

Welcome

Welcome to our public exhibition for Little South Solar Farm. We are consulting the community on our proposals in advance of submitting a planning application for the site. We are here today to discuss our plans, listen to your views and answer your questions.

We began consultations on the site with local stakeholders, including representatives and technical experts, in 2022. We have listened closely to the feedback we received and are presenting updated plans today that respond to the comments we received.



About Statkraft

- The largest generator of renewable electricity in Europe
- A state owned utility with origins in Norwegian hydropower over 125 years ago
- Operating in the UK since 2006
- Offices across the UK
- Development pipeline includes wind, solar, and grid stability services
- Distributed over £2 million to communities near operating renewables projects

The site

The site is located to the North of the A257 and West of the A256. Ash lies to the South West of the site, and Richborough is to the North West.

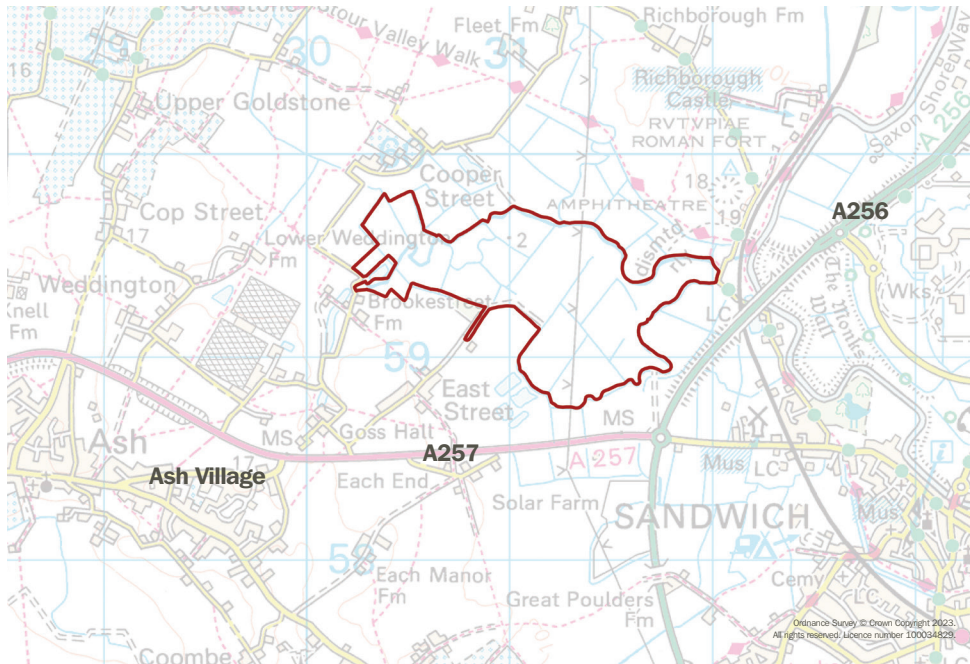
Why here?

The site has been selected for its suitability for solar development, taking account of the local environment and landscape. Site features include:

- Excellent solar irradiation to generate renewable electricity
- Land which is not of the highest agricultural quality
- A suitable grid connection
- Opportunities for landscape planting and biodiversity enhancement


At the end of the operational life of the solar farm, the land can return to original use once the solar farm is decommissioned.


Site location plan



Indicative Site Layout





18,000* 
Renewable electricity to power the equivalent of 18,000 homes
*based on average household consumption of 3509kWh pa (BEIS, Dec 2021)

Biodiversity net gain, enhancing nature through providing new habitats 

Extensive landscaping and planting to screen the solar farm 

Landscape buffers to nearby heritage assets 

Community benefit fund to support local projects 

Use of local suppliers where possible 

Landscape and heritage

Our plan includes extensive planting to screen the new development, including trees, hedgerows and shrubs. We are very keen to understand your views on landscape, and to ensure that our plans reflect local priorities wherever possible.

We are undertaking an archaeological assessment on-site, ensuring that our proposals take account of and respect local history.

In response to feedback, we have already:

- Reduced the maximum height of the panels from 4.46m to 2.7m
- Added a landscape buffer to the North East of the site
- Reduced the size of the site, providing greater distance from Richborough Roman Fort
- Excluded a possible roman road corridor from the scheme



Enhancing biodiversity

Our plans will enhance biodiversity, providing new habitats for wildlife. We are committed to supporting a range of species, while making sure that our plans have no unacceptable impact on any existing wildlife on site.

Much of the site is currently made up of land that has been farmed and currently has limited biodiversity, meaning the project provides the opportunity to support habitat restoration.

Our plans include:

- Retaining and enhancing the ecologically valuable ditch network around the site to support waterfowl habitats, as well as water vole, otter and aquatic plants.
- No chemicals will be used in the washing of the solar panels, which will be cleaned with water.
- Habitat creation for winterfowl and waders, including Red List species such as Lapwing and Curlew.
- There are opportunities for sheep grazing which would keep the site in agricultural use, while restoring parts of the site to the UK Priority Habitat, "Coastal and Floodplain Grazing Marsh"



Statkraft's work with Bumblebee Conservation Trust

In the last 100 years bumblebee populations have crashed, with two species becoming extinct in the UK. The land selected for a solar project has typically been dominated by intensive agriculture, stripping the soils of nutrients and the environment of wildlife diversity, yet they have the potential to provide an ideal environment for bee habitats because they can support a range of attractive microhabitats. The variety of dry and wet and shaded and sunny areas, if properly planted and managed, can encourage a wide variety of fauna.

That's why we're working closely with the experts at the Bumblebee Conservation Trust to develop habitat management practices at our solar farms which enhance, create and restore bumblebee habitats. The Bumblebee Conservation Trust provides feedback on habitat, plant species and ground preparation techniques which enable bumblebees to thrive.

Access and construction

Once operational, Little South Solar Farm will attract very little traffic as the facility does not require a permanent on-site presence. We are currently undertaking detailed assessments of potential construction traffic routes, with a focus on minimising impact on local roads.

As part of a planning application, we will prepare a Construction and Environment Management Plan, which will regulate the access to the site and the hours of work. We are keen to hear your views on the most suitable access to the scheme.

Construction of a solar energy farm typically takes 6 to 12 months. In the first six weeks most of the deliveries take place. After the parts have been delivered to site there are fewer vehicle movements as the site is built and then made operational.

We will seek to adopt measures to minimise the construction impact on local communities. These will include a plan to manage deliveries to site, including prescribing routes which construction vehicles and deliveries must follow.



Community benefits

We want to make sure that Little South Solar Farm benefits local people. We will work with the local community to make sure that our plans can make a positive difference to the local area.

Community benefit fund

We will set up a community benefit fund of over £9,900 per year for local projects (based on £200 per megawatt and a project size of 49.9MW). This will be available for local organisations.



Local supply chain

We work with local business groups to increase awareness of opportunities to get involved in the construction and operation of our projects. We want to ensure that local businesses have the opportunity to benefit.



Biodiversity enhancements

Statkraft looks to actively improve the environment around our projects. We welcome your ideas on improving local biodiversity.



Feedback and next steps

Thank you for coming to our consultation event. Our plans have already evolved in response to local feedback, but we want to understand your views in detail as we finalise the plans ahead of the submission of a planning application to Dover District Council.

We will set out our response to all feedback when the planning application is submitted, highlighting where the scheme has changed in response to local views.

Please take the time to fill out a feedback form and leave it with our team today. You can also provide feedback online at www.littlesouth-solar.co.uk. Or by writing to **FREEPOST STATKRAFT**.

Indicative Timeline

