



Statement of Community Involvement

**Wickham Hall Solar Farm,
Uttlesford
Endurance Energy**

May 2024

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1. Introduction

This Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out the consultation and engagement that Endurance Energy has undertaken with local residents and other stakeholders on plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall.

This document demonstrates how Endurance Energy has met and exceeded pre-application consultation guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework and Uttlesford District Council's SCI.

This SCI gives an overview of all consultation activity undertaken prior to the submission of the planning application alongside outlining how the plans have responded to feedback from the local community and other stakeholders.

Endurance Energy is committed to ongoing engagement. It ensured the community was made aware of the proposals and had multiple avenues to find out more and share their feedback. It will continue to engage throughout the determination process and beyond.

This report has been prepared on behalf of Endurance Energy by Meeting Place, a specialist in stakeholder engagement in relation to planning and development issues.

2. Consultation requirements

Community involvement is at the forefront of national planning policy and is noted in the revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (September 2023).

The revised NPPF highlights that early engagement has: "significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties". It also indicates that good quality pre-application discussion: "enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community".

Uttlesford District Council's Statement of Community Involvement (2019), outlines the council's expectations on how the local community should be involved during the pre-application process.

The SCI emphasises the council's desire to see all sections of the community shape new development proposals for effective pre-application engagement and consultation is central to achieving this.

The SCI sets out that the authority's key principles for engagement are as follows:

- *Engaging the community and stakeholders in the early stages of plan-making.*
- *Encouraging pre-application advice, by advising applicants to discuss future development proposals prior to submitting a planning application.*
- *Undertaking meaningful consultation, before applications for major development are submitted.*
- *Recognising and enhancing a sense of identity with the local area, creating a local sense of pride and greater sense of 'community'.*
- *Reaching out to those whose voices are seldom heard, being inclusive, fair, and representative in the plan-making process.*

- *Empowering communities through supporting localism, supporting neighbourhood planning and other community-related planning activities.*
- *Providing the opportunity for feedback; the Council will consider all comments received through consultations on policies and make appropriate changes accordingly.*
- *Ensuring consultation is worthwhile and achieves value for money by balancing cost, time constraints and available Council resources.*
- *Continued engagement with community and stakeholders after a decision has been made on a planning application including S106 issues.*

2.1 Our response to the consultation requirements

Pre-Statement of Community Involvement

Ahead of consultation taking place, a Pre-Statement of Community Involvement was drafted and shared with Officers at Uttlesford District Council. This document clearly set out what methods of engagement would be used during the pre-application period as well as who would be consulted. Officers were happy with the suggested approach and this document formed the basis of the consultation.

Engaging with local representatives

Meetings were sought with the ward members for the site as well as the three Parish Councils and one Town Council which covers the site. Three meetings were held prior to submission, and these helped inform the project team of the local views and opinions as the application progressed.

We will reach out again to all of the local representatives of the site to offer them the opportunity to discuss the final plans for the application and explain how the engagement helped to shape the scheme.

Engaging with Uttlesford District Council

Pre-application proposals were submitted to Uttlesford District Council. The key matters arising from pre-application meetings with the former were:

- The impact of development on the landscape and the wider visual context including the scope for additional planting
- The potential for impacts on built heritage and nature conservation – and scope for biodiversity gain
- The relationship with the rights of way network including fencing and landscaping and also the proposals to extend the rights of way with new permissive paths
- The limited potential impacts on residential amenity, air quality and human health of the chosen location
- The reversibility of the development and the avoidance of permanent loss of best and most versatile agricultural land.

Involving site neighbours and local residents

A newsletter was sent to 1,792 addresses surrounding the site (**Appendix A**). The newsletter introduced the proposals for the scheme and invited residents to visit the consultation website, [REDACTED] and to register their feedback. The newsletter can be found in **Appendix B**.

Included within the newsletter was a feedback form which residents could return to us using a Freepost envelope should they not be able to access the website (**Appendix C**). A total of 89 feedback forms were received along with 24 online responses.

Online presentation/webinar

An online presentation event was held at 7:30pm on Tuesday 15th June 2021, for residents to join and see the proposals in greater detail as well as ask the project team questions (**Appendix G**). Details of how to sign up to the webinar could be found within the newsletter. This enabled local residents the opportunity to meet, via Zoom, with the project team and to share their feedback and experiences.

Consulting with the local community by Freephone

The project Freephone number was publicised on the newsletter and website. Three Freephone calls were received during the consultation period.

Consulting with the local community by Freepost

Like the Freephone number, the Freepost address was publicised on the newsletter and website.

Consulting online with the local community

Due to COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent social distancing measure which were in place, engagement online was substantial. All materials that were sent out, contained the online consultation website address so that those who were isolating or who did not feel comfortable being out in public were able to take part in all aspects of the consultation.

Social media adverts were used to encourage local residents to visit the project website for the latest updates to the application and submit comments to the planning portal (**Appendix A**). Whilst they were there to inform the community, they also served to encourage supportive comments about the application.

52 responses were recorded with 50 of those being either neutral or supportive of the plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall. (**Appendix B**). **This represents over 96% of the responses being positive about the scheme.**

Press engagement

Several press releases and comments have been sent to local newspapers, most prominently the Bishop's Stortford Independent.

This was to ensure that local residents were able to be updated on the progress of the application and the subsequent changes which have been made to the scheme.

Bishop's Stortford market stall

In July 2022, members of the project team spoke to residents and visitors to Bishop's Stortford market about the proposals and the recent changes made to the plans. 95% of those who completed a form at the market stall were supportive of the plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall.

Engagement with local schools

Endurance Energy is currently working with primary and secondary schools in the local area to design information boards which will be located around the circular walking routes to explain the environmental benefits of the solar farm and the wildlife it helps sustain.

The schools who have been involved in the process to date include, but are not limited to:

- Hockerill Anglo-European College
- Thorn Grove Primary School
- St Michael's C of E Primary School

A copy of the worksheet sent to the schools for pupils to complete can be found in **Appendix D**.

Local schools will be invited to use the solar farm as an 'outdoor classroom' which has proved popular at other solar farms across the country. As a backdrop to lessons on renewable energy, climate change and biodiversity, solar farms are proving popular with teachers and students alike.

3. Engagement

This section details Endurance Energy's programme of engagement for the previous application. The programme was discussed with Uttlesford District Council officers to ensure robustness.

More than 250 feedback responses have been received through the various channels available.

3.1 Stakeholder meetings

From the outset of the pre-application period, Endurance Energy has sought to engage with key local stakeholders who have a strong interest in the future of the site. The project team reached out to the stakeholders listed below on several occasions since the application was submitted, offering the opportunity for the project team to present at a meeting.

- Farnham Parish Council
- Bishop's Stortford Town Council
- Albury Parish Council
- Little Hadham Parish Council
- Cllr Geoffrey Williamson

Farnham Parish Council

The project team held a Zoom meeting with Farnham Parish Council on Tuesday 23rd March 2021.

After the introductions, a presentation was made by the project team, which included the video explaining the background to the proposals.

As well as presenting the proposals, questions were taken from a number of the Parish Councillors. It was agreed that communications would continue as the engagement and application progresses.

Essex County Councillor, Ray Gooding, was also present at this meeting.

Little Hadham Parish Council

The project team presented to Little Hadham Parish Council at three meetings.

Slides were presented by the project team before questions were taken from both the Parish Council and members of the public.

The key theme which arose specifically for the Little Hadham area were the views from Little Hadham/new A120 bypass as well as viewpoints more generally. A lot of the other questions were generic about the site and were answered at the meeting.

The project team responded after the meeting with complete answers to the questions which could not be answered in full on the night. In addition to this, over 2km of additional hedge planting along the A120 Little Hadham bypass to screen the site has been included in the proposals as a direct result of the discussions that took place at the meeting.

Local District Councillor, Cllr Geoffrey Williamson, was also in attendance at the meetings.

Cllr Geoffrey Williamson

Several requests to meet with the ward member, Cllr Williamson were made. Cllr Williamson was in attendance at the Little Hadham Parish Council meeting and a follow up phone call took place to see if a separate meeting would be welcomed. Cllr Williamson confirmed that he felt all the questions or points that he'd heard from local residents had been answered at the meeting.

Albury Parish Council

The project team presented to Albury Parish Council in June 2021.

A brief presentation was made by the project team before questions were taken from both the Parish Council and members of the public.

The Parish Council did not take the project team up on their offer of subsequent meetings but update emails were provided to the parish clerk.

Bishop's Stortford Town Council

Updates were provided to the Town Council, along with the offer to provide an update at a meeting. No responses were received following these emails and calls.

Endurance Energy is committed to engagement with the local community and the offer to meet remains open throughout the application period. Another offer to meet will be sent in due course once the re-consultation period opens.

3.2 Community newsletter

A community newsletter was sent out to 1,792 residents and businesses who live or are located in the area surrounding the site. This newsletter informed them of the proposals and invited them to share their feedback, either on the website, via email, Freephone or by Freepost.

In addition to online and email responses (which can be found in **Appendix D**), we received 89 comment forms via our Freepost address. The feedback from these were broadly positive, with a small number of residents raising concerns about the proposals and the impact on the local area. Residents raised the following issues in their responses:

- Many residents were pleased to see the application brought forward and agreed that it would help towards net zero carbon aspirations.
- Some residents raised the cumulative impact of other solar farm developments in the Bishop's Stortford area.
- Some comments included more trees should be planted and how traffic flow would be accommodated in terms of access.

WICKHAM HALL SOLAR FARM ENDURANCE ENERGY

May 2022

Endurance Energy is bringing forward a planning application for a 114-hectare solar farm at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishop's Cleeve, Shropshire.

Increasing the proportion of power generated through renewable energy is key to tackling climate change, with the UK Government pledged to reduce net zero carbon by 2050. The site falls under the jurisdiction of both East Herefordshire Council and Uffelland District Council. East Herefordshire Council has declared climate emergency with Uffelland declaring a climate and ecological emergency.

We want to consult with the local community on our proposals before submitting a planning application. If approved the solar farm would have a lifespan of 40 years, after which it would revert back to farmland.

In normal circumstances, we would like to have face to face conversations with local people about the plans. However, in line with current government guidelines, we are updating local residents on the proposals remotely.

ONLINE PRESENTATION
Tuesday 15th June 7:30pm

We're hosting an online presentation to explain our proposals in greater detail and answer any questions you may have. If you would like to attend, please register via the website below.

Benefits of the proposals

- 49.9MWh of electricity generated, enough to power over 15,000 homes sustainably
- A minimum 22% biodiversity net gain on the site, with 1000 new grasslands around the solar arrays
- New footpaths and defined circular walks, with information boards, around the site for local residents to enjoy
- Planting of 10,000 new trees, with a new woodland on the north western edge
- Close proximity to the National Grid connection point

www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

WICKHAM HALL SOLAR FARM Feedback form

May 2022

Endurance Energy are bringing forward a planning application for a solar farm at Wickham Hall on the outskirts of Bishop's Cleeve. We would love to get your feedback on the proposals. Feedback will be taken on board wherever possible to help evolve the plans.

Do you agree that producing more renewable energy in the UK is crucial to tackling climate change?
 YES NO

Do you like the idea of new footpaths and defined circular walks with information boards?
 YES NO

What are your thoughts on the solar farm at Wickham Hall?

Do you support the proposals for a new solar farm at Wickham Hall?
 YES NO

www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

WICKHAM HALL SOLAR FARM ENDURANCE ENERGY

About Endurance Energy

Endurance Energy is a subsidiary company of Endurance Energy. Endurance Energy are a Cambridge based property company who work on a number of residential, commercial and renewable energy projects across the region. Further information about Endurance Energy can be found by visiting www.enduranceenergy.co.uk

How to get in touch

- Completing the enclosed feedback form
- Call our website www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk
- Email us on info@wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk
- Call our dedicated Freephone line on 0800 010 0000
- Write to us at: Freephone, MFC CONSULTANTS (no stamp required)

Next steps

Please return your feedback card using the Freepost envelope provided in submitting it to us. Feedback will be taken into account whenever possible and is greatly appreciated.

A planning application will be submitted to East Herefordshire District Council and Uffelland District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

Timetable

- May/June 2022 - Consultation
- November 2022 - Application submitted
- June 2023 - Planning application decided by East Herefordshire District Council
- May 2023 - Construction work starts
- 2023 - First homes receive electricity
- 2024 - Site is decommissioned and returned to farmland

www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Do you have any further comments on the proposals?

ENDURANCE ENERGY

Thank you for letting us know your views on the proposals. Please return the feedback form using the Freepost envelope provided. If you would like to be kept informed about the proposals, then please leave your details below.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____
Telephone: _____

How important are the following elements of the proposals to you? (1 = least important, 5 = most important)

Element	1	2	3	4	5
The provision of new solar energy					
Enhanced biodiversity through planting at the site					
New footpaths and defined circular walks for local residents to enjoy					

What charges would you suggest to improve the solar farm?

www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Screenshots of the community newsletter and feedback form sent to local residents

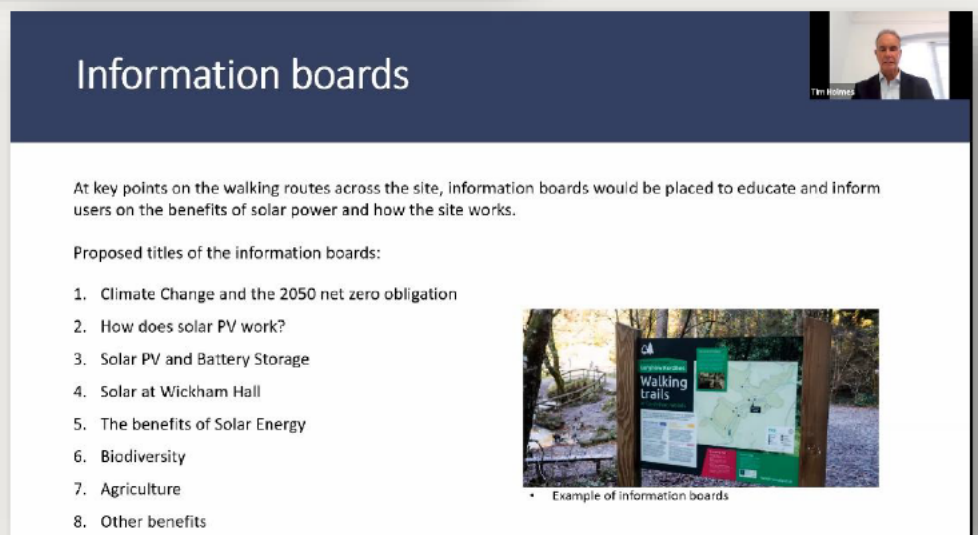
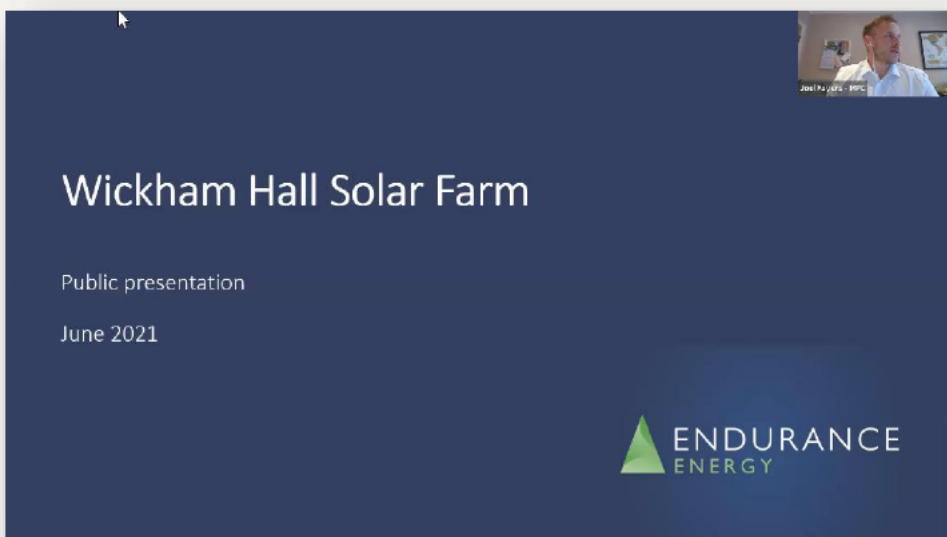
3.3 Community webinar

In order to give members of the public an opportunity to better understand the scheme, an online Zoom presentation was organised on Tuesday 15th June 2021 at 7:30pm.

The presentation was also advertised in the newsletter drop to 1,792 residents who surround the site. **There was a total of 26 attendees with an opportunity for questions to be answered by members of the project team.** A handful of residents were unable to attend the presentation so submitted their questions in advance of the meeting. For those questions which couldn't be answered on the evening, the project team explored this further and will direct the answers to those residents who raised them.

For those who were unable to attend the presentation, a recording of the event was available afterwards and a number of residents got in touch to ask for a copy.

[Grab your reader's attention with a great quote from the document or use this space to emphasize a key point. To place this text box anywhere on the page, just drag it.]



3.4 Project website

A dedicated project website, [REDACTED], was launched to act as an online hub of information on what's proposed and to provide channels for feedback. More than 1,000 people have visited the website and more than 65 people completed feedback forms online.

The website was launched to coincide with distribution of the community newsletter. It contained information on Endurance Energy, where the site was, what the plans were and further information about solar farms. A timeline was also included.

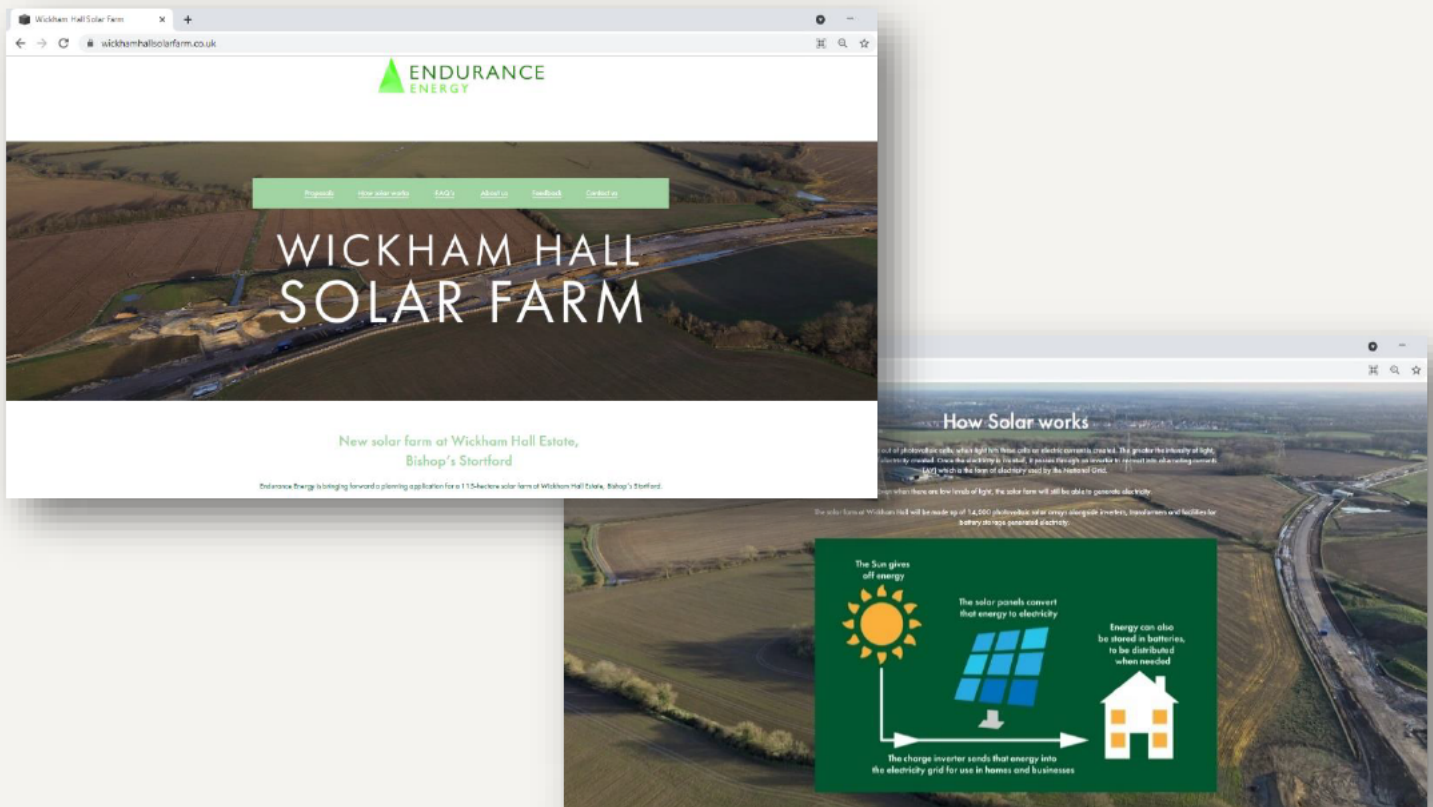
The website also invited people to, and included a link to book for, the community webinar. Freephone, email and freepost details were also available for people to contact the team.

The website was designed to be easy to navigate and engaging.

An online version of the feedback form enclosed with the newsletter was available on the website.

The set piece focus of the website was a project video which explained the background to the project, why the site was chosen as well as further information about the proposals.

A list of FAQs was also provided to answer any additional questions visitors may have had about the scheme. This list was expanded over time as additional questions were raised by the public and was continually updated as the application progressed.



Screenshots of the original project website

3.5 Social media

Adverts were promoted through Facebook and Instagram to promote the project website and opportunity to comment on the interactive map. Using social media increased awareness of the consultation and encouraged more people to engage.

Over the course of a month, social media adverts ran on Facebook and Instagram to encourage viewers to visit the project website, learn more about the proposals and submit a comment on the planning application.

Key statistics from the one-month campaign:

Link clicks (the total number of clicks on the ads) – 528 clicks

Reach (the number of people who viewed an ad at least once) – 15,960 people viewed the advert

Impressions (total number of times an ad was visible in a timeline or feed) - 65,799 impressions

96.2% of the responses were in favour of solar farms and the proposals at Wickham Hall.

All feedback received from the social media adverts can be found in **Appendix A**.



Screenshots of social media post

3.6 Local media

Several press releases and comments were sent to local newspapers, most prominently the Bishop’s Stortford Independent.

This was to ensure that local residents were able to be updated on the progress of the application and the subsequent changes which were made to the scheme, especially if they don’t have access to the internet to monitor updates to the project website.

The first press release simply focussed on informing the community that the application had been submitted. Subsequent press releases have focussed on general updates and the potential for solar energy to help reduce the impact of the energy crisis in future years. Alongside the press releases, the project team has responded to requests for comments from journalists.

A site visit was also conducted with a local journalist from the Bishop’s Stortford Independent newspaper to undertake a walk around the site and explain the changes to the plans which included additional planting and the removal of the greenbelt land from the proposals in East Herts.

Developer Endurance Energy submits plans for solar farm at Wickham Hall to straddle East Herts and Uttlesford border

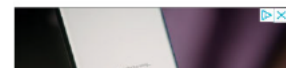
By Sinead Corr - sinead.corr@iliffmedia.co.uk
 Published: 11:53, 10 December 2021 | Updated: 11:53, 10 December 2021

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Plans for a solar farm at Bishop's Stortford's Wickham Hall estate has been submitted to East Herts and Uttlesford district councils.

The plans were **made public in June** with a chance for residents to voice their views on the scheme. The site is around the size of 200 football pitches and capable of producing 49.9 megawatts of electricity, enough to power 15,000 homes.



Revised Wickham Hall solar farm plan for Bishop's Stortford has added protection for Green Belt

By Sinead Corr - sinead.corr@iliffmedia.co.uk
 Published: 13:39, 01 June 2022 | Updated: 19:06, 01 June 2022

More news, no ads → [LEARN MORE](#)



Plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall to power homes in Bishop's Stortford have been redrawn in a bid to win approval from East Herts Council.

Endurance Energy, which is working with landowner David Harvey on the project, has added extra protection for the Green Belt in its new draft.



Screenshots of the press coverage

3.7 Market stall

In June 2022, members of the project team spoke to residents and visitors to Bishop's Stortford market about the proposals and the recent changes made to the plans.

The market stall was held on a prominent pitch along South Street on Thursday 30 June. Four roller banners were used to provide an update on the overall proposals as well as explaining what changes had been made since the consultation in May/June 2021.

Feedback forms were available for members of the public to complete, as well as links to the project website and contact details. A videographer was also present and interviewed visitors to the stall about their views on solar farms as well as the proposals at Wickham Hall. A video of the interviews can be found at [\[REDACTED\]](#).

95% of those who completed a form at the market stall were supportive of the plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall. All feedback received can be found in Appendix B and copies of the materials used are in Appendix C.



Photos of the market stall

3.8 Additional engagement – February 2024

Ahead of the planning application being made to PINS in February 2024, a number of engagement actions were undertaken with the local community and stakeholders to ensure that they were aware of what the application entailed.

Newsletter

A community newsletter (**Appendix M**) was sent out to the same mailing radius as used on previous occasions. Due to the number of new homes being built at Stortford Fields, the number of addresses increased by almost 1,000 addresses to 2,630 residents and businesses who live or are located in the area surrounding the site (**Appendix O**).

This newsletter informed them of an update on the East Herts application as well as the revised proposals for the Uttlesford application. Should residents or stakeholders have any questions, they are able to contact the project team via the website, email, Freephone or by Freepost.

Website refresh

With the Uttlesford proposals in mind, a complete refresh to the website (**Appendix N**) was undertaken so that it was clear to visitors to the site what was included in this application. As much of the original structure and content has been kept in place where possible so the visitors returning to the site are able to navigate based on previous views.

Stakeholder engagement

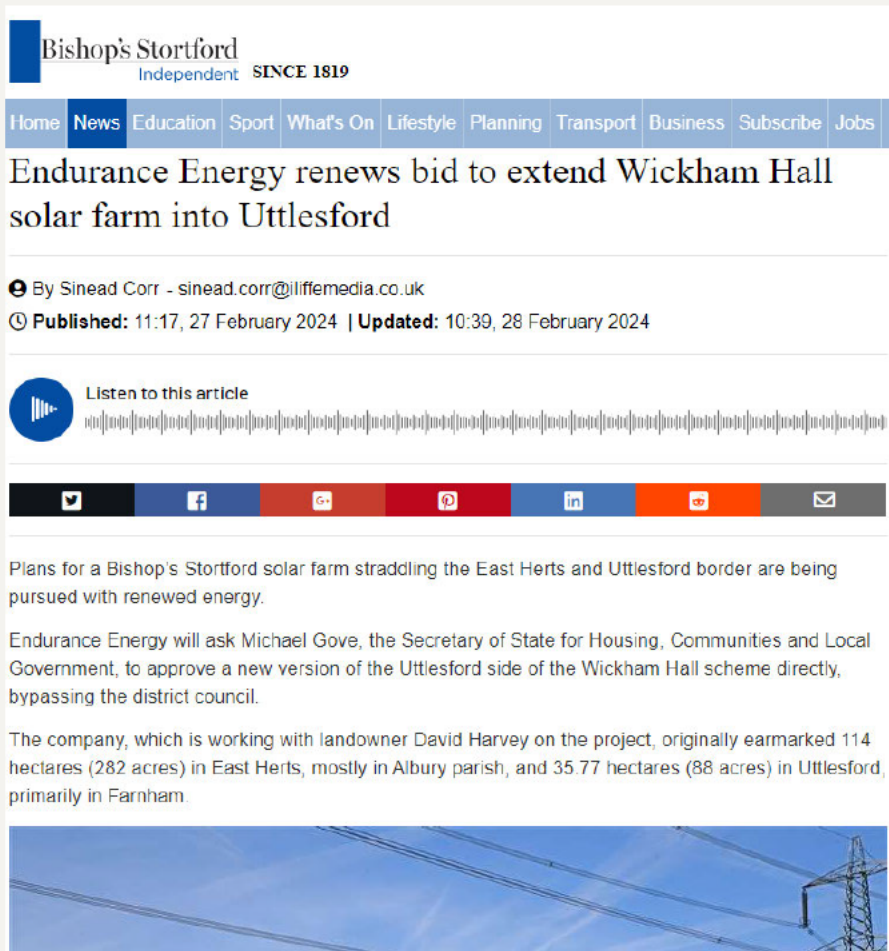
A copy of the newsletter was sent to local ward members and parish/town councils via email to ensure that they were well briefed on the proposals and wider project update. The stakeholders written to were:

- Cllr Janice Loughlin – Stort Valley ward member
- Cllr Sarah Copley – Bishop's Stortford North ward member
- Cllr Mione H Goldspink - Bishop's Stortford North ward member
- Cllr Miriam Swainston - Bishop's Stortford North ward member
- Cllr Geoffrey Williamson – Little Hadham and The Pelhams ward member
- Farnham Parish Council
- Bishop's Stortford Town Council
- Albury Parish Council
- Little Hadham Parish Council
- Cllr Ray Gooding – Stansted county council division member
- Cllr Graham McAndrew – Bishop's Stortford Rural county council division member
- Cllr Alastair Ward-Booth – Bishop's Stortford West county council division member



Press release

A press release (**Appendix P**) was issued to local newspapers to ensure that they could let their readers know the latest developments with the Wickham Hall Solar Farm and direct them to the dedicated project website if they had any questions or would like to find out more information about the project or Uttlesford planning application. The press release was picked up by the Bishop's Stortford Independent (<https://www.bishopsstortfordindependent.co.uk/news/endurance-energy-renews-bid-to-extend-wickham-hall-solar-far-9354711/>).



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Endurance Energy renews bid to extend Wickham Hall solar farm into Uttlesford


By Sinead Corr - sinead.corr@liffemedia.co.uk
Published: 11:17, 27 February 2024 | Updated: 10:39, 28 February 2024

Listen to this article

Plans for a Bishop's Stortford solar farm straddling the East Herts and Uttlesford border are being pursued with renewed energy.

Endurance Energy will ask Michael Gove, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, to approve a new version of the Uttlesford side of the Wickham Hall scheme directly, bypassing the district council.

The company, which is working with landowner David Harvey on the project, originally earmarked 114 hectares (282 acres) in East Herts, mostly in Albury parish, and 35.77 hectares (88 acres) in Uttlesford, primarily in Farnham.



3.9 Contact details

Ensuring people were able to get in touch with the team to ask any questions and make any comments was vital. The freephone telephone number and freepost address, also provided an important opportunity for people unable to access the online channels to engage.

The number, 0800 148 8911, and email address, info@wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk were staffed between 9.00am and 5.30pm from Monday to Friday. Both were answered and managed by a member of the Meeting Place team. The Meeting Place freepost address was also managed by Meeting Place.

These contact details were promoted through all communications including the newsletter and website.

4. Response to key issues

All feedback was reviewed by the team. This section details how the plans responded to several key issues that were raised with the team during the initial consultation.

Key theme	Endurance Energy's response
Support for the proposals	<p>Endurance Energy is incredibly grateful for the support which has been shown by local residents for the proposals.</p> <p>Many of those who have expressed support have referenced the need to generate renewable energy in the UK. It is recognised that building a solar farm on this site is very much needed and Endurance Energy is keen to respond to this by progressing the project at pace.</p>
Views of the site	<p>We have undertaken detailed landscape and visual impact assessments to understand the visibility of the scheme from the surrounding area. We will be retaining existing hedgerows and woodland. A new 30-metre-wide woodland will be planted as part of these proposals, in order to provide screening and wildlife connectivity between the existing ancient woodlands Bloodhounds Wood and Bailey Hills. In addition, over two kilometres of new hedgerow will be planted around the perimeter of the proposed solar farm, to provide wildlife habitat and to help screen the solar panels.</p> <p>Additional photomontages have been created from a number of viewpoints after discussions with stakeholders.</p>
Planting	<p>Following meetings with stakeholders such as Little Hadham Parish Council, the plans were amended so that an additional 2km of hedgerow planting could be added along the western boundary.</p> <p>A further 2km of hedgerow planting is proposed on this site to screen the solar panels from the rights of way.</p>
Biodiversity	<p>Residents were clear that they wished to see an improvement of the biodiversity on the site.</p> <p>This has been considered further and the proposals would deliver over 216.46% net increase in the biodiversity of the land, with wildflower grasslands around the solar arrays and a 96.57% increase in the biodiversity of the hedgerows.</p> <p>In addition, new wildlife ponds and further wildlife planting will be provided in the community wildlife area to the east of the proposed site. Information boards will be provided.</p>

5. Conclusion

Endurance Energy has undertaken a thorough programme of pre- and post-application community engagement with the local community. We have consulted with residents neighbouring the development site and local stakeholders which has been informed from the guidance set out in Uttlesford District Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Over the course of the project's lifetime, meetings and calls were held with key stakeholders to further understand their thoughts on the proposals and to have their questions answered by the project team. These conversations were productive and useful, and their feedback has been incorporated into the overall design of the scheme.

After reviewing the feedback, over 63% of those who responded to the original consultation process supported the proposals for a new solar farm on land at Wickham Hall. This is an extremely high level of support for a planning application and shows both the appetite for the scheme to come forward as well as the positive feeling towards a renewable energy scheme of this kind. This is backed up by a number of comments submitted by members of the public which included *"I think it is brilliant, well thought out and sympathetic to the environment and local neighbours."* and *"No doubt there will be some NIMBYs but this is in our backyard and we would be proud that our area is contributing to such an essential cause. Fully support. Love the footpath and information boards as well as will be educated and interesting."*

Endurance Energy has actively undertaken consultation and engagement with the local community over the past three years, including a further update in February 2024 to ensure that all stakeholders and local residents were aware of the latest developments with Wickham Hall Solar Farm and the updated proposals for the Uttlesford application.

Endurance Energy will continue to be available to answer any questions or queries about the application or the wider solar farm with the contact details remaining live and open during the course of the planning process.

Appendix A: Newsletter mailing radius



Appendix B: Newsletter

WICKHAM HALL SOLAR FARM

May 2021

Site location

Endurance Energy is bringing forward a planning application for a 115-hectare solar farm at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishop's Stortford.

Increasing the proportion of power generated through renewable energy is key to tackling climate change, with the UK Government pledging to achieve net zero carbon by 2050. The site falls under the jurisdiction of both East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council. East Herts have declared a climate emergency with Uttlesford declaring a climate and ecological emergency.

We want to consult with the local community on our proposals before submitting a planning application. If approved, the solar farm would have a lifespan of 40 years, after which it would revert back to farmland.

In normal circumstances, we would like to have face to face conversations with local people about the plans. However, in line with current Government guidelines, we are updating local residents on the proposals remotely.

ONLINE PRESENTATION
Tuesday
15th June
7.30pm

We're hosting an online presentation to explain our proposals in greater detail and answer any questions you may have.

If you would like to attend, please register via the website below.

www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

WICKHAM HALL SOLAR FARM

May/June 2021 – Consultation

Summer 2021 – Application submitted

Late 2021 – Planning application decided by East Herts and Uttlesford District Councils

Mid 2022 – Construction work starts

2023 – First homes receive electricity

2063 – Site is decommissioned and returned to farmland

About Endurance Energy

Endurance Energy is a subsidiary company of Endurance Estates.

Endurance Energy are a Cambridgeshire based property company who work on a number of residential, commercial and renewable energy projects across the region.

Further information about Endurance Estates can be found by visiting www.endurance-estates.co.uk

How to get in touch

- Completing the enclosed feedback form
- Visit our website: www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk
- Email us at: info@wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk
- Call our dedicated Freephone line on: 0800 148 8911
- Write to us at: Freepost, MPC CONSULTATION (No stamp required)

Next steps

Please return your feedback card using the Freepost envelope provided or submitting it online. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and is greatly appreciated.

A planning application will be submitted to East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

Timetable

www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Site layout

Climate change

The solar farm will have a capacity of 49.9MW, generating enough electricity to power over 15,000 homes.

With the UK government's recent announcement of a Green Industrial Revolution, the UK is trying to increase the proportion of power generated through renewable electricity to meet our ambitious climate targets and achieve carbon net zero. As we seek to power homes and vehicles through electricity, there is a renewed focus to increase our reliance on renewable energy to meet the overall target of an 80% reduction in CO2 by 2050.

This solar farm will contribute towards a zero carbon future for us all, and importantly helping the Council's meet their 2030 carbon neutral targets.

Biodiversity

The land for the proposed solar farm is currently used to produce arable crops. Whilst the solar farm is operational, the soil will be rested. We are simply borrowing the land for 40 years and increasing the level of biodiversity on the site before it will be returned to agricultural use in the future.

The site will increase biodiversity net gain by creating wildflower grasslands around the panels which will help restore the agricultural land but also increase the extent and diversity of habitats for wildlife.

10,000 new trees, hedgerow planting and new wildflower grassland will support animals who can already be found on the site, including bees, reptiles, birds and bats.

Design and layout

The solar farm is driven by a landscape led design which will take into account existing field boundaries and natural features. Much of the land on the site slopes towards the south, making it an ideal location for solar panels.

The solar farm will be made up of 14,000 photovoltaic solar arrays. The panels will have minimal impact on the landscape at ground level as they are less than 2.0 metres in height with no foundations. The frames are simply driven 2.5 metres into the ground.

The low-profile nature of the solar farm and additional woodland will help maintain the character of the local landscape including long distance views from public rights of way.

Walking routes

There are several public rights of way through the Wickham Hall Estate and the installation of the solar farm will create new footpaths and defined circular walks with information boards showing the environmental benefits of solar farms.

Why here?

The site at Wickham Hall is highly suitable for a solar farm, being just 1 kilometre away from the National Grid's Bishop's Stortford sub-station, which has the connection capacity to receive additional supplies of electricity. Such close proximity between a sub-station in a built-up area and a viable site for solar power generation is rarely available.


Due to the construction of the Little Hadham A120 bypass, a number of the fields have been turned into irregular shapes which reduces farming efficiency. However, these small fields can be used effectively to house solar panels.

Whilst most of the site is not in the Greenbelt, part of the site is. The planning application will make the case that there are special circumstances to release this land to produce renewable energy. Once the solar farm has reached its life span, it can be easily removed with the land being returned to agricultural use.

Appendix C: Feedback form


WICKHAM HALL SOLAR FARM

Feedback form



May 2021


Endurance Energy are bringing forward a planning application for a solar farm at Wickham Hall on the outskirts of Bishop's Stortford. We would love to get your feedback on the proposals. Feedback will be taken on board wherever possible to help evolve the plans.



Do you agree that producing more renewable energy in the UK is crucial to tackling climate change?


YES NO

What are your thoughts on the solar farm at Wickham Hall?



Do you like the idea of new footpaths and defined circular walks with information boards?


YES NO




Do you support the proposals for a new solar farm at Wickham Hall?

YES NO

This information is being collected by MPC on behalf of Endurance Energy and will be shared with them and the project team, securely stored and destroyed at the end of the planning process. All written feedback will be anonymised. For further information about how we hold and use your data and your rights under General Data Protection Regulations please visit the privacy & cookies page on our website www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk




Do you have any further comments on the proposals?





How important are the following elements of the proposals to you?
(1 = least important, 5 = most important)

The provision of new solar energy	1	2	3	4	5
Enhanced biodiversity through planting at the site	1	2	3	4	5
New footpaths and defined circular walks for local residents to enjoy	1	2	3	4	5



What changes would you suggest to improve the solar farm?





Thank you for letting us know your views on the proposals. Please return the feedback form using the Freepost envelope provided.

If you would like to be kept informed about the proposals, then please leave your details below.


Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

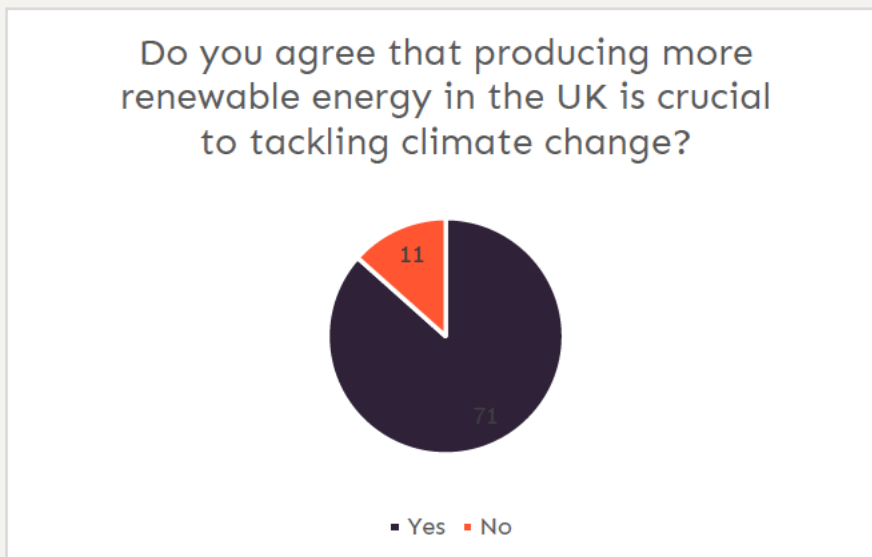
Telephone: _____

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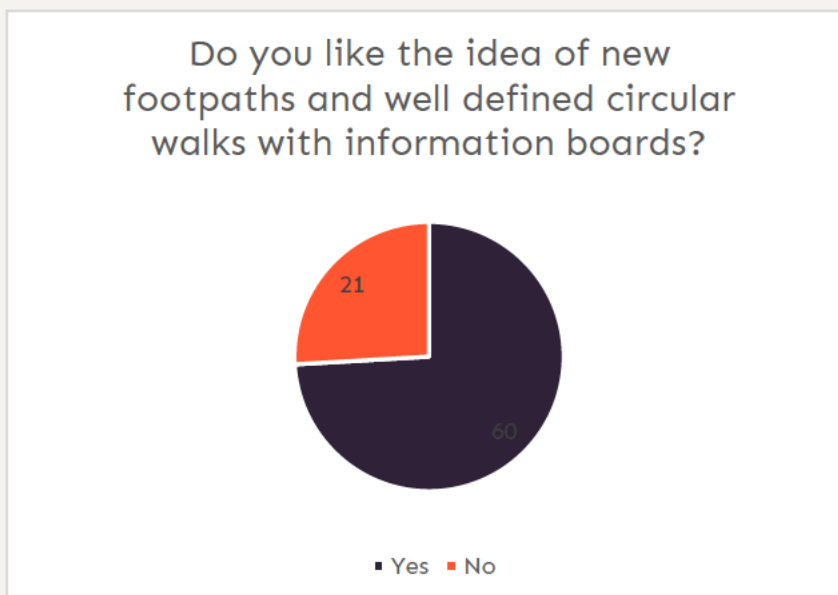


Appendix D: Feedback responses via Freepost

Do you agree that producing more renewable energy in the UK is crucial to tackling climate change?



Do you like the idea of new footpaths and defined circular walks with information boards?



What are your thoughts on the solar farm at Wickham Hall?

Verbatim comments include:

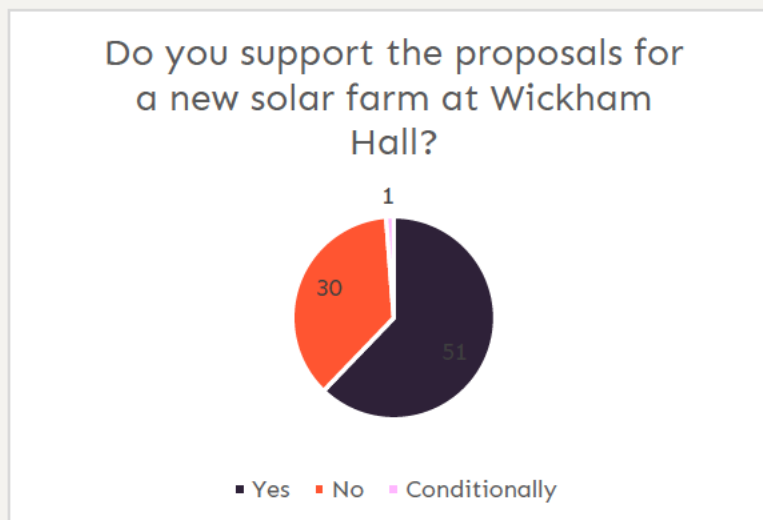
- "Don't bother"
- "Excellent idea and far less intrusive than wind turbines"
- "You're going to do what you want anyway so what's the point of this feedback form"
- "A very good use of land resource"

- "Totally unacceptable"
- N/A
- "It makes good use of it"
- "Ideal site. More of these required."
- "Superb idea."
- "Excellent, glad the local area can support renewables. Pleased biodiversity has been taken into account."
- "This should only go ahead if solar panels are put on the individual estate at church all the existing roofs and the parish council saves in the company (illegible comment)"
- "It is fantastic. We need this type of development. We can educate more people about it. We can do this with minimum disruption."
- "I think this is a positive project to combat climate change. We need more renewable energy."
- "All ok."
- "Very much in favour."
- "Too big and close to housing and too visible"
- N/A
- "Better option than houses."
- "Plan looks ok"
- N/A
- "It's a great idea."
- "No doubt there will be some NIMBYs but this is in our backyard and we would be proud that our area is contributing to such an essential cause. Fully support. Love the footpath and information boards as well as will be educated and interesting."
- "Great idea"
- "Good idea!"
- "I know we need to produce more renewable energy and support that but solar farms are so ugly and your proposal is so huge. Maybe a smaller one!"
- N/A
- "It is wrong to cover green fields with solar panels when there are other options"
- "Solar farms are better than bypass and housing estates."
- "Probably the best site locally for this to happen."
- "All positive generally. Will wildlife such as newts and bats be given help to relocate as needed?"
- "Under no circumstances should 230 acres of land be *illegible* over to the solar farm. Green belt must be left *illegible*?"
- "I think it's a very good idea"
- "I always knew that building whatever would accompany the new bypass. Taking green land not a good idea. However I still 3/5 support the solar farm."
- "Scheme should not go ahead, waste of agriculture land, loss of rural landscape"
- "Better alternatives that are aligned with government plan"
- Illegible.
- N/A
- "Very good. The signage has to be clear and understood by the public to stop them wandering"
- "An insane idea - obviously thought up by someone idiots(s) with no concerns for wildlife or residents within the immediate vicinity."
- "Very good idea"
- N/A
- "I feel that the proposed site is already to saturation point with now housing and also the site is green belt agriculture land. I see the need for solar energy but there surely must be a more appropriate site."
- N/A
- N/A

- N/A
- "I think that all of the proposed foot paths should be bridleways so that horses and cycles can continue to use the rights of way."
- "Great idea, an ideal situation and prevents future housing developments."
- "Sounds good – positive"
- "Good idea"
- "I know farmers who would love to farm there. Don't want it (and it's an eyesore)"
- N/A
- "Where are the existing footpaths? Where will the new paths be? Why is there no key to the map colours?"
- "Agree that sustainable energy source is required to support new development in Bishops Stortford area."
- N/A
- "Its fine if it doesn't impact birds such as skylarks and take away their favoured habitat."
- N/A
- "Wrong place. Bishops Stortford has lost so much of its perimeter and this is a continuation. This is beautiful countryside that will be destroyed. It is ironic that two ancient woodlands will be connected by this contrivance."
- "I don't think that greenbelt land should be used"
- "It is a shame to destroy such a beautiful countryside which is so close to the town and housing. Beautiful views will be damaged. The solar farm should be closer to the new road."
- "Should not go ahead, strongly disagree"
- "Terrible plan, just about making money"
- "Great idea - very supportive"
- "Farmland shouldn't be blighted by these panels."
- "Absolutely disgusted - all been pre-planned - chopping up and eating all our countryside. What about all the wildlife - we have a few big herds of deer who graze the areas. Will you consider local residents - like hell!"
- "Having seen other working solar farms and having walked the Wickham Hall area for over 15 years, I think this is an appropriate use of what is now disjointed agri-land"
- N/A
- "It will be a blot on our landscape when it goes ahead all materials and labour will be from overseas with no benefit to the UK"
- "I *might* support this proposal. HOWEVER - I feel the adjacent two questions are extremely loaded and unfair, the purpose of those questions is to support your application by saying **% of people like the idea of new footpaths. Also, it is very unfair to ask someone if they agree renewable energy important (which of course most will want to answer 'yes' to), and then ask if they support the proposal - as they now feel they should answer 'yes' to this too. Pure sales theory, and very unfair."
- N/A
- "With new housing estate and now a solar farm, am afraid of Bishop's Stortford becoming as diverse as Harlow, St James Park + other housing projects"
- "It will *illegible* a further serious loss of green countryside landscape if carried out and be a *illegible* on the landscape for many years."
- "Why not plant mixed woodland?"
- "It's a great idea - particularly like the idea that nature can still be present & won't be removed"
- "I like the idea so long as there is no damage to the irreplaceable ancient woodland that is so close by. The brochure does not show how visible the panels will be from the road?"
- "If it saves our planet, go ahead"

- Not the best sight to see, but necessary to protect our climate.
- "Strong objection. Loss of belt. Disturbance to movements and new nesting sites particularly ground nesters.
- Some species in the woodland will have corridors blocked.
- Free use of existing paths and bridleways cut off."
- Its hectares seems excessive and will be a blot on the local landscape. I would support a smaller area
- "Very unhappy at the size & effect on a rural area, especially animal life such as the deer who regularly use that area.
- Concern about the effect on local residents who have a by-pass, a solar farm that will *illegible* affect them negatively."
- I think it's a great idea. The UK needs additional renewable sources and this is a low impact way of doing so. The use of the land with the new by-pass seems sensible.
- It's inappropriate so close to a construction area of Hadham Hall. Open land already disfigured by new road.
- Think it is a terrible idea. Rather than destroying more countryside *illegible* where these panels not *illegible* the road as 100s of newly built homes...?
- This land should be left to produce crops not spoiling the countryside with those ghastly panels
- It will destroy the local countryside will stop food production. Destroy animals feeding land. It looks completely out of place _ only does not reflect the area. Destroy well trodden public rights of way

Do you support the proposals for a new solar farm at Wickham Hall?



Do you have any further comments on the proposals?

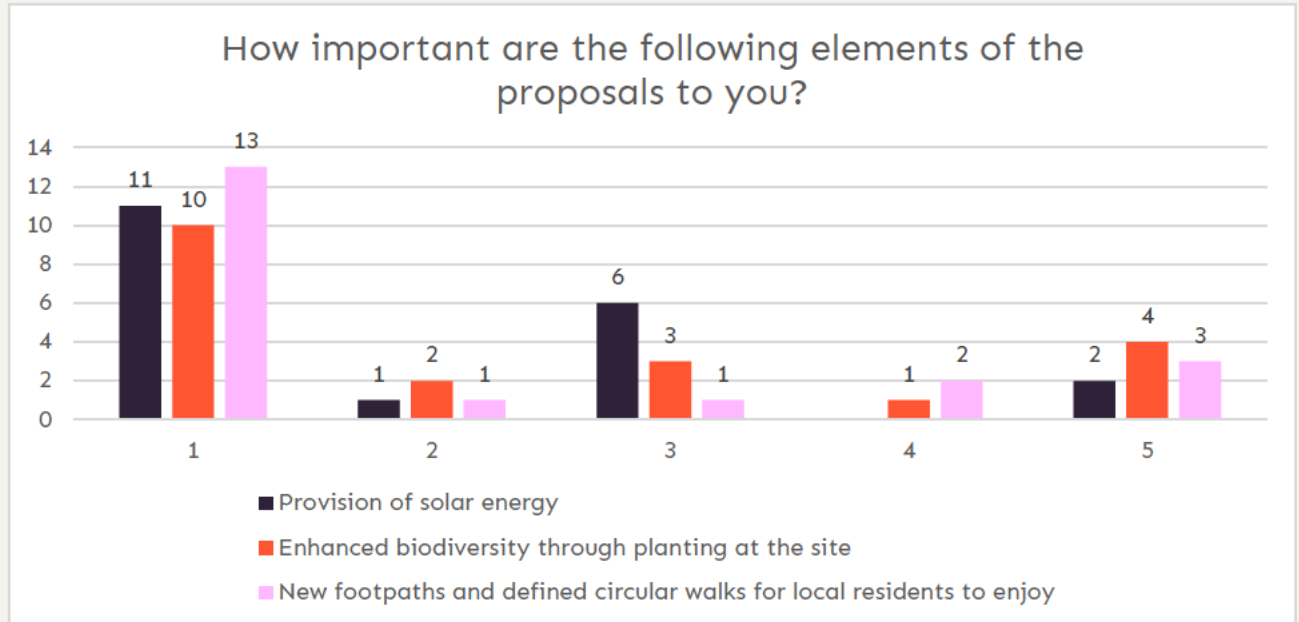
- "Yes we don't want it"
- "How about campaigning for all new-build housing to have solar panels installed on their roofs"
- N/A
- N/A
- "Abandon the proposal and review the decision process that led not only to this suggestion but also the decision to build many houses on farm land around

Bishop's Stortford and yet, not a new hospital and ancillary medical services more urgently needed than housing here."

- N/A
- N/A
- "Look forward to completion."
- N/A
- "Concerned about the amount of concrete support to panels. Gives off CO2 during setting and would make return to farm land a lengthy process"
- N/A
- "I will get involved ay way I can. This is very exciting."
- "Carry out an environmental assessment of site first to ensure any 'rarer' plant species and animal habitats are protected."
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- "Seems like a sensible location in terms of close residents / adjacent to bypass / proximity to sub station"
- N/A
- N/A
- "No"
- N/A
- "Very biased questions to get positive answers. It is wrong to use such an expanse of land for this purpose."
- N/A
- "40 years time I hope the land does not become a housing estate."
- "Management of litter around walkways"
- "We do not need new walks - we are well endowed in that department *illegible* bio diversity. (Illegible)"
- "Renewable energy sources are imperative to solve the climate crisis"
- "40 years many will have passed away. The plan could easily be overturned especially if money involved."
- Illegible
- "Government plan doesn't support solar farms in its green plan. Impact on wildlife, countryside and traffic during construction"
- "Farmer's action disgraceful"
- N/A
- "Will it effect my heating bill if we go solar and if so will it be cheaper?"
- "Who benefits financially from the change to land? Why not go the whole hog and inflict the infestation on all of Hertfordshire"
- "No."
- N/A
- N/A
- "One of the tated rationales for the project is that the fields are now too small for efficient farming. This will still be the case in 40 years time but hopefully this will not then mean that the site becomes covered in new homes."
- N/A
- N/A
- "With the increased traffic of all the new developments it is essential to provide cross country cycle pths - not road bikes."
- N/A

- "No"
- "No"
- "I hope planning is refused."
- N/A
- "Inadequate plan - no key to indicate either existing paths or the proposed new ones. Why is this?"
- "No chemical herbicides to control weeds. All walks to be dog friendly and disabled use friendly."
- N/A
- "I would like to see the environmental impact survey results for the local area."
- "Very interesting well thought out plan. More trees great hides the mess developers have made."
- "Why not incorporate solar panels into new build houses? This is surely more logical and will result in the loss of less countryside."
- "This area already has enough development"
- "Brownfield sites would be better use as solar farms."
- "Waste of tax payers money, most of year there's no sunlight."
- "This is about money, nothing else."
- "No"
- "Ugly, unsightly, waste of good farmland."
- "Reduce all the house building and you won't need more energy!"
- "I believe the proposals for boundary fencing is *illegible* to use stock fencing. This is important to enhance the biodiversity gains to full encompass flora as well as flora."
- N/A
- "The bypass has raised more countryside and the solar farm will compound this"
- "To make an informal decision the public needs MUCH more information. Not just attractive marketing information, we need FACTS. You as a company know that building this site is not for attractive purposes, it is a way to make money. This no bad things but you must be HONEST about the long term environmental impact of the plans and the true figures for renewable energy production you know these facts (and if you don't, you should), and it is important that you share them."
- N/A
- "Afraid this is just another nail in the coffin of Bishop's Stortford. From belong a rural small town. It's growing in all directions."
- "Just want to know how it will affect Bridleways + wildlife
- Are they noisy?"
- Such scheme should be more *illegible*/effective in decent areas rather where land can be more *illegible* and for agriculture *illegible*.
- "Renewable energy can be supplied in other ways rather than the loss of open land - i.e. wind farms.
- A diverse range of wildlife - given *illegible*, buzzards, led kites, owls & long pist all birds, also deal, badger, snakes, bats etc"
- This will damage the quality of the Ash Valley. This area is already suffering from excess housing, loss of countryside, affect of Stansted Expansion etc
- None
- What guarantee do we have you will return the land to farming in 40 years? What is the impact on the environment to make and install these panels?
- Who benefits beside the farmer getting a load of cash?
- These solar farms should be on top of buildings not destroying much needed fields. There are 100s of industrial buildings - put there ugly forms on those

How important are the following elements of the proposals to you? (1 = least important, 5 = most important)



What changes would you suggest to improve the solar farm?

- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- "Publish what is the net developed acreage per annum brought back into food production in the UK and not lose forever."
- "Online portal / social media access to highlight how the farm is run / benefits once it is open"
- N/A
- "Looks good as it is."
- N/A
- "Less concrete"
- "Without lasting responsible payback for this community I am against this"
- "Classrooms, meeting rooms, farmers market space"
- "Underplant the area with native wild flower mix - leave wide field margins for plants, ground-nesting birds etc"
- "None."
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- "If the panels were mounted slightly it would be possible to graze sheep in the fields, reducing the need for grass to be cut and allowing a dual income from the field."
- "Keep the footpaths a secret, currently I enjoy them on my own"

- "Please do ensure the footpaths are accesible i.e. not just grass as in the winter the mud is insane around here. Actual compacted paths would be best - in fact a carpark / layby would be really amazing so can visit and walk around easily."
- N/A
- "You've mentioned circular walks, will there be vehicle access as there is no public transport where I live?"
- "Smaller maybe!"
- N/A
- "Put it over the carparks at Stansted Airport."
- "Even more trees / areas of biodiversity. Include EV charging points in locality."
- "Low lights for current wildlife to have minimal impact"
- "Support local schools by sponsoring educational site visits"
- "Cut to 1/3 of proposed *illegible*. Do not touch green belt (illegible) 3000 homes already built too much."
- N/A
- "Someone somewhere is making a great deal of money and don't think climate change will be at the top of their list."
- "The scheme should not go ahead under any circumstances"
- "Offshor wind turbines are government preferred route."
- N/A
- N/A
- "To make people put their dog poo in bins or make them pick it up definitely on the signs to stop people wandering."
- "Move them to unpopulated areas!!! Sign the farm near Hertford (closer to EHOC)"
- N/A
- N/A
- "Permission be denied"
- "Not enough information on the outline plan to properly comment but I would expect that tree planting is done to ensure minimal adverse impact on views towards the site. Whilst I accept the rationale for the proposal it will impact on a scenic part of the country. There are many sites e.g. along the M25 in Essex where these would be much better suited to protect a scenic area."
- N/A
- N/A
- See above.
- N/A
- N/A
- N/A
- "Loaded."
- N/A
- N/A
- "Wildflower planting between the PV panels. Beehives to be located within the site."
- N/A
- "More gaps between the banks of panels."
- N/A
- "Move it somewhere sensible. How about somewhere sensible alongside road infrastructure such as the M11"
- N/A
- "Move it between the old 120 acre and the new road."
- "Do not install"
- "Don't do it"
- N/A
- "Don't build it."

- "Put it in Harlow, it's overcrowded and can't get any worse."
- "Is rare breed grazing possible around the panels? Downloadable nature hunt (app/*illegible*) for children to work alongside interactive boards"
- N/A
- "Source materials and labour locally. Find another site"
- Consult properly
- Make it smaller so the boundaries are further from houses
- Do not hide behind 'COVID' as an excuse for poor consultation. Take time to meet & consult local residents and stakeholders properly, face to face"
- "N/A"
- "Not on land at Wickham Hall which is already over developed as is the rest of Bishop's Stortford."
- Not on land at Wickham Hall which is already over developed as is the rest of Bishop's Stortford.
- Drop the whole idea
- "Public toilets
- A nice café "
- With respect, re-think the idea - objection
- Make the area of land that it take up far smaller
- Smaller area & special protection for the deer heard which has a regular route through this area. Improve environment for fora not just flora.
- Encouraging wildlife at the site would be great. Perhaps using land around the solar panels for bees would be a simple way of doing this.
- What about bridleways? Numerous are being destroyed for this (not to mentions those lost to the new houses) how are they being replaced?
- "No solar farm
- They are an eyesore but by the timetable they are already on the cards, when construction has already got a date"
- Put them on individual buildings. 8,000 new homes in Bishop's Stortford should all have them. Stop destroying our countryside
- "Give locals free energy
- Keep animal habitats"

Appendix E: Feedback responses via email

Verbatim emails include:

"To whom it may concern

We received a pamphlet through the post regarding the construction of Wickham Hall Solar Farm. Alongside it there was a feedback form with three questions. However I feel that the questions provided are not simple yes and no answers. I wanted to raise a few points about the construction of the solar farm that I could not fit in the box about "your thoughts on the solar farm at Wickham Hall". I hope this is okay.

Firstly I agree that the production of renewable energy in the UK is important in tackling climate change. However there are other important factors too. Population size and concentration also affect climate change as do lifestyle choices people make. In the last few years around the Bishop's Stortford area there has been a large uptick in urbanisation. I have also heard about plans for another solar farm in Berden as well.

Having been a resident of Albury for nearly 30 years I have seen many changes in the surrounding area. Increased urbanisation and the loss of farmland as well as the degradation of important habitats. The pamphlet mentions the planting of 10000 new trees and a new woodland on the north western edge of the farm.

Rather than just planting trees I wanted to ask about what type of trees you would be planting and the rationale for planting them. Would you be planting trees that are particularly effective at sequestering carbon? Would you be planting trees that help in promoting a wide variety of flora and fauna, including native flowers species such as the true oxslip (*primula elatior*) or native bluebells.

Whilst new, clearly marked footpaths are most welcome simply having clearly defined circular walks is a way of taming nature and losing what little wild areas we have left. I think that the planting of wildflower grasslands around the solar arrays is a great idea however I feel that there could be a more than 25% biodiversity net gain if done correctly and the right species are planted. Light pollution on the site is another thing that I was concerned about. Would lighting sensitive to wildlife be put on the site. For example having shades that direct the beams downwards rather than letting the light spill out.

My final question is would you be securing polysilicon used in the production of solar panels in an ethical way?

Also have you considered putting some form rain water collection system to harvest rain water from the panels to direct into ponds on site. This could further increase biodiversity.

Many thanks for taking the time to read my email.

Kind Regards"

"Good evening XXXXXX,

Questions I have are as follows -not necessarily for the presentation on the 15th but I would like them answered please

1. The property I have just invested in and moved into has direct sighting of the proposed solar farm which I am obviously unhappy about as it ruins the view. Can you provide me with a 3D visualisation of what I will see from my property.
2. Can you demonstrate what will be done to obscure the solar farm from view and how this will look from our property.
3. What can I claim in case of devaluation to our property if it is not shielded adequately from this proposed development.

4. If the proposal does unfortunately go ahead and I have constant glinting of bright reflected light into my property can you advise what recourse I will have to Endurance Energy to rectify this.

5. Can you demonstrate, including fabrication, installation, life cycle, dismantling and disposal, how much carbon will actually be saved and also advise if there are environmental challenges with the disposal of the solar farm components.

I look forward to hearing from you

Kind Regards"

"Hi.

It's probably too late now but I did have a couple of questions it would be nice to hear answers to...

Will there be any closures/disruption to the new A120 road now being built - we have had a lot of closures and more would not be welcome?

What quality is the existing arable land?

Why won't it remain as a solar farm - what is the point of restoring it to arable land?

Thank you"

"XXXX, it was good to speak with you this morning.

The report produced by Aspect Ecology dated June 2020 covering TNO1: Initial Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Appraisal (see attachment) under para 2 acknowledges that the Solar Farm falls within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for The Patmore Heath SSSI but then goes on to suggest that as Natural England's IRZ Scheme exempts "solar energy" then the LPA would not be required to consult with Natural England on a future planning application. Could you please let me know where Natural England shows the exemptions for "solar energy" as I have been unable to locate the appropriate document.

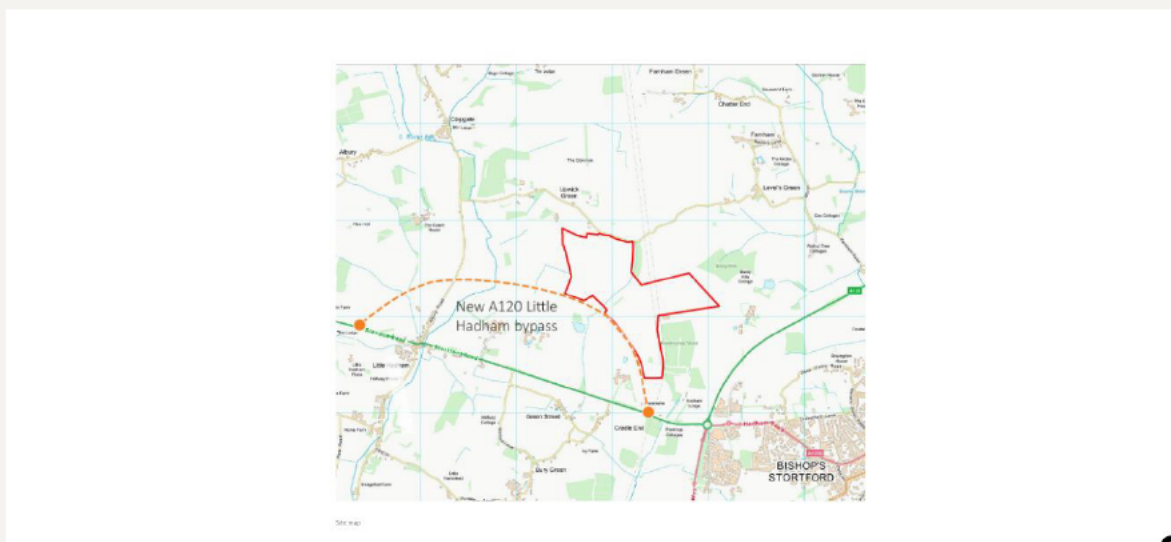
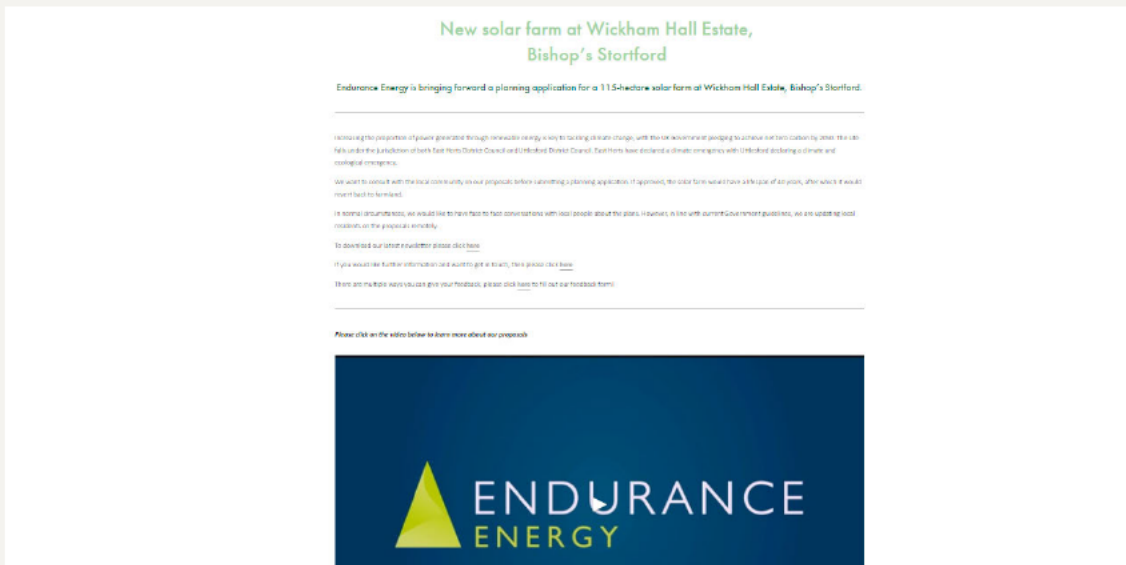
Much has been made in the promotional documents for Wickham Hall about the advantages brought to the local eco-system from the installation of the Solar Park. As such, even though an exception might exist in consulting with Natural England in respect of the Patmore Heath SSSI, it would seem best practise to me (and courteous to all concerned) to for that consultation to take place. Clearly the consultation would need to take place with the LPA but one would hope that the Promoters of the project would encourage and support this objective.

I have copied both the Clerk of Albury Parish Council (who own the Patmore Heath SSSI) and our Local District Councillor in on this mail so both are aware of this enquiry.

Many thanks for your help in looking into this matter.

- Best wishes,"

Appendix F: Consultation website



Proposals

How Solar works

Solar panels are made out of photovoltaic cells: when light hits these cells an electric current is created. The greater the intensity of light, the greater amount of electricity created. Once the electricity is created, it passes through an inverter to convert into alternating current (AC) which is the form of electricity used by the National Grid.

Even when there are low levels of light, the solar farm will still be able to generate electricity.

The solar farm at Wickham Hall will be made up of 14,000 photovoltaic solar arrays alongside inverters, transformers and facilities for battery storage generated electricity.

The Sun gives off energy

The solar panels convert that energy to electricity

Energy can also be stored in batteries, to be distributed when needed

The charge inverter sends that energy into the electricity grid for use in homes and businesses

Why here?

The site at Wickham Hall is highly suitable for a solar farm, being just 1 kilometre away from the National Grid's Bishop's Cleeve sub-station, which has the connection capacity to receive additional supplies of electricity. Such close proximity to a sub-station in a built-up area and a viable site for solar power generation is rarely available.

Due to the construction of the Lifford Aqueduct bypass, a number of the fields have been transferred to regular crops which reduces farming efficiency. However, these areas would be a good opportunity to install solar panels.

When most of the site is not in the arable part of the cycle, the planting activities will make the soil that there is no soil accumulation to release the soil to produce renewable energy. Once the solar farm has reached its life span, it can be easily removed with the land being returned to agricultural use.



View A202 to the northern bypass and the site



Climate change

The solar farm will have a capacity of 46.6MW, generating enough electricity to power just 10,000 homes. With the UK government's commitment to reach net-zero by 2050, the UK is trying to increase the proportion of power generated through renewable sources to meet its ambitious climate goals and reduce carbon emissions. As we seek to power homes and vehicles through electricity, there is mounting pressure to reach our target of renewable energy to meet the goal of net-zero by 2050.

This solar farm will contribute towards a zero carbon future for local, and importantly, helping the country meet their international net-zero targets.





Biodiversity

The land for the proposed solar farm is currently used to produce a wide range of crops. It is for the solar farm is essential, the soil will be tested. We are simply protecting the land for 40 years and increasing the level of biodiversity on the site before it will be returned to agricultural use in the future.

The site will increase biodiversity in place by a minimum of 20%. This is through creating wildlife friendly grassland around the panels which will help restore the agricultural use of our site, also increase the overall biodiversity of habitats for wildlife.

Woodcrows, thrush, hedgehog planting, and new wildlife friendly grassland will help attract animals, which can be a benefit to the site, including bees, rabbits, birds, and bats.





Not to scale

Design and layout


The solar farm will be a landscape design which will take into account existing field boundaries and natural features. Much of the land on the site slopes towards the south, making it an ideal location for solar panels.

The solar farm will be made up of 14,000 photovoltaic solar panels. The panels will have minimal impact on the landscape as ground level as they are less than 1.0 metres in height with no foundations. The panels are only 1.0 metres above the ground.

The four-profile system of the solar farm and additional woodland will help maintain the character of the local landscape including long distance views from public rights of way.

Walking routes

There are several public rights of way through the site and the installation of the solar farm will create new footpaths and different circular walks with information boards about the environmental benefits of solar farms.



Feedback

Next steps:

Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposal. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and a priority response provided. A planning application will be submitted to your local district council and Bradford District Council, when it will be determined by their planning committees later this year.

WICKHAM HALL SOLAR FARM

We are keen to get your feedback on plans for a solar farm at:

FAQ'S

What is a solar farm? +

Who are Endurance Energy? +

Why do we need solar farms? +

Why are you planning the solar farm here? +

Is this site suitable? +

Is the site in the Greenbelt? +

What about the loss of agricultural land? +

If a solar farm is given planning permission, is it classified as a brownfield site where new houses can be built? +

Will I be able to see it? +

Parking +

How long will the solar farm be there for? +

How big are the solar panels? +

Will there be a loss in the biodiversity on the site? +

What about the wildlife on the site? +

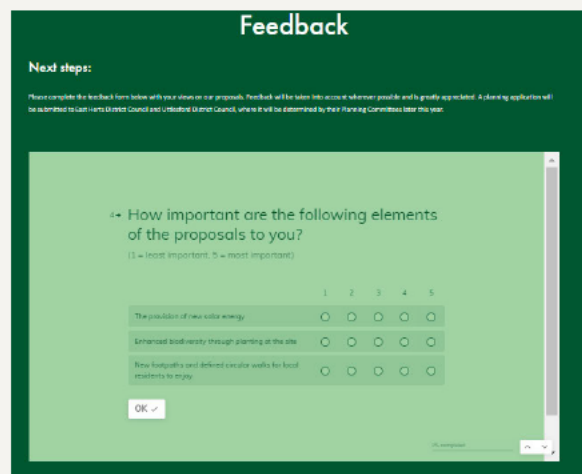
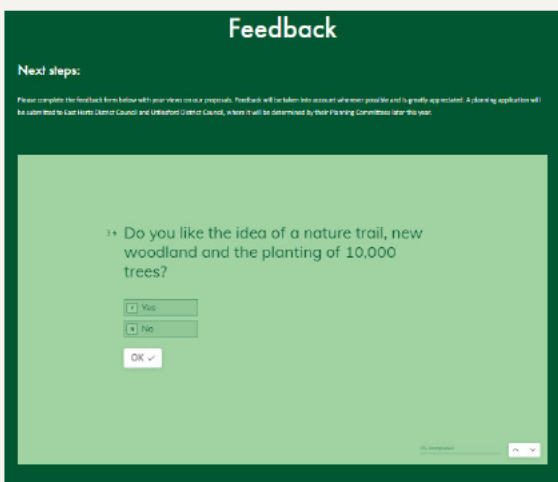
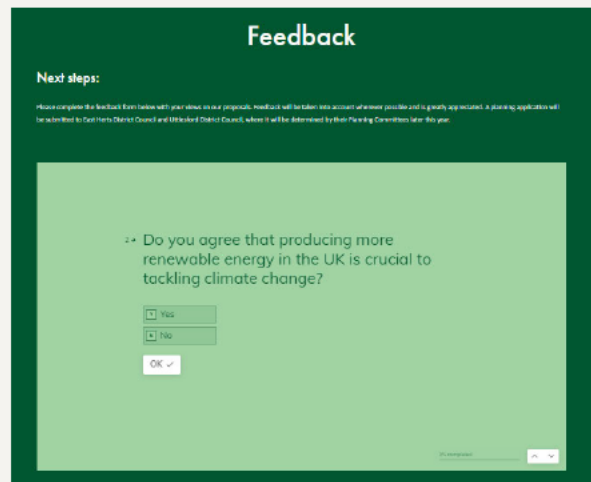
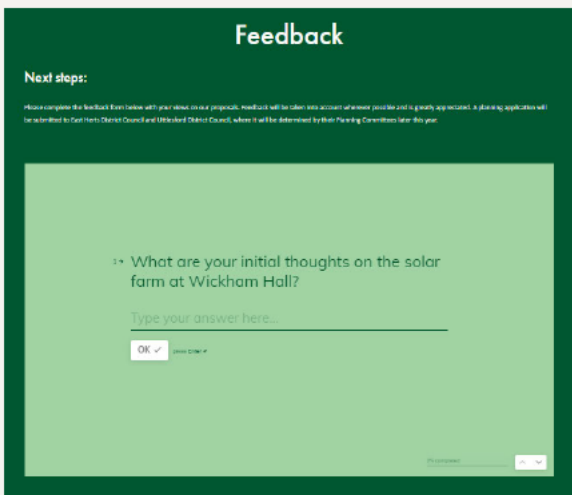
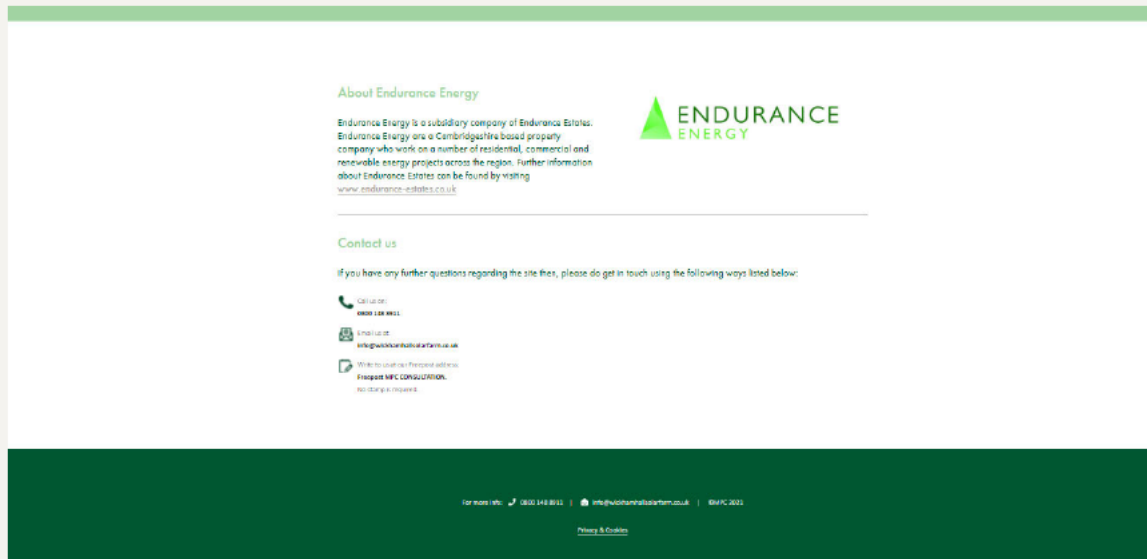
Will the birds be affected? +

Has the project got planning permission? +

Will the project lead to an increase in traffic? +

Will there be reflection/glare off the panels? +

How much electricity will it produce? +



Feedback

Next steps:

Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposals. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and is greatly appreciated. A planning application will be submitted to East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

6* What changes would you suggest to improve the solar farm?

Type your answer here...

OK ✓ Save Answer

Feedback

Next steps:

Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposals. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and is greatly appreciated. A planning application will be submitted to East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

6* Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Type your answer here...

OK ✓ Save Answer

Feedback

Next steps:

Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposals. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and is greatly appreciated. A planning application will be submitted to East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

7* Great. Now for just a few final details. Please provide us with your name *

(Required)

Type your answer here...

OK ✓ Save Answer

Feedback

Next steps:

Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposals. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and is greatly appreciated. A planning application will be submitted to East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

8* Age group? *

(Required)

Under 15

15-25

26-40

41-60

Over 60

OK ✓ Save Answer

Feedback

Next steps:

Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposals. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and is greatly appreciated. A planning application will be submitted to East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

9* Address?

(Optional)

Type your answer here...

OK ✓ Save Answer

Feedback

Next steps:

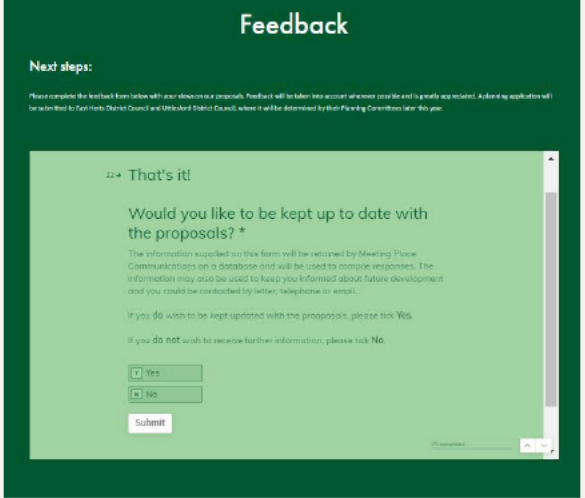
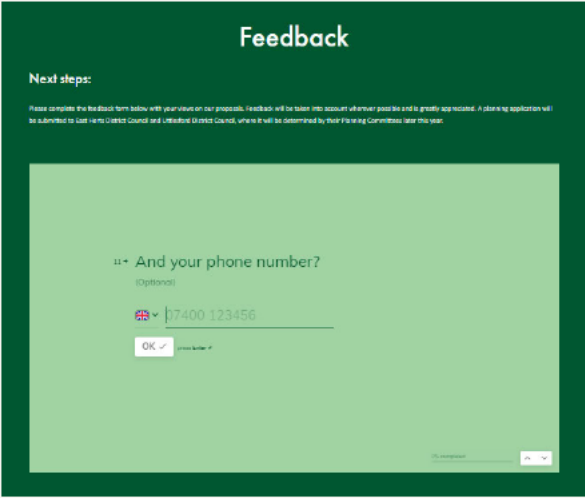
Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposals. Feedback will be taken into account wherever possible and is greatly appreciated. A planning application will be submitted to East Herts District Council and Uttlesford District Council, where it will be determined by their Planning Committees later this year.

10* Email? *

(Required)

name@example.com

OK ✓ Save Answer



Appendix G: Responses from the consultation website

Do you agree that producing more renewable energy in the UK is crucial to tackling climate change?

One one person filled out this question and answered 'yes'.

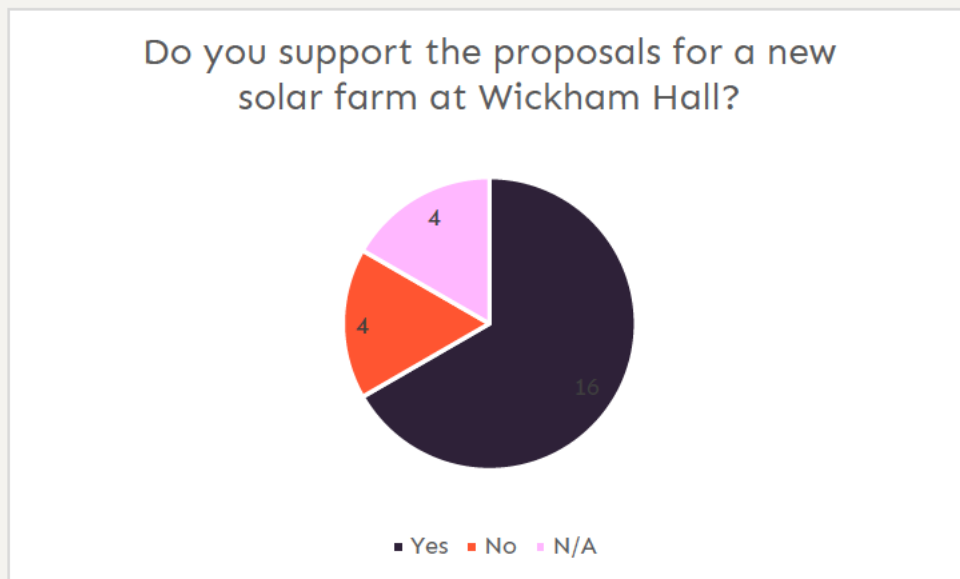
Do you like the idea of new footpaths and defined circular walks with information boards?

Only one person filled out this question and answered 'yes'.

What are your thoughts on the solar farm at Wickham Hall?

Verbatim comments include:

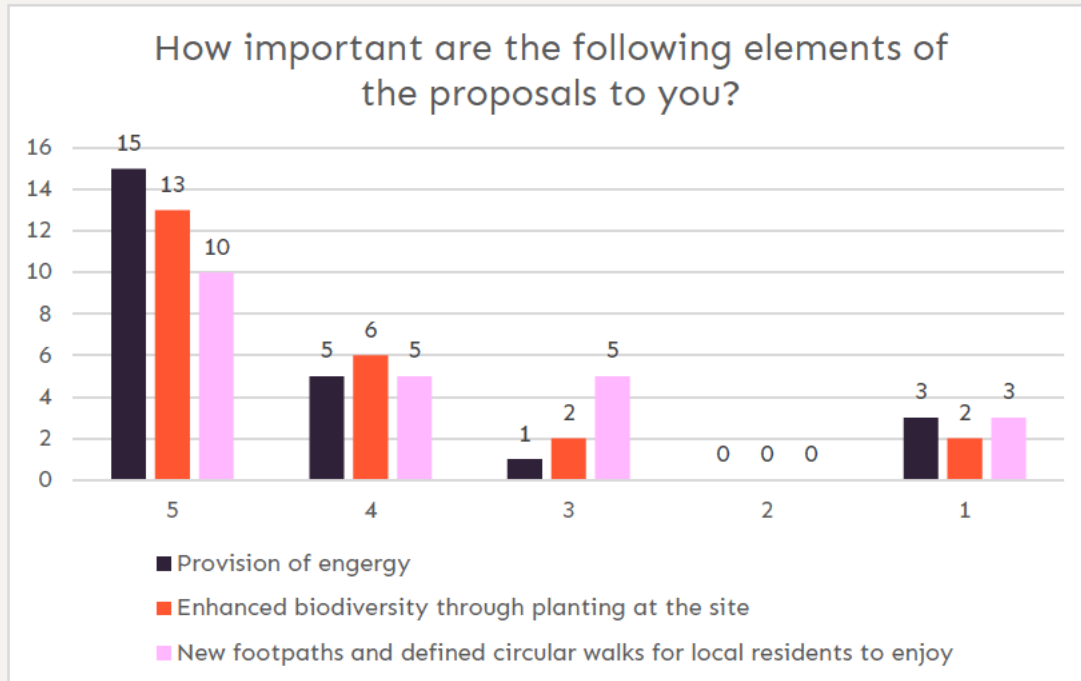
- Fantastic
- Great idea
- I support it
- Great. Can't come soon enough.
- Great idea
- Love the idea
- Fantastic idea
- Brilliant. Absolutely support this.
- Devastated at the destruction of our beautiful countryside. You have destroyed Stortford with uncontrolled building and now you are going to destroy the surrounding countryside and villages to service it.
- Very unhappy. Just purchased a property with a beautiful view over the Ash Valley only to hear of your proposals which will destroy the look of the countryside
- I think it is a great idea and extremely important for the future of our country.
- It's good but worry about the safety
- It is very welcomed.
- Well as a transition to net zero is desperately needed and somewhat rapidly I'd say this is a very good thing
- Brilliant, we need more renewable energy and this land next to main road looks ideal.
- Absolutely appalling. This needs to be rejected on many grounds.
- Not 100% about it here.
- Fantastic idea. With the new bypass being built, it is optimal to build around this road and use the smaller pockets of land for a great cause
- We need renewable energy, so this solar farm would clearly have a positive impact. Giving the local community an opportunity to invest may improve that further (e.g. [REDACTED])
- Happy to see solar energy being more widely implemented. It's important to transition more towards green energy.
- The scale is huge and will have a significant impact on the rural nature of our local environment.
- I think it is brilliant, well thought out and sympathetic to the environment and local neighbours.

Do you support the proposals for a new solar farm at Wickham Hall?**Do you have any further comments on the proposals?**

Verbatim comments include:

- "I would hope that despite having solar panels on the land that it could remain or be designated as green belt land. My only concern would be that in 40 years time it would be thought an ideal plot to put thousands of houses."
- This is a great initiative.
- None that you would want to hear. You would not believe (or probably care about) the tears shed over your 'solar farm' plans here and in Furneux Pelham. There are generations of families here who are utterly devastated.
- No
- N/A
- Great idea
- Replacing our lost meadows is really important. Research shows that solar farms are great for farmland birds. Hope this one doesn't meet the usual Nimby opposition!
- This is not conducive in any way in this location. Far too close to residential properties, in some cases on the boundary of the gardens. Not green, produced in China, emitters noxious chemicals and only produces up to 25 % capacity in a cloudy and rainy country. Te think this proposal and relocate close to motorways.
- Would like regular updates/ news bulletins so we understand what is happening and more importantly when and how.
- Beehives are key as previously mentioned. And the trees you are planning to plant need to be a part of the biodiversity.
- This website is a good idea, as is the meeting this coming Tuesday (16/06)
- No

How important are the following elements of the proposals to you? (1 = least important, 5 = most important)



What changes would you suggest to improve the solar farm?

Verbatim comments include:

- Landscape it so it's difficult to see from the road
- Car park and possibly visitor centre to inform public and even schools of benefits of a project like this. Even something similar to the setup that used to be next to the Stocking Pelham substation years back, our kids went on a school trip there.
- A commitment that the land cannot be used for housing / industrial use after the site is vacated would cement my support. Would also be interested to understand why after 40 years the panels are now renewed/replaced rather than being removed?
- Put it in wild open countryside in Norfolk or Scotland away from our beautiful villages or, better still, on existing buildings or industrial estates.
- I'm not happy with it at all so suggest investing in offshore wind farms for a start
- N/A
- Make sure the safety of farm including any possible radiation and energy crisis away from households. Provide more educational information or opportunities for citizens to get to know more about the fields. Periodic meetings with neighbourhoods are highly recommended
- No changes, but would like to see apprenticeships offered to local students if possible.
- Share the profits with the local community via a community benefit fund. Beehives would also be a great addition.
- Do not do it. Put it on the new A14 away from residents
- As much interaction with the locality as possible, so that we can appreciate the value to the whole community, not just the land owner who has more to gain all round?
- More power
- "Beehives on the sites with the amount of wildflowers you are planning to plant and employ a local beekeeper to maintain. The honey can be sold locally and you're then integrating with the local community much better. I also think large

trees should be planted around the outskirts so that it does not block the view of seeing the panels.

- Educating is key. When the site opens it would be good to engage to local community and explain how the site works with a tour."
- "As mentioned above, give locals an opportunity to invest in the farm.
- In addition to the access paths and sign posting, run regular educational events for schools and the public to understand how solar works and the benefits it brings."
- Not sure
- I can see that in some respects land use as a solar farm might be more beneficial for local ecology than intensive arable agriculture but that says more about local farming practices than solar being a good use of productive agricultural land. It's frustrating to see that a new housing development next door (built on land also owned by the Harveys) includes not a single solar panel as built.
- I hope you are able to make the footpaths out of compacted materials that are suitable for walks in the winter without getting overly muddy for dog walkers who are always looking for good less swampy muddy routes in the winter time.

Appendix H: Feedback responses via social media (personal information redacted)

We need more solar	CM235FA
To support greener ways	CM24 8BL
We need a variety of greener energy sources and every region should play it's part.	CM234HT
It is better and greener than houses!	CM23 4BZ
Clean energy. Houses can't be build on fields that have solar panels on them.	CM23 4DU
I care about climate change	CM23 1HA
It's green, sustainable and help towards ending our reliance for energy on other countries. We need to become self sufficient!	CM23 4DX
We need to do something to help climate change	CM234BW
Needs to be somewhere	CM23 4GF
We need control of our energy	CM22 7AD
We need to invest in renewable energy for the environment	CM23 4GB
It is greener healthier and therefore neceary	CM22 7AB
We need more solar everywhere	Cm21 0at
Climate change. Better uk based energy supply	CM23 1DP
Solar energy is the cleanest energy and greatly needed.	CM23 5HW
We need green energy	CM24 8EA
It's important we have energy security and we have it in a sustainable way.	Cm23 4ez
It's for all	Cm219ln
We need renewable was soon as possible please. This is not a countryside of outstanding beauty and so really is well suited to this. We have a power sub station locally and no vista is without pylons anyway	CM23 2NH
Because we have to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels	CM234FW
It's needed	CM21 9LN
Yes	Cm23 3nl
We need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels by as much as possible.	CM21 9HH
	Cm23 3Ub
I believe we must address climate change as quickly as possible	CB21 6AF
	Cm23 3ql

To move away from oil and gas	CM24 8UX
I think it's very much needed with the current energy crisis. I think green energy is the way forward and support it.	Cm233tr
To help uk stop being dependent on despots for energy supply	CM23 4PA
To provide electricity without a carbon footprint	CM23 4DX
Environment and energy security	CM23 5FH
I don't. These solar panels should be fitted on all the thousands of new houses being built in Bishops Stortford. We should be promoting British food, not taking away much needed farmland.	CM23 4HR
I regularly walk through and drive along the area proposed for the solar farm and wouldn't have the slightest concern about them. I've seen them on the continent and think they even have a certain beauty. They are visible proof that we are doing something to move beyond fossil fuels. I'm sure that hundreds of years ago there were people objecting to building windmills, canals, or draining the fens, things that are treasured today.	CM23 2RA
It's necessary	CM22 6EZ
Because we need to cut carbon emissions	CM24 8JJ
We need to reduce carbon emissions and have local sources of renewable energy	CM24 8TQ
I don't, leave our farm land alone. There must be better ways to have solar farms. Why not use the banks on motorways. We have little enough farmland as it is. I am strongly against this proposal.	CM23 2EB
For the ecological benefits	CM23 2ss
Because it will help climate change	CM23 5AF
Better for the world	SG10 6EP
We need to get away from fossil fuels and time is running out. Solar farms are a lot nicer to look at than a dying planet.	SG10 6BS
We have a climate emergency and this helps address the problems. Taking farmland out of production also helps biodiversity.	CM24 8AN
Renewable energy is vital to combat climate change and we should do everything we can to encourage its use.	CM23 5NQ
To help address climate change	CM23 2NN
	CM23 2HA
	CM22 6ET
We have to embrace more solar farms throughout the UK.	CM23 5RE
Because there is a climate emergency !	Cm23 3tu

Yes	CM23 5QL
Low carbon energy	CB113PJ
Green energy	Cm23 3nx
We need to move away from fossil fuels much quicker than we are	SG10 6BS

Appendix I: Feedback responses from market stall (personal information redacted)

Age	Post Code	Do they support the application?	Comments
41-60	CM23 3SN	Yes	Supportive of this concept with measures taken to deal with the impact on the environment.
26-40	EN11 8FE	Yes	This is a brilliant idea, better for the planet.
26-40	CM23 5LR	Yes	
41-60	CM23 5LR	Yes	
41-60	CM23 2HS	Yes	
Over 60	CM23 5HE	Yes	
	CM22 6NN	Yes	His land. No livestock. Helps community.
26-40	CM23 3TG	Yes	We need more green energy projects. It will look beautiful on the landscape compared to more estates. Great for local wildlife.
Over 60	CM23 3US	Yes	I think we need to have more solar energy.
	CM23 5BL	Yes	
41-60	CM23 2QS	Yes	
41-60	CM23 2AA	Yes	Great plan, good for wildlife and the local area.
41-60	CM23 3GH	Yes	
	CM6 1RG	Yes	
41-60	CM23 5EJ	Yes	
26-40	CM23 4PF		Although in theory I feel this is a fantastic idea, I am disappointed that this is taking more green space and the disruption this will cause. It is a shame this is not house based solar.
Over 60	CM23 4BC	Yes	
Over 60	CM23 4BE	Yes	
Over 60	CM23 3QB	Yes	
41-60	CM23 4AD	Yes	

Appendix J: Market stall materials



Wickham Hall Solar Farm

Bishop's Stortford

Endurance Energy is proposing a renewable energy scheme on land at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishop's Stortford.

Our proposals will help secure future energy production in the UK, reducing our reliance on importing energy from overseas.

With renewables generating 40% of the UK's electricity supply in 2021, there is a desire to see increased production of renewable energy in the UK following soaring prices.

The solar farm is a temporary installation, generating power for 40 years, after which it will be returned to its previous agricultural use.

Solar energy is the lowest cost form of electricity generation in the UK, according to the UK Government's figures.

Generate clean electricity to power 10,000 homes, all year round. That's equal to a town the size of Ware.

The use of battery storage will even out the delivery of energy to the grid, meaning it can export power even when the sun isn't shining.

The solar farm will connect directly to the grid connection point in Bishop's Stortford which is just 1km from the site.



Site location





Our proposals

Helping East Herts District Council respond to the climate emergency they declared in 2019.



35MW of electricity generated, enough to power over 10,000 homes sustainably.



Over 82% net increase in the biodiversity of the land, with wildflower grasslands around the solar arrays.



New footpaths and defined circular walks, with information boards, around the site for local residents to enjoy.



Planting of over 10,000 new trees with a new woodland on the north-western edge and over two kilometres of new hedgerows.



Close proximity to the grid connection point.





Biodiversity

There will be an increase of over 82% in biodiversity on the site.



The arrays of solar panels have minimal impact on the landscape at ground level as they stand no more than 3 metres in height.



The grassland and meadows will provide new habitat for a range of pollinator species including bees and butterflies.



The solar farm is surrounded by mature woodlands, which are known to support locally important bat roosts which will be enhanced through new native hedgerow and woodland planting.

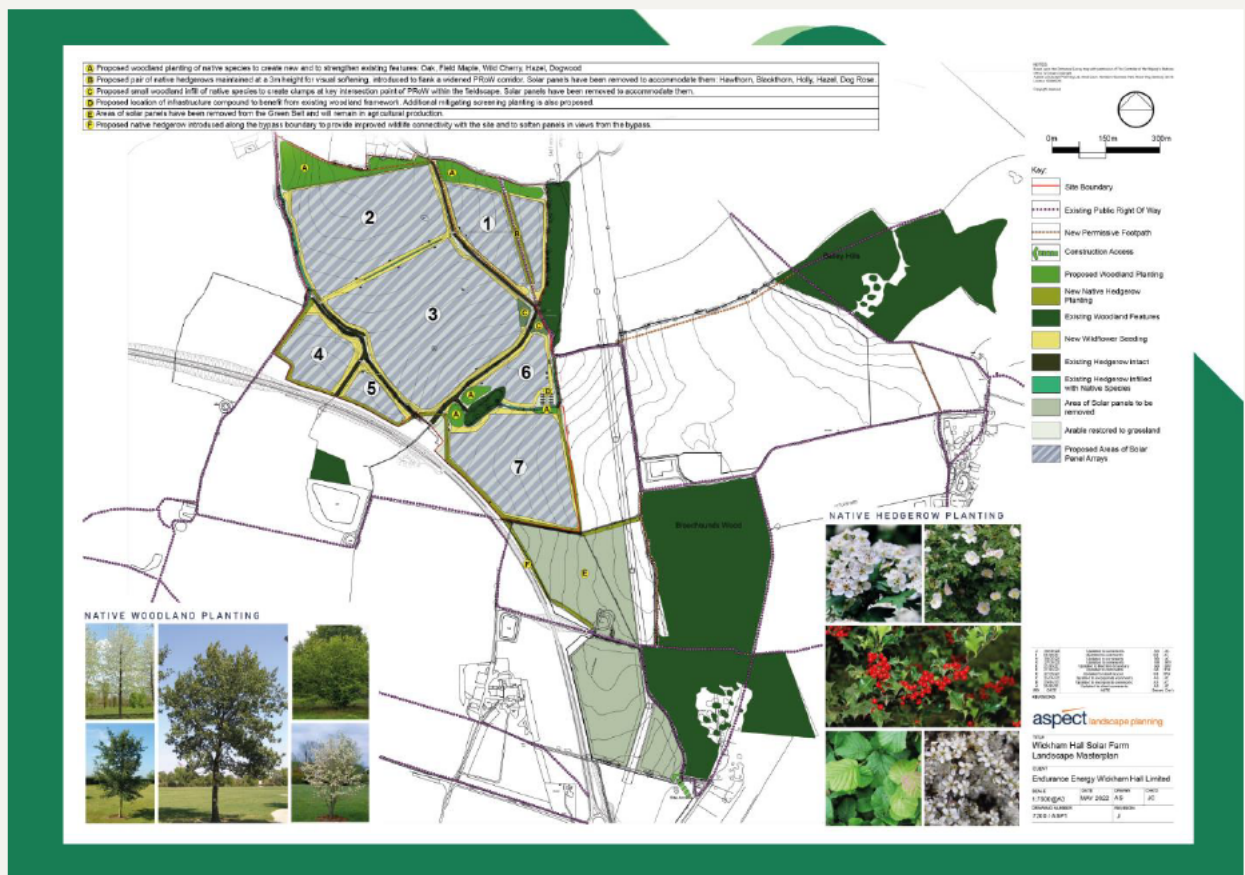


Grassland and wildflower meadows will be managed carefully around the solar panels to enhance biodiversity, including through the use of livestock grazing.



A range of animal species including bats, badgers, deer, and farmland birds make use of the surrounding landscape, which will be enhanced by the extensive habitat creation.





Wickham Hall Solar



June 2022

Proposals for a solar farm on land at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishop's Stortford

Application Ref: 3/21/2601/FUL

Name: _____

Age: Under 15 15 to 25 26 to 40 41 to 60 Over 60

Address: _____ Telephone: _____

Postcode: _____

Email address: _____

I support this application


Comments

This information is being collected on behalf of Endurance Energy and will be shared with the project team and East Herts and Uttlesford District Council. All responses will be anonymised before being shared, securely stored and destroyed at the end of the project. For further information on how we hold and use any data you provide and your rights under General Data Protection Regulations, please visit www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Appendix K: Schools worksheet



Wickham Hall Solar Farm
Information boards - school task



As you will be aware, Endurance Energy Wickham Hall Limited submitted plans for a new solar farm on the edge of Bishop's Stortford on land at Wickham Hall. The application features proposals for a temporary solar installation that will present a key number of benefits to the local area and the wider community, including:

- Generating enough electricity to provide power for over 15,000 homes, the same number of homes as half of Bishop's Stortford or the whole of Saffron Walden or Hertford.
- The planting of 10,000 new trees on the site.
- A 47% net increase in biodiversity to the land and 35% to the hedgerows, with wildflower grasslands around the solar arrays.
- The protection of local public rights of way and the addition of new permissive paths and bridleways, to be enjoyed by the local community including the creation of new circular walking routes.
- Endurance Energy are committed to promoting green energy in the wider community by installing information boards along the circular walking routes to explain the environmental benefits of solar energy.

In an effort to help educate local children on the benefits of renewable energy and the biodiversity found across the site, we are currently taking to a number of schools who might be interested in future visits to Wickham Hall. These visits would look to incorporate a walk around the new solar farm to learn about how renewable energy is produced, as well as understanding more about ecology, habitats and wildlife.

This will be aided by information boards which will be found along the walking routes. We wish to ensure that the content is interesting and engaging and to engage with children of all ages whilst the boards are being designed.

We would be grateful if your students could review the information in the following pages and provide their thoughts on how the information could be worded along with illustrations. This will allow us to review the different responses so that views from across local primary and secondary schools can be included.

Board 1

Climate change

Carbon dioxide levels have increased by about 45% since before the industrial revolution according to Government scientists. Evidence shows that this increase in greenhouse gases is almost entirely due to human activity.


The UK Government has pledged to achieve net zero carbon by 2050. As fossil fuels are phased out, demand for low-carbon electricity generation is set to increase significantly. Maximising the proportion of power generated from renewable sources is essential in tackling climate change.

One of the main contributors to greenhouse gases arises from the burning of fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) for energy. Therefore, one of the key steps towards achieving the net zero is to remove greenhouse gases from energy generation.

This solar farm is helping to hit the targets set by the UK Government and local councils, contributing towards a zero-carbon future for us all.


Did you know? When comparing the cost of energy from new power plants, onshore solar such as here at Wickham Hall are the cheapest source to produce electricity, costing less than gas, geothermal, coal, or nuclear.

How would you word the information above?
Is there anything else you would like to see explained on this board?
What image should be on here to help bring it to life?



Board 2

How does solar power work?



Solar panels are made out of photovoltaic cells (which is why generating electricity with solar panels is often called solar PV), when light hits these cells, an electric current is created.

The greater the intensity of light, the greater amount of electricity created. Once the electricity is created, it passes through an inverter to convert from direct current (DC) into alternating currents (AC) which is the form of electricity used by the National Grid.

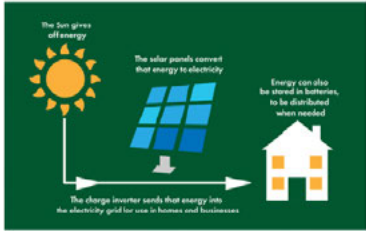
The electricity that is produced is either sent via a cable connecting the solar farm to the National Grid Sub Station at Bishop's Stortford or it is stored in one of the battery storage units until it is needed.



The output of solar cells is measured in terms of the amount of energy they generate in full sunlight and is known as kilowatt peak or kWp. The output of a solar farm is usually measured in megawatts (MW), with the proposed output of Wickham Hall Solar Farm being 49.9MW.

The site is especially suitable for a solar development due to it being just one kilometre from the Bishop's Stortford sub-station, which has the connection capacity to receive additional supplies of electricity. Such close proximity between a sub-station is a built-up area and a viable site for solar power generation is rarely available, with only a small proportion of sub-stations being able to accept new supplies.

Did you know? Even when there are low levels of light, the solar farm will still be able to generate electricity.

How would you word the information above?
Is there anything else you would like to see explained on this board?
What image should be on here to help bring it to life?
Does the diagram make sense, or does it need to be changed?



Board 3
Solar at Wickham Hall

The agricultural land and landscape where the solar farm is located has already been altered by the construction of the A120 Little Hadham bypass and link roads, creating several small, irregular shaped fields with reduced access.

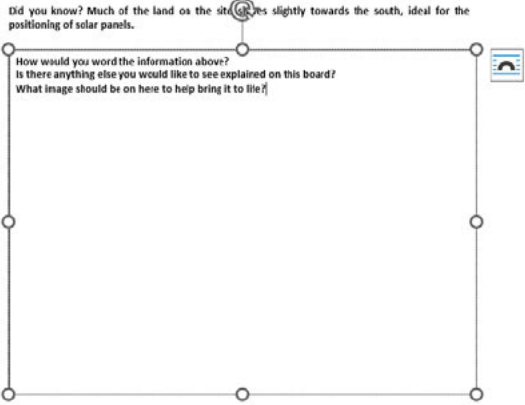
However, this land is suitable for the placement of solar panels and the design of the site has been landscape led, taking into account existing field boundaries and natural features, in order to minimise the impact on the landscape.


The solar farm is made up of 14,000 photovoltaic solar panels alongside inverters, transformers and facilities for battery storage of generated electricity.

The arrays of solar panels have minimal impact on the landscape at ground level as they stand no more than 3 metres in height. They have no foundations as the frames are simply driven 1.5 metres into the ground, disturbing a small proportion of the soil.

Did you know? Much of the land on the site is slightly towards the south, ideal for the positioning of solar panels.

How would you word the information above?
Is there anything else you would like to see explained on this board?
What image/s should be on here to help bring it to life?






Board 4
Biodiversity and wildlife

There will be a 47% net increase in the biodiversity value of the land and an over 30% net increase in the biodiversity value of the hedgerows, as measured using Government approved methods.

Wildflower meadows are around the solar arrays, providing habitat for a range of pollinator species, and bird and bat boxes have been installed throughout the site.

We have also planted over 16,000 trees within new woodland areas to the north of the site and over two kilometres of new native hedgerow along the western boundary with the new A120 bypass.

Did you know? Sheep help to keep the wildflowers maintained around the solar panels rather than using a lawnmower.

How would you word the information above?
Is there anything else you would like to see explained on this board?
What image/s should be on here to help bring it to life?




Board 5
Wildlife

A range of animal species including bats, great crested newts, badgers, deer, and farmland birds make use of the surrounding landscape, which have been enhanced by the extensive habitat creation and positive ecological management.



Ponds within the site and adjacent Bloodhound's Wood are managed, in line with specialist advice, to increase their suitability for great crested newts, which also benefits a range of invertebrate and bird life.

The solar farm is surrounded by mature woodlands, which are known to support locally important bat roosts. The presence of these protected species has underpinned the proposals, and great care has been taken to ensure bats can continue to thrive alongside the solar arrays. Habitat connectivity for bats has been enhanced through a combination of new native hedgerow and woodland planting.

The fence is here to ensure deer do not cause damage to themselves or the equipment. It has minimal impact on distant views and other wildlife such as rabbits, stoats, small mammals and newts.

Did you know? Bats are the only true flying mammals in the world.

How would you word the information above?
Is there anything else you would like to see explained on this board?
What image/s should be on here to help bring it to life?

Board 6
What happens next?

The solar farm has a lifetime of 40 years. Once the solar farm has reached the end of its life span, it can be easily removed with the land being returned to agriculture.

Once a solar farm has reached the end of its term, nearly all the materials can easily be repurposed or recycled. The panels are constructed almost entirely from aluminium, glass and silicon. At the end of the project, the panels can be re-used elsewhere or dismantled into components for recycling with 95% of glass and 100% of metal being reused. In addition, around 80% of the solar cell modules can be reused.

The silicon wafers are etched away and smelted into reusable slabs, and with around 85% of this silicon repurposed for new solar panels.

This contrasts with other forms of electricity generation which place much greater demand on staff to maintain, repair and manage their operation. Now that it is installed, the benefits of zero carbon energy are therefore maximised.

Thank you for visiting today, we look forward to seeing you again soon.

Did you know? After 40 years, the land will be returned to how it was before and it will look like the solar panels were never here!

How would you word the information above?
Is there anything else you would like to see explained on this board?
What image/s should be on here to help bring it to life?

Appendix L: Updated project website

ENDURANCE ENERGY

Proposals How solar works FAQ's About us Feedback Contact us

Wickham Hall Solar

New solar farm at Wickham Hall Estate,
Bishop's Stortford

Proposals

35MW of electricity generated, enough to power over 10,000 homes sustainably

Over 82% net increase in the biodiversity of the land, with wildflower grasslands around the solar arrays

Close proximity to the National Grid connection point

Planting of over 10,000 new trees with a new woodland on the north-western edge and over a kilometre of new hedgerows

New footpaths and defined circular walks, with information boards, around the site for local residents to enjoy

Increasing the proportion of power generated through renewable energy is key to tackling climate change, with the UK Government pledging to achieve net zero carbon by 2050.

The site falls under the jurisdiction of East Herts District Council who declared a climate emergency in 2019.

Endurance Energy has undertaken a thorough programme of pre-application community consultation with the local community. We have consulted with residents neighbouring the development site and local stakeholders which has been informed from the guidance set out in East Herts District Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Meetings were held with key stakeholders to further understand their thoughts on the proposals and to have their questions answered by the project team. These conversations were productive and useful, with their feedback contributing to the overall design of the scheme.

Feedback from local residents at Bishop's Stortford market – June 2022



Consultation

Almost 1,800 households and businesses received a newsletter inviting them to visit the consultation website and provide feedback. Residents were also encouraged to sign up to an online presentation that displayed the proposals and provided an opportunity for residents to raise their questions directly with the project team.

This dedicated project consultation website has enabled members of the local community to submit feedback throughout the design process.

After reviewing the feedback, over 63% of those who responded to the consultation process support the proposals for a new solar farm on land at Wickham Hall.

This is an extremely high level of support for a planning application and shows both the appetite for the scheme to come forward as well as the positive feeling towards a renewable energy scheme of this kind.

This is backed up by a number of comments submitted by members of the public which included "I think it is brilliant, well thought out and sympathetic to the environment and local neighbours," and "No doubt there will be some NIMBYs but this is in our backyard and we would be proud that our area is contributing to such an essential cause. Fully support. Love the footpath and information boards as well as will be educated and interesting"

residents and visitors to Bishop's Stortford market about the proposals and the recent changes made to the plans.

95% of those who completed a form at the market stall were supportive of the plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall.



Market Stall, June 2022



Market Stall, June 2022

Endurance Energy has actively undertaken consultation with the local community and will continue to update local residents, key community groups and stakeholders on the progress of the application.

- [Click here to download our latest newsletter](#)
- [Click here if you would like further information and want to get in touch](#)
- [Click here to fill out our feedback form](#)

What has changed since last year?

A planning application was submitted to East Herts District Council in late 2021.

Following discussions with planning officers and reviewing feedback from stakeholders, we have revised our application in East Hertfordshire by removing the site from the green belt entirely, increasing the amount of hedgerow and woodland screening, and increasing the level of biodiversity benefits.

The proposed solar farm will have a capacity of 35MW, generating enough electricity to power over 10,000 homes on an annual basis.

In addition to this, all of the associated infrastructure has been moved into East Hertfordshire and a revised temporary construction access has been provided.

Additional hedge planting, tree planting and an improved native grassland and wildflower planting mix have been proposed, in direct response to queries from the local community. This has led to an increase in the Biodiversity Net Gain to 82%.



Why here?

The site at Wickham Hall is highly suitable for a solar farm, being just 1 kilometre away from the National Grid's Bishop's Stortford sub-station, which has the connection capacity to receive additional supplies of electricity. Such close proximity between a sub-station in a built-up area and a viable site for solar power generation is rarely available.

Due to the construction of the Little Hadham A120 bypass, a number of the fields have been turned into irregular shapes which reduces farming efficiency. However, these small fields can be used effectively to house solar panels.

Once the solar farm has reached its life span, it can be easily removed with the land being returned to agricultural use.



Location of the site and point of connection



Climate change

With the UK government's recent announcement of a Green Industrial Revolution, the UK has targets to increase the proportion of power generated through renewable electricity to meet our ambitious climate targets and achieve carbon net zero. As we continue to switch from fossil fuels for transport and heating, it is imperative that we increase the generation of clean, zero carbon electricity, in order to help deliver the significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to which the UK has committed.

This solar farm will contribute towards a zero-carbon future for us all, and importantly help East Herts District Council meet their 2030 carbon neutral targets.

Biodiversity

The land for the proposed solar farm is currently used to produce arable crops. Whilst the solar farm is operational, the soil will be rested. The land will be used for renewable energy generation for 40 years, whilst providing new habitats for wildlife on the site, before being returned to its original agricultural use.

There will be an over 82% net increase in the biodiversity of the land. This is through creating wildflower grasslands around the solar panels which will help restore the agricultural land, new woodland and hedgerow planting, increasing diversity of wildlife habitats on the site.



Site plan

[Download the detailed site plan in PDF format](#)

Design and layout

The solar farm is driven by a landscape led design which will take into account existing field boundaries and natural features. Much of the land on the site slopes towards the south, making it an ideal location for solar panels.

The panels will have minimal impact on the landscape at ground level as they are around 3 metres in height with no foundations. The frames are simply driven 1.5 metres into the ground.

The low-profile nature of the solar farm and additional woodland will help maintain the character of the local landscape including long distance views from public rights of way.

Concerns over the impact of the proposals have been considered and the revised scheme in East Herts does not have any infrastructure within the green belt.

Walking routes

There are several public rights of way through the Wickham Hall Estate and the installation of the solar farm will create new footpaths and defined circular walks with information boards showing the environmental benefits of solar farms.



FAQ'S

What is a solar farm? +

Who is Endurance Energy? +

Why do we need solar farms? +

Why are you planning the solar farm here? +

Is this site suitable? +

Is the site in the Greenbelt? +

What about the loss of agricultural land? +

If a solar farm is given planning permission, is it classified as a brownfield site where new houses can be built? +

Will I be able to see it? +

How long will the solar farm be there for? +

How big are the solar panels? +

Will there be a loss in the biodiversity on the site? +

Has the project got planning permission? +

Will the project lead to an increase in traffic? +

Will there be reflection/glare off the panels? +

How much electricity will it produce? +

Is there a risk of flooding on site? +

Will the site be fenced? +

What happens after the 40-year lifespan? +

What happens to the solar panels after 40 years? +

Will there be any noise created by the solar farm? +

Rather than solar farms on fields, why can't solar panels be installed on building rooftops and brownfield land instead? +

What happened to the planning application made to Uttlesford District Council? +



What about the wildlife on the site? +

Will the bats be affected? +

How Solar works

Solar panels are made out of photovoltaic cells, when light hits these cells an electric current is created.

The greater the intensity of light, the greater amount of electricity created. Once the electricity is created, it passes through an inverter to convert into alternating currents (AV) which is the form of electricity used by the National Grid.

Solar uses daylight (not just direct sunlight) to generate electricity. The electricity is generated as Direct Current (DC) which is converted to Alternating Current (AC) before being exported to the grid to be utilised by homes and businesses. Even when there are low levels of light, the solar farm will still be able to generate electricity.

The Sun gives us energy

The solar panels convert that energy to electricity

Energy can also be stored in batteries to be distributed when needed

The charge inverter sends that energy into



Feedback

Next steps:

Although the planning application has been submitted, we are still keen to hear your views. Please complete the feedback form below with your views on our proposals and any questions you may have.

Wickham Hall Solar

We are keen to get your feedback on plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishop's Stortford. All comments received will be reviewed carefully and will be incorporated wherever possible.


Please fill in this feedback form with as much or as little details as you like to include.

[Give feedback](#)

About Endurance Energy

Endurance Energy is a sister company of Endurance Estates, an established property company with offices in Cambridge, Birmingham and London.

Endurance work on a range of residential, commercial and renewable energy projects across the region. Further information about Endurance Estates can be found by visiting www.endurance-estates.co.uk



Contact us

If you have any further questions regarding the site then, please do get in touch using the following ways listed below:

Call us on [0800 148 8911](tel:08001488911)

Email us at info@wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Write to us at: Freepost, MPC CONSULTATION (no stamp required)

For more info: [0800 148 8911](tel:08001488911) | info@wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk | ©MPC 2021

[Privacy & Cookies](#)

Appendix M: Community newsletter, February 2024



February 2024

Wickham Hall Solar Farm

A 14.9 megawatt (MW) solar farm near Bishop's Stortford.

Please scan the QR code to view our project website
www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk



Dear resident,

You may recall that due to the proposals crossing the authority boundary, the original plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall were made up of two planning applications: one to East Herts District Council and the other to Uttlesford District Council.

The East Herts application for a new 35MW solar farm, 10,000 new trees (including a woodland) and over 2km of new hedgerow was approved in January 2023.








Unfortunately, the Uttlesford application was refused in April 2022. Since the refusal, Endurance Energy has revised the scheme, specifically via a reduction in scale of the proposed development, enhanced woodland planting proposed to the south of the site and a further 2km of hedgerow screening of rights of way and other biodiversity enhancements.

This newsletter update provides further information about the revised proposals ahead of the submission of a new planning application to the Secretary of State.


You can contact the project team using the details provided on the back page.



Benefits of the proposals

-  14.9MW of electricity generated, enough to power over 4,000 homes on an annual basis, sustainably.
-  Over 216.46% net increase in the biodiversity of the land, with wildflower grasslands around the solar arrays and a 96.57% increase in the biodiversity of the hedgerows.
-  Planting of over 5,000 new trees to create a new community woodland and a habitat linkage between the two existing areas of woodland.
-  A new hedgerow around the whole perimeter of the site - approximately 2.4km in length.
-  Close proximity to the grid connection point in Bishop's Stortford.
-  Responding to the climate and ecological emergencies declared by Uttlesford District Council in 2019.
-  New footpaths and defined circular walks, with information boards around the site for local residents to enjoy.

Wickham Hall Solar Farm



Biodiversity and climate change

The solar farm will contribute towards the UK's progression to a zero-carbon future as well as help address the climate and ecological emergencies declared by Uttlesford District Council.

There will be an increase of over 216.46% in biodiversity on the site, as measured using Government-approved methods.

Wildflower meadows would be sown and maintained around the solar arrays, providing habitat for a range of pollinator species, and bird and bat boxes would be installed throughout the site. The plans will also include the planting of 5,000 trees, including a new woodland area and over two kilometres of new native hedgerow.

Whilst the solar installation is operational, the soil will be rested. Wickham Hall Solar Farm will be in operation for 40 years and in this time, it will increase the level of biodiversity on the site before it is returned to agricultural use.



Design

The proposals have been driven by a landscape led design which takes into account existing field boundaries and natural features, in order to minimise the impact on the landscape.

The agricultural land and landscape to be temporarily used for the solar farm has already been altered by the existing pylons, the construction of the recently opened A120 Little Hadham bypass and link roads, creating several small, irregular shaped fields with reduced access. However, this land is suitable for the placement of solar panels.

Much of the land on the site slopes slightly towards the south, ideal for the positioning of solar panels. The arrays of solar panels have minimal impact on the landscape at ground level as they stand no more than 3 metres in height. They have no foundations as the frames are simply driven 1.5 meters into the ground, disturbing a small proportion of the soil.



February 2024



Site masterplan



Location

Endurance Energy has identified a suitable site for solar power generation at Wickham Hall, on the edge of Bishop's Stortford and have brought forward proposals for the installation of a 14.9MW solar farm.

The site is especially suitable for a solar development due to it being just one kilometre from the Bishop's Stortford sub-station, which has the connection capacity to receive additional supplies of electricity, and serves the local area, meaning that the electricity generated will be consumed in local households and businesses. Only a small proportion of sub-stations are able to accept new supplies of electricity, meaning those with capacity should be utilised in full.



Walking routes

There are several public rights of way across the Wickham Hall Estate and these will be unchanged by these proposals. The solar farm proposals will create an additional two kilometres of footpaths for the community to enjoy.

New defined circular walks will be established with information boards showing the environmental benefits of solar farms and the wildlife to be seen. The low-profile nature of solar farms and the additional woodland to be planted will help maintain the countryside character of this landscape.

Wickham Hall Solar Farm

February 2024

Community consultation

Endurance Energy has undertaken a thorough programme of community engagement about a solar farm at Wickham Hall since 2021.

- 1,768 newsletters mailed to local addresses
- Online webinar
- 100+ pieces of feedback received during the pre-application consultation period
- Over 63% of those who responded to the public consultation supported the proposals
- 200 letters of support were sent for the East Herts application
- 95% of those who completed a form at the market stall were supportive of the plans

Comments from the consultation submitted by members of the public included "I think it is brilliant, well thought out and sympathetic to the environment and local neighbours." and "No doubt there will be some NIMBYs but this is in our backyard and we would be proud that our area is contributing to such an essential cause. Fully support. Love the footpath and information boards as well as will be educated and interesting."

Market stall

In June 2022, members of the project team spoke to residents and visitors to Bishop's Stortford market at a prominent pitch along South Street.

A videographer was present and interviewed visitors to the stall about their views on solar farms as well as the proposals. A video of the interviews can be found at:

www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Working with local schools

Endurance Energy has engaged with primary and secondary schools about the information boards.

Local schools will be invited to use the solar farm as an outdoor classroom which has proved popular at other solar farms across the country. As a backdrop to lessons on renewable energy, climate change and biodiversity, solar farms are proving popular with teachers and students alike.

Next steps

A planning application is currently being prepared and will be submitted shortly. The Government issued Uttlesford District Council with a Section 62A notice, meaning that planning applications can now be submitted directly to the Secretary of State. Endurance Energy will submit their application directly to the Secretary of State.

About Endurance Energy

Endurance Energy is a sister company of Endurance Estates, an established property company with offices in Cambridge, Birmingham and London. Endurance work on a range of residential, commercial and renewable energy projects across the region.



How to get in touch

Visit: www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Email: info@wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Write: Freepost MEETING PLACE CONSULTATION
(No stamp required)

Freephone: 0800 148 8911
(9am - 5pm, Monday - Friday)



Appendix N: Website update, February 2024



Proposals
How solar works
FAQ's
Resources
Feedback
About us
Contact us



Wickham Hall Solar

New solar farm at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishop's Stortford

Endurance Energy is bringing forward a planning application for a solar farm at Wickham Hall Estate, Bishop's Stortford.

You may recall that due to the proposals crossing the authority boundary, the original plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall were made up of two planning applications: one to East Herts District Council and the other to Uttlesford District Council.

The East Herts application for a new 35MW solar farm, 10,000 new trees (including a woodland) and over 2km of new hedgerow was approved in January 2023.

Unfortunately, the Uttlesford application was refused in April 2022. Since the refusal, Endurance Energy has revised the scheme, specifically via a reduction in scale of the proposed development, enhanced woodland planting proposed to the south of the site and a further 2km of hedgerow screening of rights of way and other biodiversity enhancements.

A planning application is currently being prepared and will be submitted shortly. The Government issued Uttlesford District Council with a Section 62A notice, meaning that planning applications can now be submitted directly to the Secretary of State. Endurance Energy will submit their application directly to the Secretary of State.

Proposals for the Uttlesford application



14.9MW of electricity generated, enough to power over 4,000 homes on an annual basis, sustainably.



Over 216.46% net increase in the biodiversity of the land, with wildflower grasslands around the solar arrays and a 96.57% increase in the biodiversity of the hedgerows.



Planting of over 5,000 new trees to create a new community woodland and a habitat linkage between the two existing areas of woodland.



A new hedgerow around the whole perimeter of the site – approximately 2.4km in length.



Close proximity to the grid connection point in Bishop's Stortford.



Responding to the climate and ecological emergencies declared by Uttlesford District Council in 2019.



New footpaths and defined circular walks, with information boards around the site for local residents to enjoy.



Increasing the proportion of power generated through renewable energy is key to tackling climate change, with the UK Government pledging to achieve net zero carbon by 2050.

The site falls under the jurisdiction of Uttlesford District Council who declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019.

Endurance Energy has undertaken a thorough programme of community consultation with the local community since 2021.

Feedback from local residents at Bishop's Stortford market – June 2022



Consultation

Almost 1,800 households and businesses received a newsletter inviting them to visit the consultation website and provide feedback. Residents were also encouraged to sign up to an online presentation that displayed the proposals and provided an opportunity for residents to raise their questions directly with the project team.

This dedicated project consultation website has enabled members of the local community to submit feedback throughout the design process.

After reviewing the feedback, over 63% of those who responded to the consultation process support the proposals for a new solar farm on land at Wickham Hall.

This is an extremely high level of support for a planning application and shows both the appetite for the scheme to come forward as well as the positive feeling towards a renewable energy scheme of this kind.

This is backed up by a number of comments submitted by members of the public which included -

"I think it is brilliant, well thought out and sympathetic to the environment and local neighbours."

and -

"No doubt there will be some NIMBYs but this is in our backyard and we would be proud that our area is contributing to such an essential cause. Fully support. Love the footpath and information boards as well as will be educated and interesting."

In June 2022, members of the project team spoke to residents and visitors to Bishop's Stortford market about the proposals and the recent changes made to the plans.

95% of those who completed a form at the market stall were supportive of the plans for a solar farm at Wickham Hall.



Market Stall, June 2022



Market Stall, June 2022

Key changes made to the scheme from the previously refused Uttlesford application

Endurance Energy has actively undertaken consultation with the local community and this feedback from all consultation undertaken since 2021 has helped to shape the proposals for the new Uttlesford application. Key change made to the scheme include:

- The site was originally 35.77 ha but this has now reduced to 33.68ha, including all access roads and cable routes.
- We have reduced the number of solar panels and inverters/transformers.
- Construction access will be via land in the part of the site which was approved by East Herts in January 2023, not via Jazz Street as originally proposed.
- Introduction of new 30m wide broadleaf woodland belt comprising 1.717 ha.
- New boundary native hedgerow.
- A new multi-functional wildlife area, including numerous habitats such as wetland, wildflower meadow.
- Scrub planting (1.104ha)
- Bolstering of boundary hedgerows to be managed to a height of 3m.
- Foraging/nesting areas for skylarks.

We will continue to update local residents, key community groups and stakeholders on the progress of the application.

[Click here if you would like further information and want to get in touch](#)



Why here?

Location

Endurance Energy has identified a suitable site for solar power generation at Wickham Hall, on the edge of Bishop's Stortford and have brought forward proposals for the installation of a 14.9MW solar farm.

The site is especially suitable for a solar development due to it being just one kilometre from the Bishop's Stortford sub-station, which has the connection capacity to receive additional supplies of electricity, and serves the local area, meaning that the electricity generated will be consumed in local households and businesses. Only a small proportion of sub-stations are able to accept new supplies of electricity, meaning those with capacity should be utilised in full.



Location of the site and point of connection - [click for larger view](#)



Climate change

With the UK government's recent announcement of a Green Industrial Revolution, the UK has targets to increase the proportion of power generated through renewable electricity to meet our ambitious climate targets and achieve carbon net zero. As we continue to switch from fossil fuels for transport and heating, it is imperative that we increase the generation of clean, zero carbon electricity, in order to help deliver the significant reductions in greenhouse gas emissions to which the UK has committed.

This solar farm will contribute towards a zero-carbon future for us all, and importantly help Uttlesford District Council meet their 2030 carbon neutral targets.

Biodiversity and climate change

The solar farm will contribute towards the UK's progression to a zero-carbon future as well as help address the climate and ecological emergencies declared by Uttlesford District Council.

There will be an increase of over 216.46% in biodiversity on the



site, as measured using Government-approved methods.

Wildflower meadows would be sown and maintained around the solar arrays, providing habitat for a range of pollinator species, and bird and bat boxes would be installed throughout the site. The plans will also include the planting of 5,000 trees, including a new woodland area and over two kilometres of new native hedgerow.

Whilst the solar installation is operational, the soil will be rested. Wickham Hall Solar Farm will be in operation for 40 years and in this time, it will increase the level of biodiversity on the site before it is returned to agricultural use.



Site plan - [click for larger view](#)

[Download the detailed site plan in PDF format](#)

Design and layout

The proposals have been driven by a landscape led design which takes into account existing field boundaries and natural features, in order to minimise the impact on the landscape.

The agricultural land and landscape to be temporarily used for the solar farm has already been altered by the existing pylons, the construction of the recently opened A120 Little Hadham bypass and link roads, creating several small, irregular shaped fields with reduced access. However, this land is suitable for the placement of solar panels.

Much of the land on the site slopes slightly towards the south, ideal for the positioning of solar panels. The arrays of solar panels have minimal impact on the landscape at ground level as they stand no more than 3 metres in height. They have no foundations as the frames are simply driven 1.5 meters into the ground, disturbing a small proportion of the soil.



Walking routes

There are several public rights of way across the Wickham Hall Estate and these will be unchanged by these proposals. The solar farm proposals will create an additional two kilometres of footpaths for the community to enjoy.

New defined circular walks will be established with information boards showing the environmental benefits of solar farms and the wildlife to be seen. The low-profile nature of solar farms and the additional woodland to be planted will help maintain the countryside character of this landscape.





Working with local schools

Endurance Energy has engaged with primary and secondary schools about the information boards.

Local schools will be invited to use the solar farm as an outdoor classroom which has proved popular at other solar farms across the country. As a backdrop to lessons on renewable energy, climate change and biodiversity, solar farms are proving popular with teachers and students alike.

FAQ'S

What is a solar farm? +

Will the bats be affected? +

Who is Endurance Energy? +

Has the project got planning permission? +



Why do we need solar farms? +

Will the project lead to an increase in traffic? +

Why are you planning the solar farm here? +

Will there be reflection/glare off the panels? +

Is this site suitable? +

Is there a risk of flooding on site? +

What about the loss of agricultural land? +

Will the site be fenced? +

If a solar farm is given planning permission, is it classified as a brownfield site where new houses can be built? +

What happens after the 40-year lifespan? +

What happens to the solar panels after 40 years? +

Will I be able to see it? +

Will there be any noise created by the solar farm? +

How long will the solar farm be there for? +

How big are the solar panels? +

Rather than solar farms on fields, why can't solar panels be installed on building rooftops and brownfield land instead? +

Will there be a loss in the biodiversity on the site? +

What about the wildlife on the site? +



Solar Energy Facts

Are solar farms good for nature?

Certainly. Solar farms provide benefits such as improving local biodiversity by supporting new and existing plant and animal life. Ecologists have found that solar farms can deliver biodiversity net gains of 20% to over 100%.

#SolarEnergyFacts

Does land used for solar farms reduce food security?

No. Solar farms provide valuable income for farmers, they can still be used for grazing, and can support UK farmers to continue food production on other parts of their land. Some developers consider growing produce under or alongside solar panels.

#SolarEnergyFacts

How much space do solar farms take up?

Very little. Even under 2050 Net-Zero targets, solar farms would occupy 0.5% of the UK's land - much less than what is currently used by golf courses.

#SolarEnergyFacts

Are solar parks built with the landscape in mind?

Absolutely. Developers work closely with communities to ensure that solar farms blend in and restore traditional meadows and hedgerows to the countryside.

#SolarEnergyFacts

Do solar panels create glint and glare?

Barely any. Glint and glare are not a problem, as recognised in English planning policy for the largest solar farms. Numerous airports also have them installed. Solar panels are designed to absorb light, so the more a panel absorbs, the more power it will generate.

#SolarEnergyFacts



Resources

[BEIS Electricity Generation Cost Report 2020 \(PDF\)](#)

[Practical Guide to realising the biodiversity potential of solar farms \(PDF\)](#)

[RenewableUK - Summary document polling survey - August 2022 \(PDF\)](#)

[Solar Energy UK - Ecological Monitoring Guidance - 2022 \(PDF\)](#)

[Solar Energy UK - Public attitudes to solar - January 2022 \(PDF\)](#)

[Solar Farms Briefing: Fact-Checker-March 2022 \(PDF\)](#)

[Solar Park Impacts on Biodiversity and Ecosystems Services \(PDF\)](#)

[Solar Stewardship Initiative - Code of conduct \(PDF\)](#)

[The Natural Capital Value of Solar \(PDF\)](#)



How Solar works

Solar panel are made out of photovoltaic cells, when light hits these cells an electric current is created.

The greater the intensity of light, the greater amount of electricity created. Once the electricity is created, it passes through an inverter to convert into alternating currents (AV) which is the form of electricity used by the National Grid.

Solar uses daylight (not just direct sunlight) to generate electricity. The electricity is generated as Direct Current (DC) which is converted to Alternating Current (AC) before being exported to the grid to be utilised by homes and businesses. Even when there are low levels of light, the solar farm will still be able to generate electricity.

```

graph LR
    A[The Sun gives off energy] --> B[The solar panels convert that energy to electricity]
    B --> C[The charge inverter sends that energy into the electricity grid for use in homes and businesses]
    C --> D[Energy can also be stored in batteries, to be distributed when needed]
            
```



About Endurance Energy

Endurance Energy is a sister company of Endurance Estates, an established property company with offices in Cambridge, Birmingham and London.

Endurance work on a range of residential, commercial and renewable energy projects across the region. Further information about Endurance Estates can be found by visiting www.endurance-estates.co.uk



Contact us

If you have any further questions regarding the site then, please do get in touch using the following ways listed below:

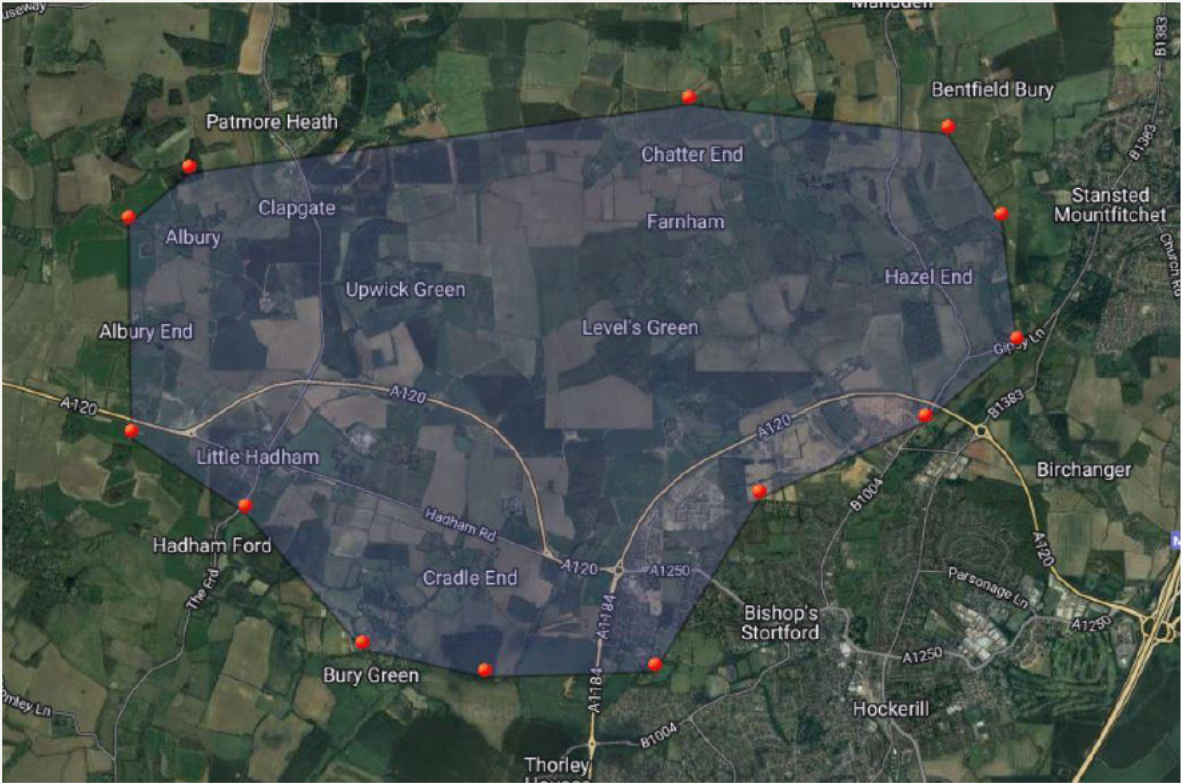
Call us on [0800 148 8911](tel:08001488911)

Email us at info@wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk

Write to us at: Freepost MEETING PLACE CONSULTATION (no stamp required)



Appendix O: February 2024 newsletter mailing radius



Appendix P: February 2024 press release



Media release
February 2024
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Revised planning application for Wickham Hall Solar Farm

A revised planning application for a solar farm at Wickham Hall will shortly be submitted. The original proposals for a solar farm at Wickham Hall crossed the local authority boundary, with two planning applications being submitted: one to East Herts District Council and the other to Uttlesford District Council.

The East Herts application for a new 35MW solar farm, 10,000 new trees (including a woodland) and over 2km of new hedgerow was approved by Councillors in January 2023.

The Uttlesford application was refused in April 2022. Since the refusal, Endurance Energy has revised the scheme, specifically via a reduction in scale of the proposed development, enhanced woodland planting proposed to the south of the site, significantly more screening of rights of way and other biodiversity enhancements contained within a wildlife area.

This revised planning application would be capable of producing 14.9MW of electricity, enough to power over 4,000 homes on an annual basis, sustainably.

The solar farm will contribute towards the UK's progression to a zero-carbon future as well as help address the climate and ecological emergencies declared by Uttlesford District Council. There will be an increase of over 216.46% in biodiversity of the land and a 96.57% increase in biodiversity of hedgerows, as measured using Government-approved methods.

Wildflower meadows would be sown and maintained around the solar arrays, providing habitat for a range of pollinator species, and bird and bat boxes would be installed throughout the site. The plans will also include the planting of 5,000 trees, including a new woodland area linking Bloodhounds Wood and Bailey Hills and over two kilometres of new native hedgerow. A particular feature of the new proposals is the dedicated wildlife area on the east of the site: comprising wildflower areas, wildlife ponds, scrub and tree planting. Access will be provided for the community to enjoy.

Whilst the solar installation is operational, the soil will be rested. Wickham Hall Solar Farm will be in operation for 40 years and in this time, it will increase the level of biodiversity on the site before it is returned to agricultural use.

A spokesperson for Endurance Energy added:

"The solar farm at Wickham Hall is a great opportunity to provide sustainable and renewable energy for years to come at the same time as delivering vital new habitats for a range of wildlife. Increasing the proportion of renewable energy is key to help Uttlesford District Council meet their 2030 carbon neutral target and to deliver significant benefits for wildlife.

"We are incredibly grateful to all who have supported the plans over the past three years. Over 63% of local residents who took part in our original consultation were in support of a solar farm at Wickham Hall and 95% of those who completed a form at the market stall last year were supportive of the plans on show."

The Government issued Uttlesford District Council with a Section 62A notice in 2022, meaning that planning applications can now be submitted directly to the Secretary of State. Endurance Energy will be submitting their application directly to the Secretary of State.

For more information or to get in touch with the project team, visit the dedicated project website - www.wickhamhallsolarfarm.co.uk.

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