

# Welcome

The Farm Energy Company

Welcome to our exhibition providing an introduction to proposals for a Solar Farm on land to the west of Ware.

We hope you find the information useful and invite you to let us know your views by completing our feedback form. We also encourage you to ask any questions to the team in attendance. All feedback will be taken into consideration by the project team before submitting a planning application to East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC).

## GSK and The Farm Energy Company

The solar farm is proposed by The Farm Energy Company in partnership, with GSK, to provide the Ware campus directly with renewable energy.

GSK and The Farm Energy Company have been working as development partners for a number of years and are

currently constructing a combined wind and solar farm at the GSK facility in Irvine, Scotland.

We are also collaborating on renewable energy projects at various GSK sites across the UK, including Barnard Castle.



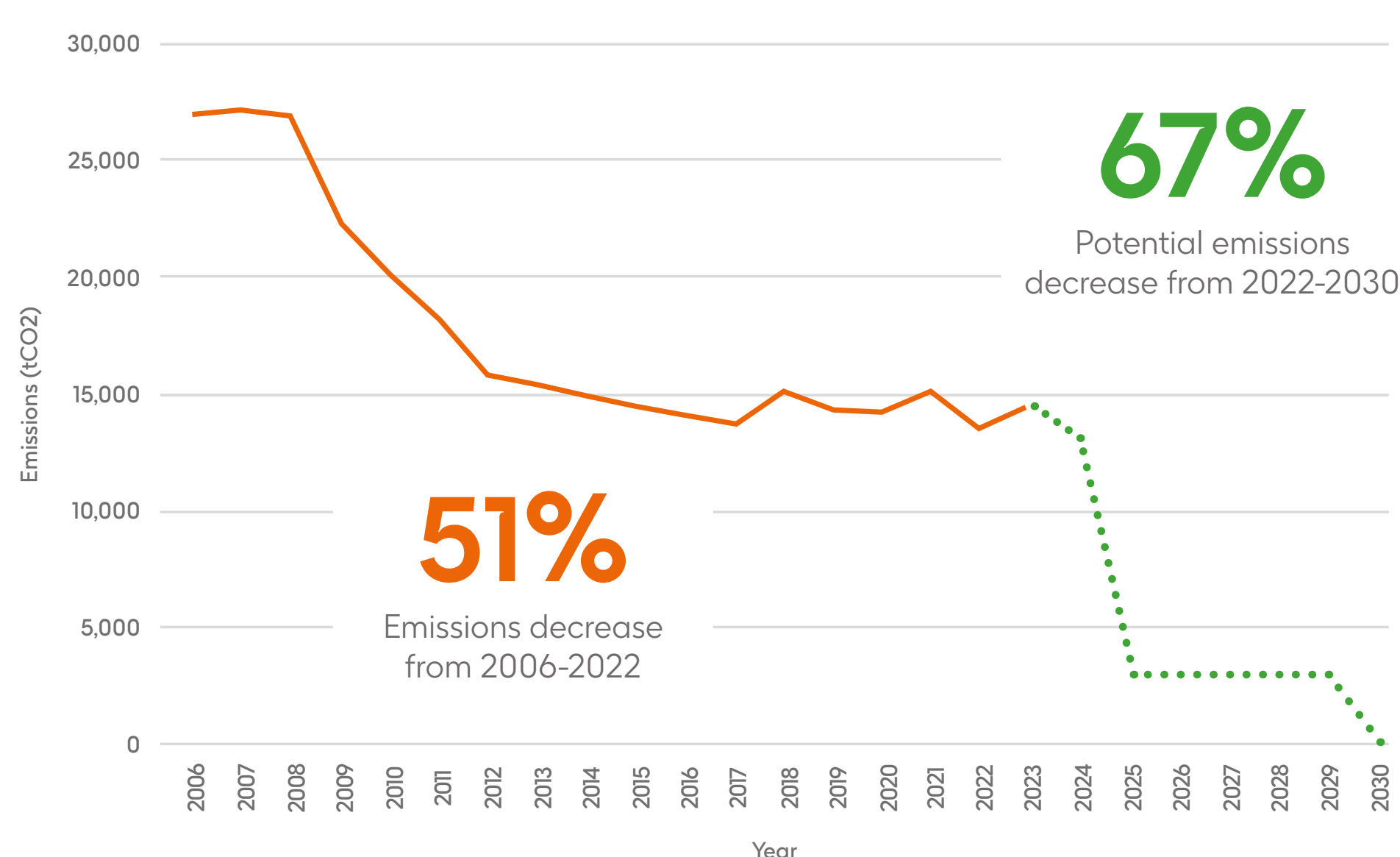
## GSK at Ware

The GSK Ware campus is home to one of six UK pharmaceutical manufacturing sites and a significant R&D facility, with around 1,350 employees. Global Supply Chain (GSC) at Ware manufactures 200 million tablets and capsules and over 55m respiratory inhalers every year. It is also a leading New Product Introduction site, responsible for industrialising and manufacturing new medicines for clinical studies and early launch markets. R&D at Ware is home to approximately 350 full-time employees from the Medicine Development and Supply group. GSC and R&D work closely together on one GSK

Ware campus to bring new and innovative medicines to patients faster.

GSK aims to reduce its carbon emissions by 80% by 2030 and invest in nature-based solutions for the remaining 20% of our footprint, with ambitious net nature positive goals to reduced water and waste and increase biodiversity across all sites by 2030. We aim to achieve net zero emissions across our full value chain by 2045 including building on our structured engagement programme with suppliers.

## CO2 Emissions: (manufacturing site)





GSK, Irvine

The Farm Energy Company



# The Farm Energy Company

The Farm Energy Company is a UK based renewables developer and operator founded in 2011 that specialises in large-scale private wire and off-site projects for significant energy users.

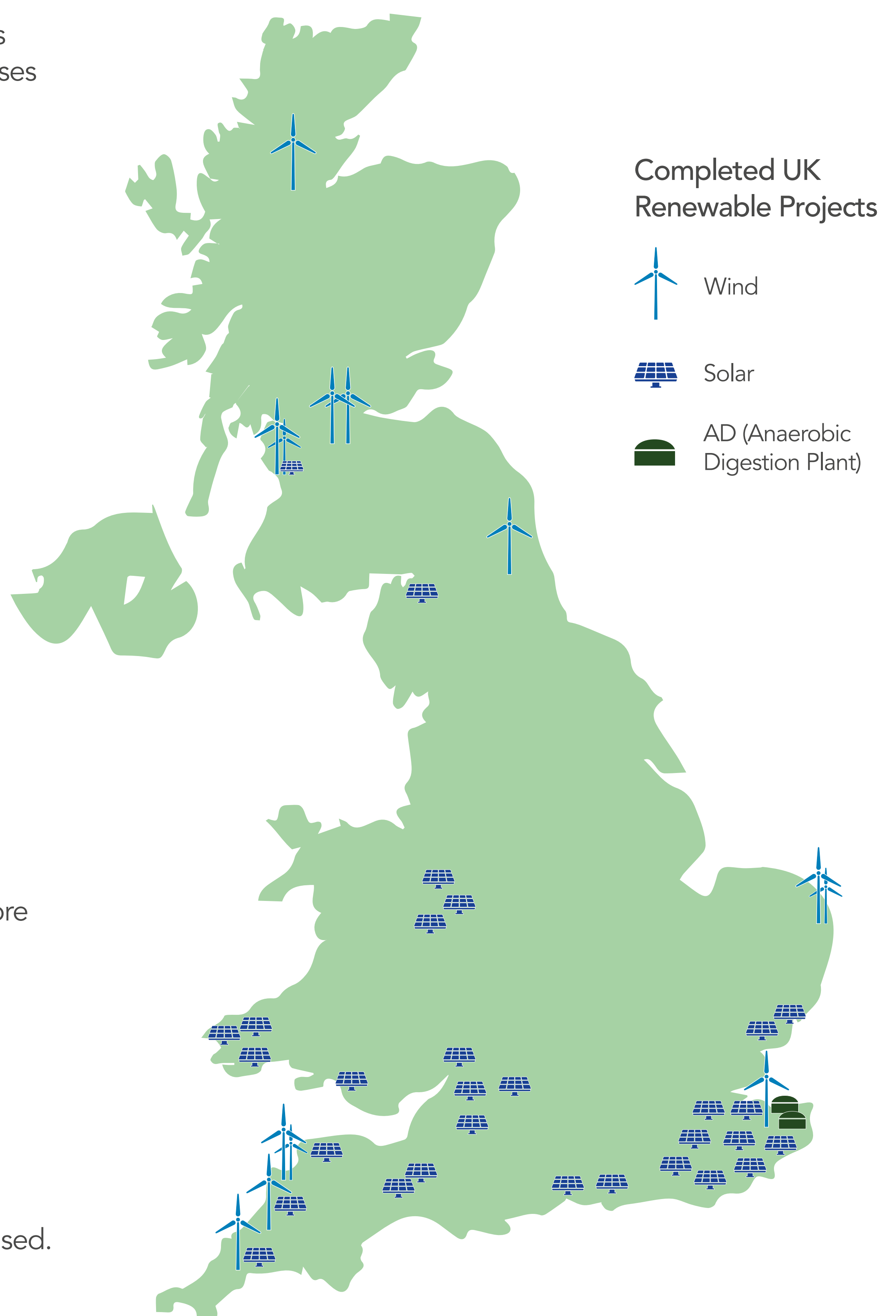
The company enables its clients to source renewable energy from a range of technologies (including wind, solar, biogas and battery power) combining both private wire and grid based solutions.

Our primary aim is to work with existing businesses with large power requirements to provide direct power via either a wind or solar farm.

These businesses are often at the heart of communities with many employees coming from the local area. It is therefore important that we engage with local communities to hear their views on our projects and address any concerns they may have at an early stage.

In June 2021, the UK Government set in law the world's most ambitious climate change target of cutting emissions by 78% compared to 1990 levels. We are dedicated to supporting the transition to a more sustainable energy market to help achieve this target and are working closely with a wide range of existing businesses to provide low cost, green, renewable energy. By providing increased energy security our business partners can deliver increased job security.

In achieving this, our goal is to ensure that additional renewable energy can meet local demands and any opportunities to enhance the environment are maximised.





# A renewable solution to reducing carbon emissions

GSK, Irvine

Our project will significantly reduce GSK Ware's carbon footprint, improving the facility's sustainable energy supply. It will also support energy security and stabilise costs.

The solar farm would provide up to 24 MWp of low carbon renewable energy.

At GSK Ware, this would:

- Meet around 32% of its electricity consumption, equivalent to 6,350 homes
- Reduce its carbon footprint by around 6,091 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per year (121,820 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> across the lifetime of the solar farm)
- Reduce its reliance on fossil fuels.

GSK has a target of achieving a carbon-neutral global value chain by 2045 with ambitious goals to reduce carbon, water and waste by 2030.

East Hertfordshire District Council has committed to reaching Net Zero by 2030. The solar farm would contribute to both national and local renewable energy targets.



GSK



# Project Overview

We are preparing a planning application to be submitted to East Hertfordshire District Council for a solar farm development which will **deliver renewable energy directly to the GSK Ware site** via a "private wire" connection.

It will be developed, owned and operated by The Farm Energy Company.

The site lies to the north west of the existing GSK campus, covering an area of approximately 18.3 hectares.

Access to the site is anticipated to be from Park Road via a private access road. However, alternative access options are also being explored.

The proposed solar farm development comprises the following elements:



Solar PV modules mounted onto arrays



Inverter / transformer units



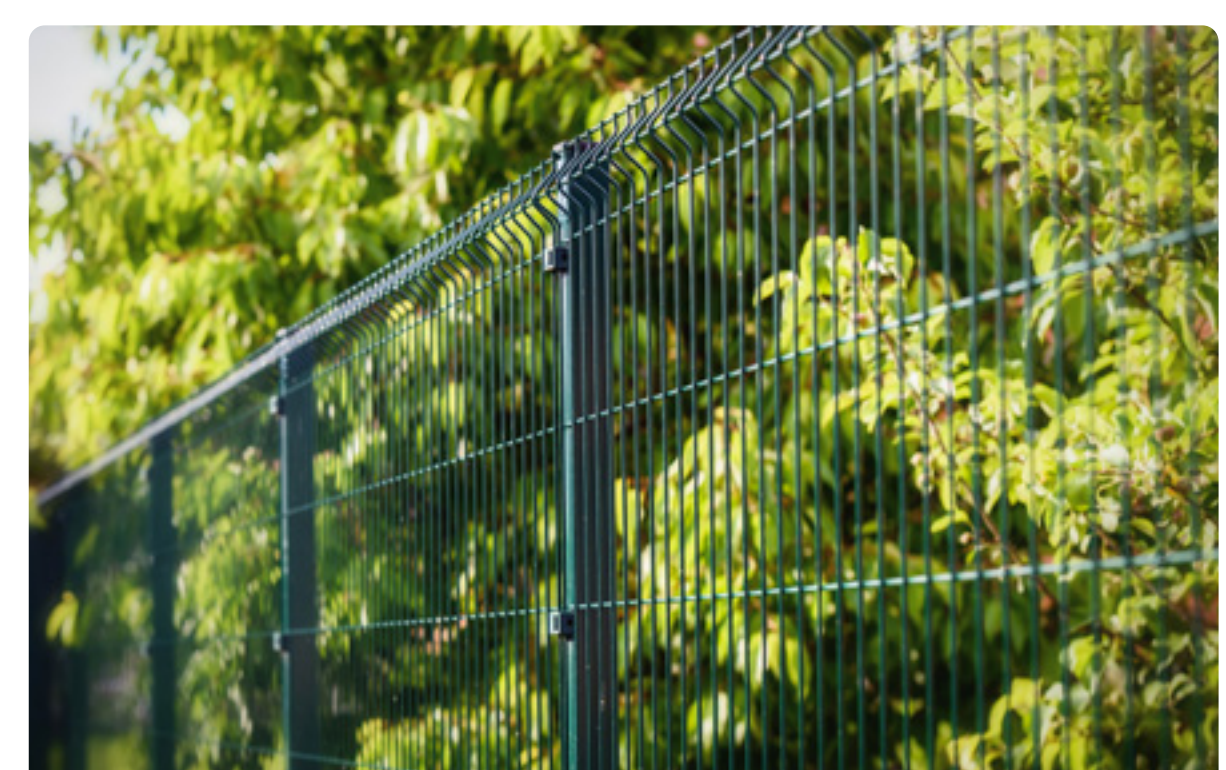
Batteries to store electricity for future use



Substation



Access tracks and landscaping  
in and around the site






Fencing and security measures



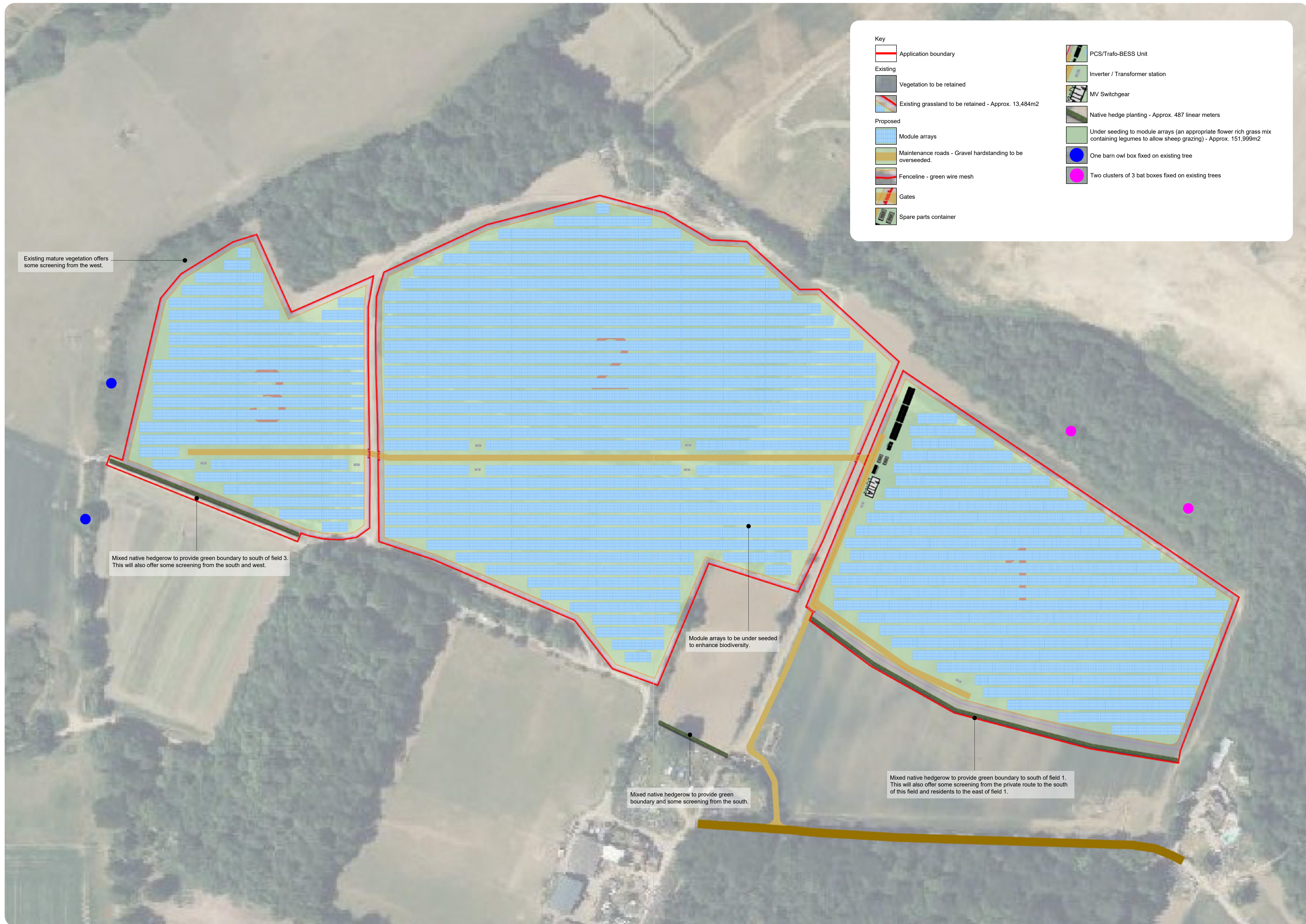


# Site Location

-  GSK, Ware
-  Proposed solar farm site
-  Proposed site access via Park Road









# Project Benefits



Enhance biodiversity across the solar farm site including opportunity for wildflower meadows, new hedges, upgrading existing hedges, native tree planting and many other biodiversity enhancements.



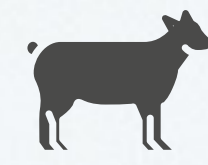
Support national and local renewable energy targets.



Generate up to 24MWp of renewable energy, offsetting electricity imported from the grid.



Batteries to store excess power for future use.



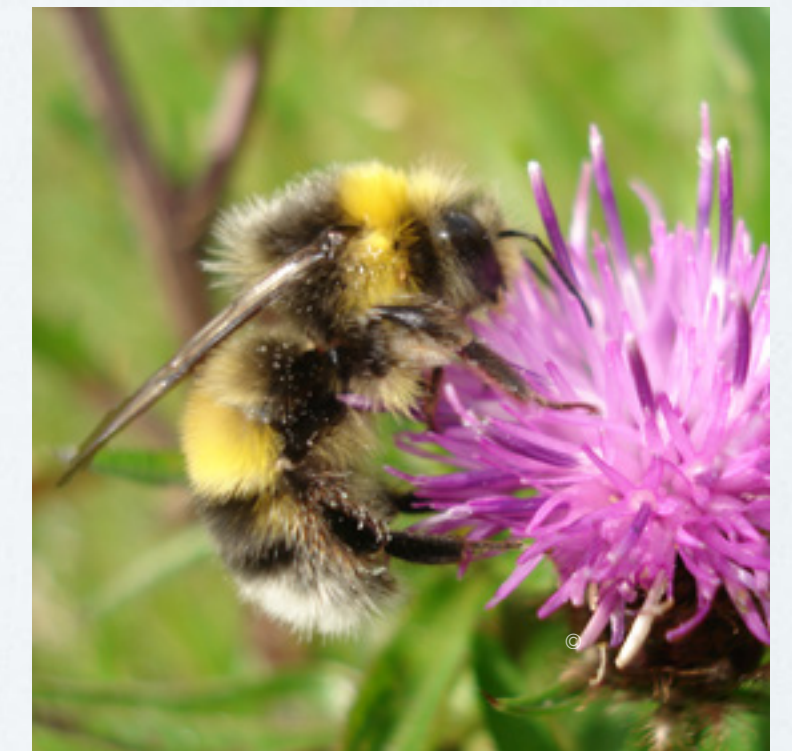
Continued agricultural use of the land for sheep grazing, alongside the solar farm.



Community Benefit Fund providing £15,000 per annum for local projects (equating to £600,000 over the lifetime of the solar farm).



Helping East Hertfordshire to meet its July 2023 climate declaration.



Biodiversity Images: John Feltwell / Wildlife Matters





# Environmental and Technical Considerations

The project team is committed to minimising potential environmental impacts of the Proposal.

We will be working with East Hertfordshire District Council through the formal pre-application process to confirm the scope of the supporting assessment required.



Technical experts have already begun preparing a number of environmental and technical assessments to support the planning application to East Hertfordshire District Council.

This includes:

- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
- Cultural Heritage Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Soil Classification Assessment.

The development of the solar farm will contribute to a biodiversity net gain, with measures incorporated such as sowing native grasslands, planting to attract bees and provision of hedgerows to create 'green corridors'.

The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will include steps to mitigate the potential impact of the solar farm, including increased boundary planting and careful layout and design of the solar arrays.



# Site Projections

Viewpoints were chosen to produce indicative photomontages showing what the solar farm might look like when built.

## Viewpoint B



Existing Photograph - View from B158 road representative of road and residential users viewing east towards the Application Site. Grid reference: TL 32712 15080



Proposed Illustrative Photomontage



## Viewpoint C



Existing Photograph - View from Public right of way representative of recreational users viewing east towards the Application Site. Grid reference: TL 32409 15047



Proposed Illustrative Photomontage

## Viewpoint D





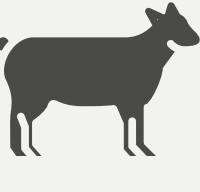

Existing Photograph - View from Public right of way representative of recreational users and residential users viewing north east towards the Application Site. Grid reference: TL 32355 14355







Proposed Illustrative Photomontage



# Frequently Asked Questions

Feedback Theme	Project Team Response
 <p>Current Site uses.</p>	<p>The land has alternated between arable production and short term stewardship schemes (as is currently in place). A small part of the site has been used for horse paddocks.</p>
 <p>Questions about future land classification.</p>	<p>When the proposed solar farm comes to the end of its lifetime, the land would continue to be greenfield land which will either be returned to crop growing or another appropriate agricultural use. In addition, throughout the lifetime of the solar farm, the land under the solar panels can be used for sheep grazing.</p>
 <p>Total Land Take of the development.</p>	<p>The infrastructure associated with the development will cover less than 10% of the land. The remaining portion of the land will remain accessible for vegetation growth and sheep grazing, allowing for ongoing biodiversity enhancements and retaining agricultural use throughout the life of the solar farm.</p>
 <p>Operational Life of the solar farm.</p>	<p>The solar farm is planned to be operational for 40 years, after which it will be decommissioned and the land returned to its original pre-construction state, with the majority of materials recycled where appropriate.</p>



Feedback Theme	Project Team Response
 <p>Shouldn't the land be used for food production?</p>	<p>As planning permission for solar projects is not granted on a permanent basis, the land in question is technically only temporarily out of use and could even improve in quality while not being intensively farmed.</p> <p>In the meantime, we will be improving the biodiversity of the site. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has made it clear that climate change, not solar power, is the "biggest medium to long-term risk" to the nation's domestic food supply.</p>
 <p>Access.</p>	<p>Access is anticipated to be taken from Park Road to the south east of the development. The scheduling of HGV movements will be strictly managed to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum. Typically, up to 185 HGV deliveries would be expected throughout the course of the construction period, which is anticipated to be approximately 3 months. The majority of the HGV movements are associated with the delivery of the solar panels and the structure supporting them. This equates to an average of 60 HGV deliveries per month, or around 3 per day (6 two-way trips). This is subject to change as the precise number of movements can only be finalised when a contractor is appointed, construction methods are agreed and a construction timetable drawn up. A Construction Management Plan will agree that deliveries will be outside of peak school hours.</p>
 <p>Biodiversity.</p>	<p>The Vision and Objectives of both the Bengeo Neighbourhood Plan and East Herts District Plan emphasise the need to protect and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>A suite of ecological surveys are being completed as part of the planning application to understand the current baseline of the Site. Recommendations for improvements to habitats and mitigation measures to ensure there will be no negative impacts have been suggested by the project Ecologists and fed into the Landscape Masterplan to provide a significant biodiversity net gain across the Site.</p>
 <p>LVIA and photomontages.</p>	<p>Bengeo Neighbourhood Plan identifies View 3 from Bengeo Field towards Ware Park Manor as an important view. The site does not fall within this view, it does however sit to the north and a small proportion will be visible. It should be understood that the view of the solar farm will be a small part of a wider view across the landscape, this is demonstrated on the photomontage display boards. Whilst screening in the form of hedgerow planting has been incorporated along the boundary, the topography means that it will be difficult to screen this part of the solar farm completely. We are in the process of agreeing viewpoint locations with East Hertfordshire District Council as part of formal pre-application discussions.</p>



# Next Steps

Community  
feedback  
received by:  
1st October

Application  
submitted:  
Mid-October

Application  
decision:  
Early 2024

Construction:  
2024

Operation:  
2025

We are interested in hearing your views on the proposed solar farm and invite you to complete our feedback form.

Your views are important to us, and we will take on board any comments received and, where possible, incorporate them into our plans.

East Hertfordshire District Council will undertake its own consultation as part of the planning process and will seek the views of statutory consultees and the community.

## Contact us:

Email: [feedback@consultation-online.co.uk](mailto:feedback@consultation-online.co.uk)  
Freephone: 0800 298 7040?