

GET INVOLVED!



You can send us your feedback, comments or support via our online Planning Portal:



GO TO

www.lightsource-re.co.uk

In-House Planning



TYPE

'Middle Balbeggie'

We have recently submitted some of the required planning application documents to Fife Council, but we are still gathering information from detailed wildlife and landscape assessments in order to refine the design and tailor the plans for planting and enhancing habitats. We are also able to adjust our proposal to take on board local input, so we would welcome any feedback or suggestions you may have.

We are keen to involve as many local contractors and businesses as we can during the solar farm's construction and the ongoing responsible management of the land. If you would like to be involved in the project, please get in touch, or come and introduce yourself at our information event.

The Planning Team

T: 0333 200 0755

E: info@lightsource-re.co.uk

www.lightsource-re.co.uk

You can also contact us by phone or email. If you would prefer to write to us the traditional way, please get in touch and we will happily send you a pre-paid envelope.

WHY SOLAR?

Stabilising energy bills long term

Once the equipment is installed, the sun's energy is free – this makes solar power a vital long term player in protecting us from the volatile costs of raw materials, such as coal and gas. Generating energy locally also means the UK can take more control over its electricity supply and costs, without relying on foreign supplies.

Championing the local economy

Renting a small portion of land to Lightsource for the generation of renewable energy can provide rural businesses with a predictable, steady income stream which can support the rest of the farming business. We also try to incorporate as many local contractors and service providers into our plans as possible. If you'd like to work with us, please get in touch.

Meeting our targets

The UK is legally committed to meeting 15% of its energy demand from renewable sources by 2020. Solar power is one of the most passive technologies to implement in order to help meet these targets and fight climate change whilst protecting our native wildlife.

Boosting biodiversity

The UK's wildlife is declining in species and number, largely due to intensive crop farming. Solar farms provide pockets of diversified land which allow wildlife habitats to flourish undisturbed and biodiversity levels to increase.

A local educational resource

Solar farms offer a safe opportunity to get up close to the technology whilst it is generating. We often host tours for local school groups on our operational sites, guided by a Lightsource expert. Having a tangible example of renewable energy generation in the community can be a great supplement to learning about electricity, local ecosystems and climate change.

Solar farms do not harm the ground they sit on

Solar farms produce no harmful waste products and the steel, pile driven foundations can simply be pulled out of the ground with no lasting damage. At the end of the working life of a solar farm all infrastructure is removed easily and the land fully restored to the way it was. Not many other 'power stations' can say that.



Newlands Solar Farm, Devon



Haxton Solar Farm, Nottinghamshire



Boards

Visit our YouTube channel 'Lightsource Solar' to watch the video!

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Community Information Pack PROPOSED SOLAR FARM at MIDDLE BALBEGGIE



Benefits

1,300 homes powered by clean, locally produced electricity

Sheep grazing throughout the solar farm

Biodiversity enhancements to enrich wildlife habitats around the boundaries

Opportunities for local residents, students and wildlife groups to get involved in our plans

Lightsource Renewable Energy is working on a proposal for a solar farm at Middle Balbeggie near Thornton in Fife. Lightsource is a British company that already owns and operates a variety of solar farms and rooftop installations across the UK, working with local communities, businesses and landowners to generate green energy locally and sustainably.

The proposed field has been chosen for the project because it is well-screened by surrounding hedgerows and trees, so there are very few views from the surrounding area. The wide field margins and boundary hedgerows will be managed to create and enhance habitats for local birds and wildlife.

Generating energy locally means the UK can reduce its reliance on foreign fossil fuel supplies, but it also opens opportunities for championing the local businesses and skills around each site. If you would like to see how you can get involved in the project, please get in touch with our team, or come and meet us in person at Coaltown Of Wemyss Community Centre on 18th August.



Solar farms provide great opportunities for biodiversity enhancement

Get involved!

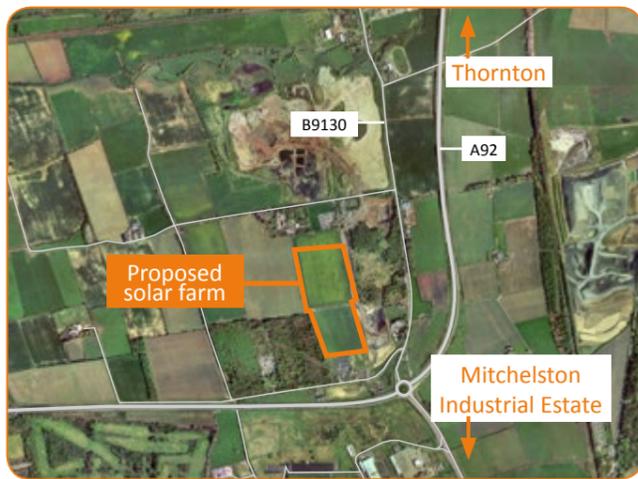
COMMUNITY INFORMATION EVENING

Tuesday 18th August 2015

Coaltown Of Wemyss Community Centre,
Main Street,
Coaltown Of Wemyss,
KY1 4NP

Drop in any time between 5:00 - 8:00 pm

 LIGHTSOURCE



OUR INITIAL PROPOSAL...

Proposed solar farm on land at Middle Balbeggie, Fife, KY1 3NW

Our design and planting proposals will evolve as we gather local input and the results of our ecological, topographical and landscape assessments. These are our current thoughts:



Species-rich grass
Species-rich grass will be sown throughout the site, including the areas oversailed by panels.

New planting
We are proposing a new hedgerow along the northern edge of the site which will create a new field boundary. This will help to mitigate any potential views from the north of the site.



Sheep grazing
The land inside the solar farm will be designed to accommodate the grazing of small livestock.

Vegetation retained

The existing trees and hedgerows around the site boundaries will be retained and managed as part of the project.



Mammal gates
'Mammal gates' in the fencing allow small mammals to move freely across the site undisturbed.

Low height

The panels would reach a maximum height of 2.5 metres so would be rarely glimpsed beyond the site's surrounding hedgerows and woodland. There are no views of the site from the village of Thornton or from the surrounding roads.

HOW MUCH ENERGY?

- 5 Megawatts Peak (MWp)
- 1,300 households powered
- 2,200 tonnes of carbon emissions saved, every year
- ...Equivalent to taking 500 large family cars off the road

To find out how we make our calculations, please take a look at our planning portal at: www.lightsource-re.co.uk

Case study: WILBURTON SOLAR FARM



The 5 Megawatt Lightsource solar farm at Wilburton, Cambridgeshire, was installed in 2011. Since its installation, the land has seen a dramatic increase in its wildlife population. Spotted species include: brown hare, butterflies, dragonflies, numerous bird species, repopulated badger setts and most importantly, an insurgence of the Grey Partridge which is currently a Red List species due to a dramatic decline in recent years.

Find out more: 'Lightsource Solar'



Biodiversity enhancement
The design avoids using areas shaded by boundary vegetation by leaving wide field margins around the site perimeter. These spaces can be utilised to improve prospects for wildlife by sowing wild flowers or installing hibernacula. The specific enhancements we propose here will be decided using the results of our ecological surveys as well as local input and ideas. If you would like to help shape our plans, please get in touch.

All new cabling will be buried underground so there will be no new overhead lines.



Green open space
Wide spaces around the site boundaries and between the rows of panels will leave the majority of the solar farm's grasslands completely open and uncovered.



Rural fencing
A timber and wire agricultural fence of about 2 metres in height will be used, appropriate to the rural setting. The fence will sit inside the surrounding vegetation.

The operation of the solar farm would be of no disturbance to farm animals, wildlife, walkers or motorists. There will be no flood lighting, the solar panels will not move, and as they are designed specifically to absorb daylight, an anti-reflective surface ensures any reflection of light is dull and minimal.



Frequently Asked Questions

How can I get involved?

We welcome as much feedback as possible on our initial designs. If you have a question, would like to help refine our proposal, or belong to a local wildlife group, school or youth group and would like to see how you could get involved, we would love to hear from you. Please get in touch with our planning team via our online Planning Portal:

www.lightsource-re.co.uk
(Full instructions overleaf)

Why harvest energy instead of food?

It isn't a choice - solar farms can do both. Where appropriate, Lightsource solar farms are being designed for the grazing of small livestock, enabling us to generate energy whilst continuing the land's agricultural use.

Are solar farms irreversible development?

No - solar farms are a temporary use of land and do not necessarily lead to further development. At the end of our lease period (usually about 25-30 years) the framework will be removed without harming the land.

Is there an increased risk of flooding around solar farm sites?

No - no mass concrete surface is required and the majority of the solar farm remains open grassland, so the infrastructure on a solar farm does not affect run-off volumes. The panels are raised on a framework which rests on pile-driven legs, so less than 5% of the ground surface is actually disturbed.

Will the solar farm cause traffic disruption?

Whilst the solar farm is being installed, a traffic management plan will be in place to avoid disruption, including organising off-peak daytime deliveries. It would take about 2 months to install the solar farm, averaging about 6 deliveries per day. Once the solar farm is in place it requires very little maintenance and the occasional visits in regular cars or 4x4s would cause no traffic disruption at all.

Are solar farms noisy?

No - you would not expect to hear any noise beyond the site boundary.

Where will the electricity go?

The solar farm will connect to the Local Distribution Network. At its current design, the solar farm would be expected to generate 4,400 Megawatt Hours (MWh) of electricity over the course of a year - this is equivalent to the annual consumption of 1,300 households. Local energy take-off will consume some, if not the majority, of the energy generated.