



# Moreton Brook Solar Farm

Aura Power have recently submitted a planning application for a 49.9 MW solar farm to East Staffordshire Borough Council. This briefing has been prepared by Aura Power as a helpful summary of the plans. To view the full suite of planning documents please do so by visiting the East Staffordshire Borough Council public access system - **Application Number P/2024/00696**.

Solar power is one of the cheapest, most readily-deployable energy sources we have, and it will be a key part of achieving homegrown, clean power by 2030 ☀️. The UK Government has identified a target of 70 GW of solar by 2035 and is critical in decarbonising our electricity grid. This would require a **five-fold increase in the amount of solar capacity** we have today and would utilise less than 0.3% of all land in the UK and less than 0.5% of land used for farming. Solar farms support the agricultural industry as well as offering a number of other benefits:



## Combats Climate Crisis

Solar PV avoids greenhouse gas emissions by generating, clean renewable energy, decreasing reliance on fossil fuels.



## Community Fund

We are offering a **£20,000 a year fund** for the local community to share in the benefit of the project to support local projects and initiatives.



## Boosts Economy

Solar developments create jobs, lower energy bills, stimulate investment, and increase energy security.



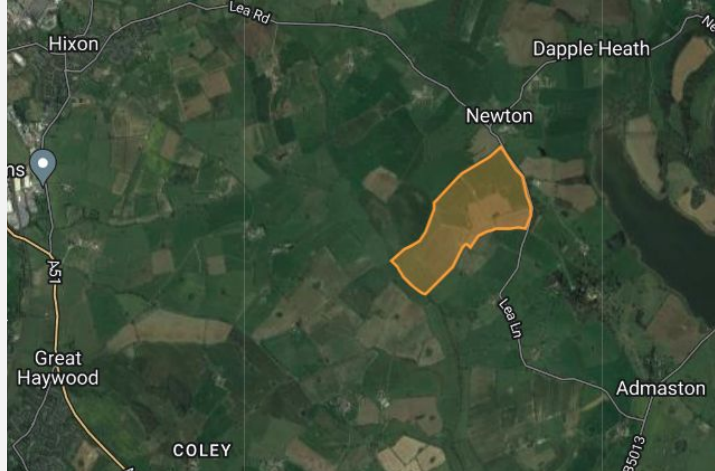
## Boosts Biodiversity

The site will include new tree planting, wildflowers, grasses and enhanced hedgerows, **improving biodiversity by 102%**.



# The Design

- We have a **confirmed connection** with National Grid Electricity Distribution (NGED) to connect into the overhead line in the southwest of the site.
- We have conducted a number of environmental and visual surveys to shape the design and help **mitigate any negative impacts**.
- We have **worked closely with local residents** to address concerns and **amended our site design** to allow further setbacks from the bridleway and nearest residences, as well as **planting new trees and enhancing hedgerows** for screening.
- Species rich **grassland and wildflowers** will be sown across the site, improving the soil quality, drainage, carbon sequestration and biodiversity.
- **Sheep grazing** will occur in controlled stocking densities to continue agriculture and support biodiversity.

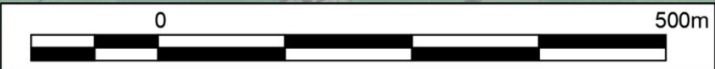


- 1 Panels
- 2 Access roads
- 3 Substation
- 4 Security fence
- 5 Overhead lines
- 6 New tower
- 7 New native trees
- 8 Existing trees
- 9 New hedges
- 10 Enhanced hedges
- 11 Existing hedges
- 12 Existing effluent pit
- 13 Existing pond
- 14 Native species grassland - controlled grazing
- 15 EM2 standard general purpose meadow mixture with EM10 tussock mix around the border
- 16 Skylark mitigation area / native species grassland - controlled grazing - EM10 tussock mix
- 17 Two-way bridleway gate
- 18 Wild bird seed mix
- 19 Bridleway
- 20 Hedge break
- 21 Hedge infill

- Saves 12,000 tonnes of Co2 entering the atmosphere each year
- Equivalent of powering over 16,000 homes
- Equivalent of charging over 21,000 electric cars per year



Construction traffic will access the site on Lea Lane from Rugeley via Colton Road and the B5013



# Frequently Asked Questions

## Why do we need solar farms?

We understand that solar farms, like all new developments, can represent change in the landscape and that can be unsettling, particularly in rural areas. However, we are currently experiencing climate, ecological and cost of living crises and solar farms can help tackle all three of these pressing existential challenges we are faced with. Solar has been identified by the UK Government as an instrumental technology in decarbonising our electricity grid, bolstering our energy security and lowering electricity bills.

## What is in it for the local community?

We believe that our host communities should be able to benefit directly from the development. That is why we are offering a voluntary community benefit fund of £20,000 a year, index linked, for the solar farm's 35 year lifetime. We will work with local people and the Parish Council to establish the best mechanism to fairly distribute the funds.

## What about food production?

It is a misconception that solar farms threaten food security. The UK has more than enough agricultural land to accommodate domestic demands for food and energy. If UK targets are met, this will occupy less than 0.3% of all UK land (more land is currently used for golf courses). Controlled sheep grazing in and around the panels will enable food production to continue and rental payments to landowners can enable them to continue farming other parts of their land elsewhere.

## Why does solar use agricultural land and not roofs?

It uses both! Reaching national targets of a fivefold increase in solar capacity cannot be met by rooftop solar alone. The site at Moreton Brook consists predominantly of grade 3b land (76%) with 5% of grade 2 and the remaining grade 3a which is mixed in generally small quantities with the lower quality land.

## How do we engage with the local community?

We held an in-person exhibition at Admaston Village hall in October 2023, as well an online webinar. We thank everyone who attended and gave us feedback on our plans which we have sought to incorporate into our application. Community engagement is an ongoing process and we welcome local stakeholders to contact us at any time.



## How does this solar farm benefit wildlife?

Solar farms can significantly improve local biodiversity, by providing new habitats and food for wildlife. Our proposal includes the planting of 26 new native trees and new native species rich grassland with wildflowers across the site. All ponds and existing vegetation will be retained and enhanced to improve habitats for wildlife calculated to offer a biodiversity net gain of 102%.



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For more information visit: [aurapower.com/projects/moreton-brook](http://aurapower.com/projects/moreton-brook)

