

Great North Road Solar Park

Phase One Community Consultation Leaflet



January 2024



Introduction

Elements Green is developing proposals for a new solar and energy storage park located to the northwest of Newark-on-Trent, Nottinghamshire.

With a potential generation capacity of around 800 megawatts (MW) AC of solar energy, the scheme has the potential to provide enough clean, affordable energy to meet the power needs of approximately 400,000 homes while avoiding more than 250,000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions every year.

This consultation leaflet introduces who we are, our proposals for Great North Road Solar Park and how you can get involved in our first stage of community consultation. Our Stage One consultation starts on Tuesday 16th January 2024. It will run for six weeks, closing on Tuesday 27th February 2024.

Further to developing more detailed proposals for the project, we will then carry out a second stage of consultation. This will be a statutory stage of consultation which is intended to give you the opportunity to comment on our updated proposals and how they have evolved since the initial consultation. Stage Two consultation is expected to take place later this year.

Who we are

The proposals for Great North Road Solar Park are being developed by Elements Green, who has a proven track record in renewable energy development, with 7 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy development projects globally.

We are committed to powering the world's future energy needs. Using our deep understanding of the renewables sector, we are delivering innovative and sustainable solutions for global energy security and the needs of a rapidly evolving world.

Great North Road Solar Park

Great North Road (GNR) Solar Park would comprise the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, an on-site energy storage facility and the infrastructure needed to connect the scheme into the national grid.

The location

The project is proposed to be located on approximately 2,900 hectares (7,166 acres) of land to the northwest of Newark, Nottinghamshire.

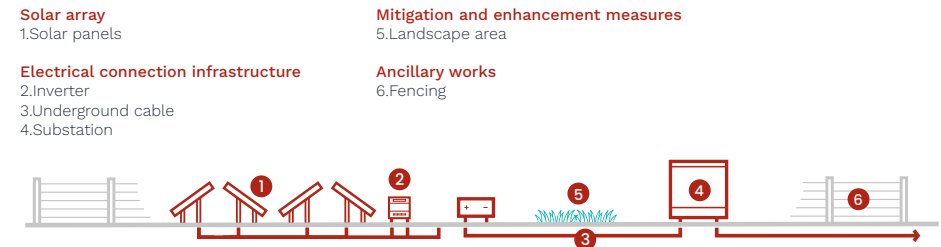
A key factor influencing the location of GNR Solar Park is the availability of a connection at National Grid's Staythorpe substation. The closure of fossil fuel power stations has created capacity on the grid. The site location was further refined through a range of planning and environmental factors, such as the existing land use, quality of land, and technical constraints. The project boundaries are naturally shaped by the River Trent to the east, Sherwood Forest to the west, the historic landscape of Laxton to the north, and the protected views of Southwell to the south. High flood risk zones, protected ecological and landscape sites, high grade agricultural land and adverse topography have been avoided in order to select the most suitable land for the project.

The components of a solar farm

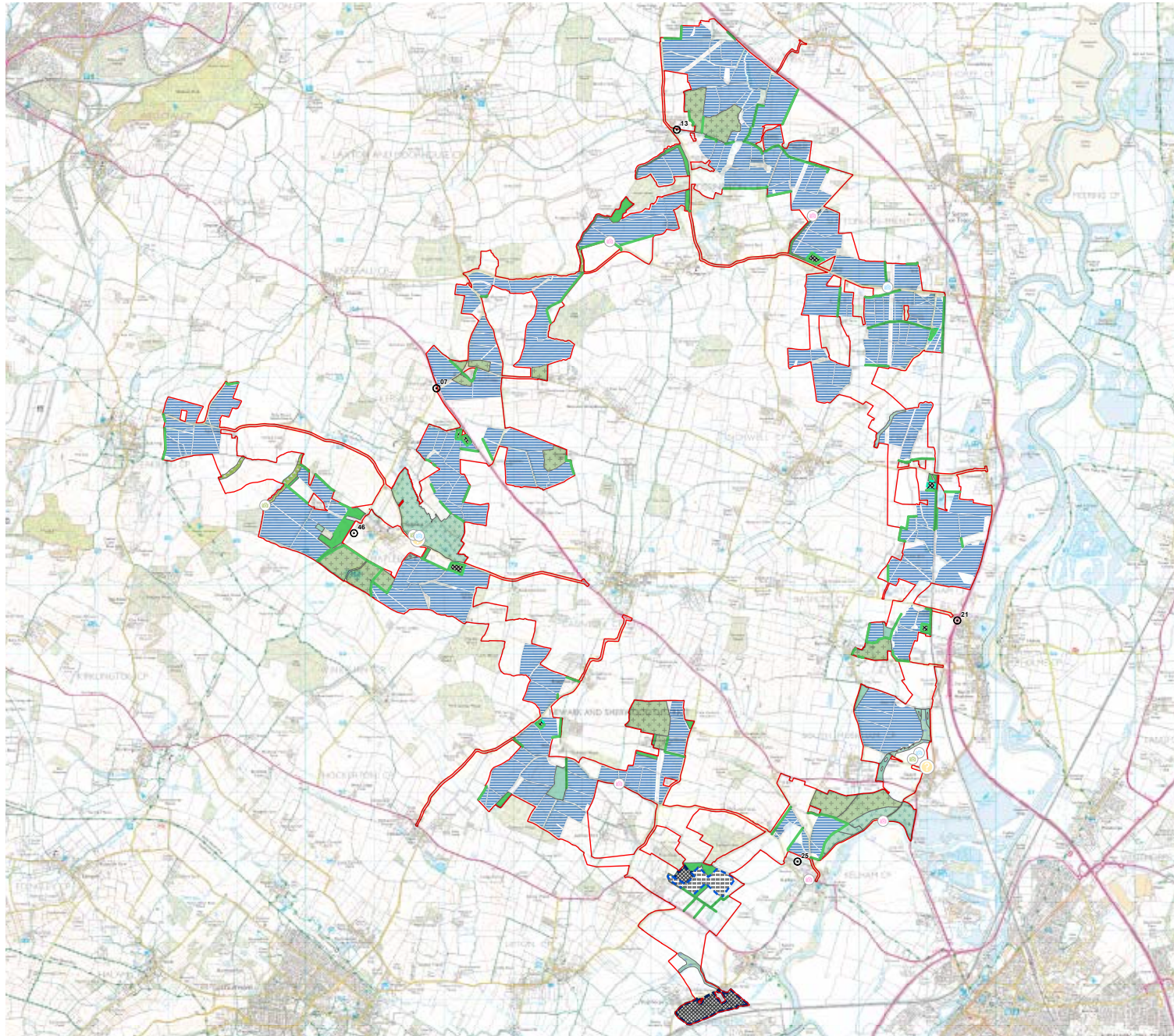
The development we are proposing would comprise the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and an on-site energy storage facility. The energy storage system would deliver significant efficiency, whereby electricity generated by the solar PV panels could be stored in batteries at times when demand for electricity is low, and then released on to the grid at times of higher demand.

This serves to improve reliability, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness of electricity supply by providing an important balancing service for the national grid.

















The principle components of the scheme we are proposing are shown in the diagram below.



Solar technology is rapidly evolving; therefore, our application will include flexibility to allow us to use the latest technology available at the time of construction.



Key

-  Order Limits
-  Proposed Solar Panel Areas (1) - typically offset approximately 10m from field boundaries
-  Proposed 400kV Substation Areas (2)
-  Proposed BESS Area (2)
-  Proposed Substation Areas (2)
-  Viewpoint Locations
- Landscape & Ecology**
-  Proposed Hedgerows and Broadleaf Woodland (5) (6)
-  Retained Agricultural Land - enhanced ecological management (7)
-  Proposed Permanent Grassland (8)
-  Proposed Green Corridor (9)
-  Proposed Riparian Corridor (9)
-  Proposed Wildlife Site (10)
- Visitor Interpretation**
-  Clean Energy Information (14)
-  Ecology/Landscape Information (14)
-  Heritage Information (14)
-  Solar Farm Visitor Hub (13)



The benefits of Great North Road Solar Park

If approved and constructed, GNR Solar Park could make significant impacts on national and local priorities and initiatives.



Contributing to national and local climate targets

The UK has set ambitious and legally binding targets to eliminate carbon emissions by 2050. Large scale solar development is recognised as having an important role to play in helping achieve this target.

The British Energy Security Strategy, published in April 2022, aims to increase the UK's solar capacity fivefold by 2035, equivalent to around 70GW total generation capacity. With an installed capacity of over one gigawatt (GW) DC, GNR Solar Park would contribute 1.5 per cent towards this target.

Subject to being consented and becoming operational, GNR Solar Park would make a significant contribution towards achieving this goal: generating clean, affordable, electricity that would annually avoid around 250,000 tonnes of carbon emissions from entering our atmosphere.



Supporting the local community

Subject to consent being granted, Great North Road Solar Park would offer a community benefit package – known as NG+, which has the potential to make available around £1 million per annum. With this fund, NG+ will support and deliver projects to benefit the local community with a focus on the environment, education, food security, wellbeing, and energy efficiency.

We are committed to working with local communities to identify and define community benefits. This could include:

- Supporting projects to enhance woodlands, meadows, wetlands and hedgerows to promote biodiversity
- Creating local jobs in the Midlands and Lincolnshire
- Providing educational opportunities such as school visits, research funding and apprenticeships
- Enhancing local amenities and creating healthier spaces, such as picnic and play areas and linking new and existing footpaths
- Tackling food poverty and reducing food waste
- Offering grants for energy-related home improvements such as insulation, solar panels and heat pumps.



Helping reduce household bills and providing energy security

The price of solar panels has dropped significantly over recent years, making solar power the most cost-effective source of energy to produce. The transition to renewable forms of energy, therefore, can help the UK to become more energy self-sufficient, while also reducing household energy bills for years to come.

Solar parks such as the proposed Great North Road Solar Park advance energy efficiency, providing clean, renewable, and sustainable electricity to communities, and NG+ wants to take this further.

We will be offering grants for energy-related home improvements such as insulation, solar panels, LED lighting, EPC provision, and heat pumps. We are also keen to support innovation in this area by providing funding for green startup businesses. We will also offer business grants for related measures, with the aim to support local employment.



Protecting the local environment

Solar farms can deliver significant benefits for the local environment and support a range of ecosystem services, such as generating new habitats, supporting sustainable agriculture, and reducing carbon emissions.

While we have not yet reached a stage of having an exact estimate of the biodiversity net gain for GNR Solar Park, our ambition is to exceed this baseline requirement. The proposals we develop will set aside areas for environmental enhancements that will create new or enhance existing habitats. These could include establishing wildflower meadows to provide habitats for pollinators and birds, promoting wetland habitats that support aquatic life, and new planting to preserve, restore and deliver new hedgerows and native species.

We are keen to hear from you regarding any suggestions and ideas you might have to enhance the natural environment.

Our consultation process

Great North Road Solar Park is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) because it would generate more than 50 megawatts (MW) of electricity.

The 2008 Planning Act defines the consent regime for a NSIP. This means that we will be applying for a Development Consent Order (DCO) through the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). The application will be determined by the Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

A DCO application is planned to be submitted in Spring 2025. Prior to this, we will be engaging with local communities and consulting on and refining our proposals across two stages of consultation, including:

- The first phase of consultation now underway is non-statutory. While not formally required, it is intended to give local communities a real opportunity to influence the proposed development from an early stage to gain a better understanding of what we are proposing and its potential impacts.
- During the second, statutory phase of consultation, we will provide more information on the developing proposals which have been informed by the first phase of consultation and environmental assessments. We expect to conduct this consultation in Autumn 2024.

Ahead of our Stage Two consultation, we will consult with relevant local planning authorities to invite their views on the approach we intend to take to engage with and obtain feedback from local communities on our detailed proposals for GNR Solar Park. This will be set out in our Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) which will be published just ahead of the second stage of consultation.

We are committed to working with local communities throughout the development of the project, and beyond, should the project be granted consent. We are keen to hear your feedback to shape a strong set of proposals.

Community consultation forms an important part of the pre-application process for NSIPs. Early and ongoing engagement will influence the evolving design of GNR Solar Park. Local councils, residents and community groups all have an important part to play.

Our first phase of community consultation

Our Stage One consultation on our early-stage proposals will begin on 16 January 2024.

The aim of this consultation is to introduce Elements Green and the overall project, share our early-stage proposals and give you the opportunity to have your say and share your views.

We value local knowledge, and we are confident that this consultation will result in a strong set of proposals that respect the concerns of local communities while generating clean, renewable energy.

We will acknowledge and record all the comments submitted to us during consultation taking them into consideration to help inform our decisions as we evolve and finalise our proposals.

Learn more about our proposals and provide your feedback to our Stage One consultation in the following ways:



Join us at our exhibition events and webinars

We are holding a series of information events across the site area where you can view materials, ask questions to the project team, and provide your feedback.



Visit our project website

Our dedicated website (www.gnrsolarpark.co.uk) provides the latest project information, including relevant documents and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs). You can view and download all consultation materials and complete an online feedback form via our website.



Contact us via our communication lines

Email: info@gnrsolarpark.co.uk
Call: Freephone 0808 1754054
Write: FREEPOST GNR SOLAR

The deadline to submit feedback during this first phase of consultation is **Tuesday 27 February 2024.**

Exhibition events and webinars

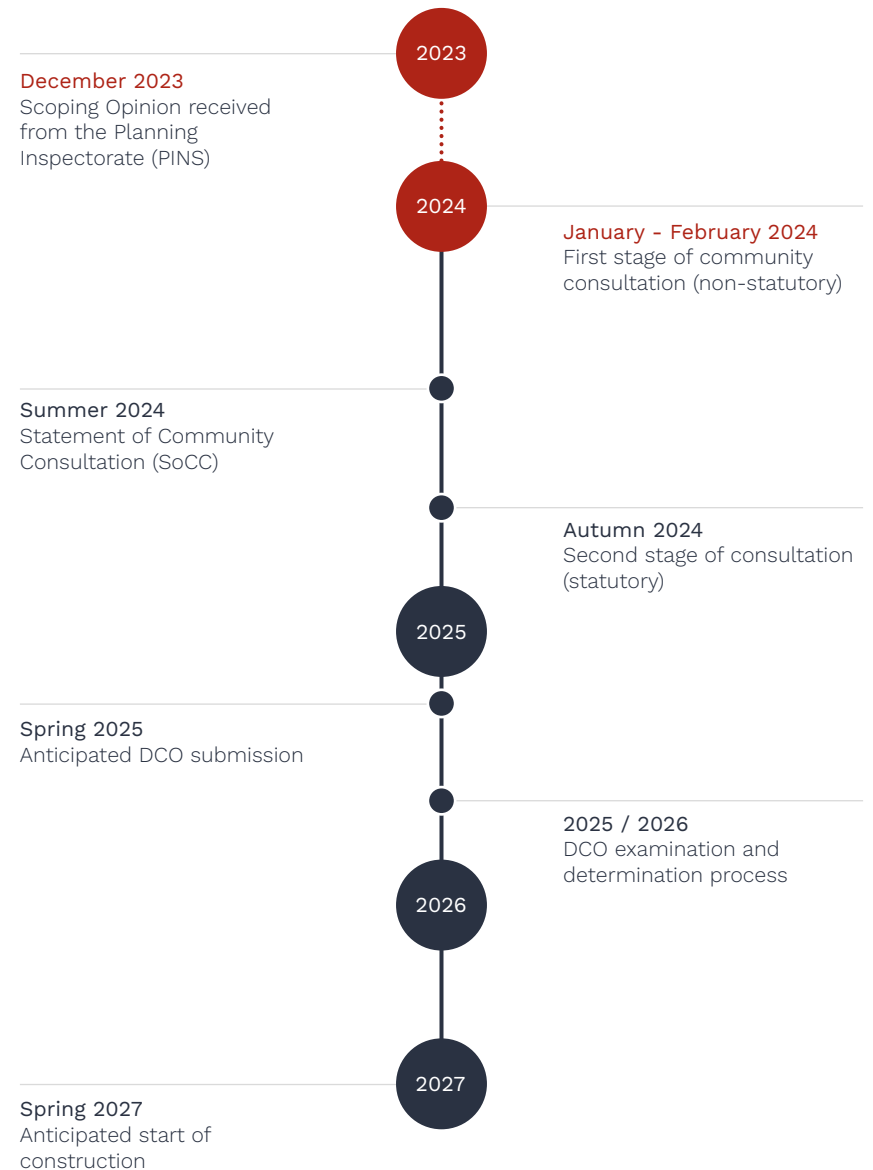
Our first stage of community consultation will feature a series of both in-person and online exhibition events, providing opportunities for the community and key stakeholders alike to find out more information about our proposals and provide their feedback.

We will be holding a total of eight events during our first stage of community consultation, this includes six in-person events and two online webinars, between Monday 29th January and Saturday 10th February.

We encourage anyone with an interest in these proposals to join us at one of our exhibition events to learn more about the scheme and provide your feedback.

| Date | Location |
|---|--|
| Monday 29 January 5:30pm – 7pm | Community webinar |
| Tuesday 30 January 12pm – 6pm | Eakring Cator Hall , Kirklington Road, Eakring, NG22 0DA |
| Wednesday 31 January 2pm – 6pm | Laxton Village Hall , High St, Laxton, Newark, NG22 0NX |
| Thursday 01 February 12pm – 6pm | Newark Town Hall , Newark, Nottinghamshire, NG24 1DU |
| Monday 05 February 5:30pm – 7pm | Community webinar |
| Thursday 08 February 2pm – 6pm | Carlton on Trent Village Hall , Main Street, Carlton-on-Trent, Newark, NG23 6NW |
| Friday 09 February 2pm – 8pm | Maplebeck Village Hall , Main Street, Maplebeck, Newark, NG22 0BS |
| Saturday 10 February 12pm – 5pm | Kelham House , Main Street, Kelham, Newark, NG23 5QP |

Indicative project timeline



**Please note this timeline is indicative and may be subject to change*



Contact Us

We want to keep you informed and hear your views on Great North Road Solar Park.

We have established dedicated communication lines for the project, which will be active for the duration of consultation on GNR Solar Park. You can get in touch with members of our stakeholder engagement team using any of the communication lines listed below:

 **Email:** info@gnrsolarpark.co.uk

 **Call:** Freephone 0808 175 4054

 **Write:** Freepost GNR Solar

 **Visit:** www.GNRsolarpark.co.uk

