



At EDF Renewables UK our goal is to combat climate change – we're passionate about creating a net zero future where clean energy powers our lives.

# Solar Farms

## Frequently Asked Questions



### **Do solar panels work in the UK? We don't get much sun?**

Yes, they produce power from daylight and can work even when it's cloudy. In May of 2020, solar power met over 11% of UK electricity demand.

### **I'm concerned about glint and glare. Will this be a problem?**

Solar panels are designed to absorb as much light as possible and not to reflect it, however sometimes glint can be produced as a direct reflection of the sun from the surface of the solar PV panel. Screening with trees and planting can be very effective. A glint and glare assessment will also form part of the planning application to make sure there are no unacceptable effects.

### **Will there be noise?**

There is some noise generated on site during the construction stage – from the construction traffic and from fixing the frame that supports the solar panels into the ground. Once built, there is very little noise from the site – you would need to be listening very carefully to hear anything.

### **How long will it take to build?**

If the proposal gets planning permission, installation will take around 9 months.

### **How big is the site?**

The site is approximately 80 hectares and has very good levels of solar irradiation.

### **Will the panels be visible from where I live?**

Assessments are being carried out on how visible the solar farm might be from surrounding viewpoints. Existing trees and hedgerows, natural topography and existing infrastructure, will screen many of the longer-

range views towards the solar panels. Our aim is to design a layout that has the least visual impact.

### **What about the wildlife that's on the site?**

We are carrying out ecology surveys to understand our potential impact on species. The results will inform our mitigation plan to ensure wildlife is protected during the construction and operation of the development and this will be agreed with the council. Habitats on site will be enhanced by protecting existing hedgerows and trees, as well as by planting new ones alongside wildflower meadows. We will ensure that this results in biodiversity being in a better state than before any development took place.

### **Will the project damage the land?**

In the main, unlike other forms of development, solar farms do not irreversibly disturb the ground and therefore following the development's operational lifespan (anticipated to be 35 years), the land is able to return to its original use in a better condition.

### **Will access across the site be restricted?**

There are no Public Rights of Way (PRoW) on site and no diversions will be necessary.

### **Is this land farmed at the moment?**

Yes, the land is currently farmed for crop and livestock purposes. According to UK wide datasets, the land at the site is classed as Grade 3, under the Natural England Agricultural Land Classification. Detailed soil surveys will be undertaken to determine the quality of the land across the site. Seasonal grazing to control vegetation growth will be possible with adequate room underneath and around the panels for sheep to graze.

### **Who will look after the site once it is completed?**

EDF Renewables UK will own and operate the site throughout its lifetime. The panels are remotely

monitored and operated, and technicians will visit regularly. For security purposes, inward-facing CCTV will be installed, and there will be no lighting visible to the naked eye.

### **What happens to the panels at the end of their lifespan?**

Like any other electrical waste, solar panels need to be disposed of responsibly. Decommissioning is agreed at the planning stage, so there is a commitment to safely remove panels from the site at the end of their lifespan. Around 80% of solar panel parts are now recyclable, and recycling methods are improving all the time.

### **Why is the scheme set at 47.5 MW (Megawatts)?**

All solar schemes under 50 MW are determined by the Local Planning Authority (LPA). Anything over 50 MW is a decision for central government, with the Secretary of State taking the final decision following consultation with the LPA.

### **There are more solar projects being out forward now than ever before. Why is that?**

There are a number of reasons for the increase in solar projects coming forward. Renewables projects need to be located where the natural resource is. In this part of the country, there are good levels of sunlight – or irradiance. Conversely, for onshore wind, these are now more likely to be developed in Scotland and Wales – which are the windier and more mountainous parts of the UK. As the UK decarbonises, moves away from using fossil fuels, and electrifies heating and transport, we need to generate a greater amount of electricity from renewable sources. The UK Government aims to achieve net zero by 2050, and to do that we need more renewable energy projects right across the country.

### **Can solar farms affect health?**

Solar farms are not known to pose any danger to neighbouring residents or communities whatsoever. Unlike fossil fuels they do not release emissions into the atmosphere so there is no impact from emissions on human health. Replacing fossil fuel power stations with renewable energy alternatives like solar and wind farms means there will be less emissions from fossil fuels in the atmosphere in the longer term – which is good for human health and the health of the planet.

### **What are the UK climate change commitments?**

Policy at local, national and global level is changing rapidly to address the threat of climate change. Decarbonisation means we must reduce our consumption of fossil fuels and increase renewable and low carbon energy generation.

The UK Government recently announced it will enact a new climate change law targeting a 78% cut in greenhouse gas emissions by 2035 in order to reach net zero by 2050. Solar generation plays an important part in the UK energy mix, and the planning system supports the transition to a low carbon future.

### **Will energy go to local people?**

The electricity produced by the solar panels will enter the grid network at Indian Queens Substation and will be exported for use from there. Solar is now one of the lowest cost forms of new, large-scale electricity generation in the UK, helping to keep electricity bills low for all consumers.

### **Are the solar panels procured ethically?**

EDF Renewables UK and Ireland opposes the abuse of human rights and forced labour anywhere in the global supply chain.

We ask all suppliers to ensure compliance with the Modern Slavery Act.

We are also actively strengthening our existing procurement process to make every effort to prevent any negative impact on people and the environment.

### **Why can't you put solar panels on roofs instead?**

It isn't an either/or situation. To meet government targets all options for solar installation needs to be considered including solar arrays, such as Trelion, and installation on commercial properties, domestic settings, and brownfield sites.

EDF Renewables UK already has a partnership with Tesco where we are installing solar panels on the roof of some of its supermarkets and warehouses in England. Brownfield sites for solar farms are also considered but these sites tend to be more challenging in development terms, as the ground conditions are often unfavourable.

### **Will EDF Renewables UK use local contractors?**

During construction there are opportunities for local suppliers and EDF Renewables UK will discuss these opportunities with local companies and contractors. Whilst there are no large scale solar panel suppliers based in the UK, the sorts of opportunities that might be available for local people and contractors are around fencing, drainage, landscaping, habitat management, and maintenance roles.

Please visit our website for further information: [edf-re.uk/our-sites/trelion-solar-farm/](https://edf-re.uk/our-sites/trelion-solar-farm/) or contact us at: [trelion@edf-re.uk](mailto:trelion@edf-re.uk) or call us on 01726 210722.

