

Little South Solar Farm – Ref. DOV/23/01363

Case Officer recommendation: **Approve**

On Thursday 27 November, Dover District Council's Planning Committee will be asked to decide on Statkraft's plans for Little South Solar Farm; plans to generate clean energy, create habitats for wildlife, and boost investment in the local economy.

Officer's report

- **Climate emergency:** Dover District Council has declared a climate emergency, strengthening the policy context for supporting renewable energy projects.
- **Landscape:** The design includes substantial landscape buffers, with new planting to compliment the local landscape character and protect the immediate setting of Richborough Roman Fort and local public rights of way.
- **Visual mitigation:** The landscape and visual effects are assessed as moderate adverse at year 1, but are expected to reduce to not significant by year 10 as planting matures. The development is well-screened, flat, and located near existing grid infrastructure, minimising disruption and visual intrusion.

Site map



What are the key benefits?

- **Renewable energy:** Generating renewable energy to power the equivalent of around 15,000 homes.
- **Economic benefits:** £50,000pa in business rates for Dover District Council, and a community benefit fund of up to £796,000 for local causes across the project's lifetime.
- **Boosting biodiversity:** We would deliver a 20% net gain for habitats and 142% net gain in hedgerows.
- **Careful design:** Our plans have been designed with sensitivity to protect local landscape and heritage assets.

Why here?

Our site is ideally suited to solar development because:

- The site has one of the highest levels of solar irradiance in the UK.
- No area of the site is categorised as Best and Most Versatile agricultural land.
- The site has an on-site connection to the grid.
- There are opportunities to enhance wildlife, especially through the conversion of arable land to new floodplain grazing marsh habitat, in line with local policy.

How are we respecting local history?

We have taken particular care in making sure our plans don't cause unacceptable harm to the Richborough Roman Fort and Amphitheatre. We have achieved this through:

- **Incorporating separation distances:** Solar panels will be at least 588m away from the amphitheatre, and over 1km (and not visible) from the Roman Fort itself.
- **Archaeological surveys:** Extensive archaeological surveys conducted by independent experts, including trenching, have confirmed there is no evidence of a Roman road within the site, as previously suggested.
- **Careful design:** Respecting the existing field pattern in the solar farm design, we would reinforce local character of the landscape through native hedgerow planting, wet woodland, field drainage ditches, grassland and reedbeds.
- **Enhancing understanding:** Our commitment to make information available that shows what the landscape would have looked like during the Roman period.

Contact us

If you have any questions or would like to speak to a member of the team, please contact our Community Relations Team using the details below:

- **Email:** ukprojects@statkraft.com
- **Freephone:** 0800 772 0668
- **Visit our website:** www.littlesouth-solar.co.uk