



Introducing Oldhouse Solar Farm



Who are we?

ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) is part of the ScottishPower group of companies operating in the UK under the Iberdrola Group, one of the world's largest integrated utility companies and a world leader in wind energy. SPR, the first integrated energy utility in the UK to generate 100% green electricity, is already investing a total of £10 billion over five years - £8 million every working day, focusing on wind energy, solar energy, smart grids and driving the change to a cleaner, electric future.

At SPR, we are committed to developing renewable energy responsibly. We strive to be a good neighbour in all aspects of our work and are committed to maximising the opportunities for local communities to benefit from our projects. We aim to find the best balance of environmental factors; to minimise impacts resulting from our developments; and to demonstrate that the benefits of our project are of real value, wide-reaching and shared with the community.

We are at the forefront of the development of the renewables industry through pioneering ideas, forward thinking and outstanding innovation. Our ambitious growth plans include expansion of its existing onshore wind portfolio, investment in new large-scale solar deployment and innovative grid storage systems including batteries.

We are committed to early consultation with the local community in the development of our projects and throughout the development process, to ensure local communities and stakeholders are given the opportunity to provide feedback and are kept informed of project progress.



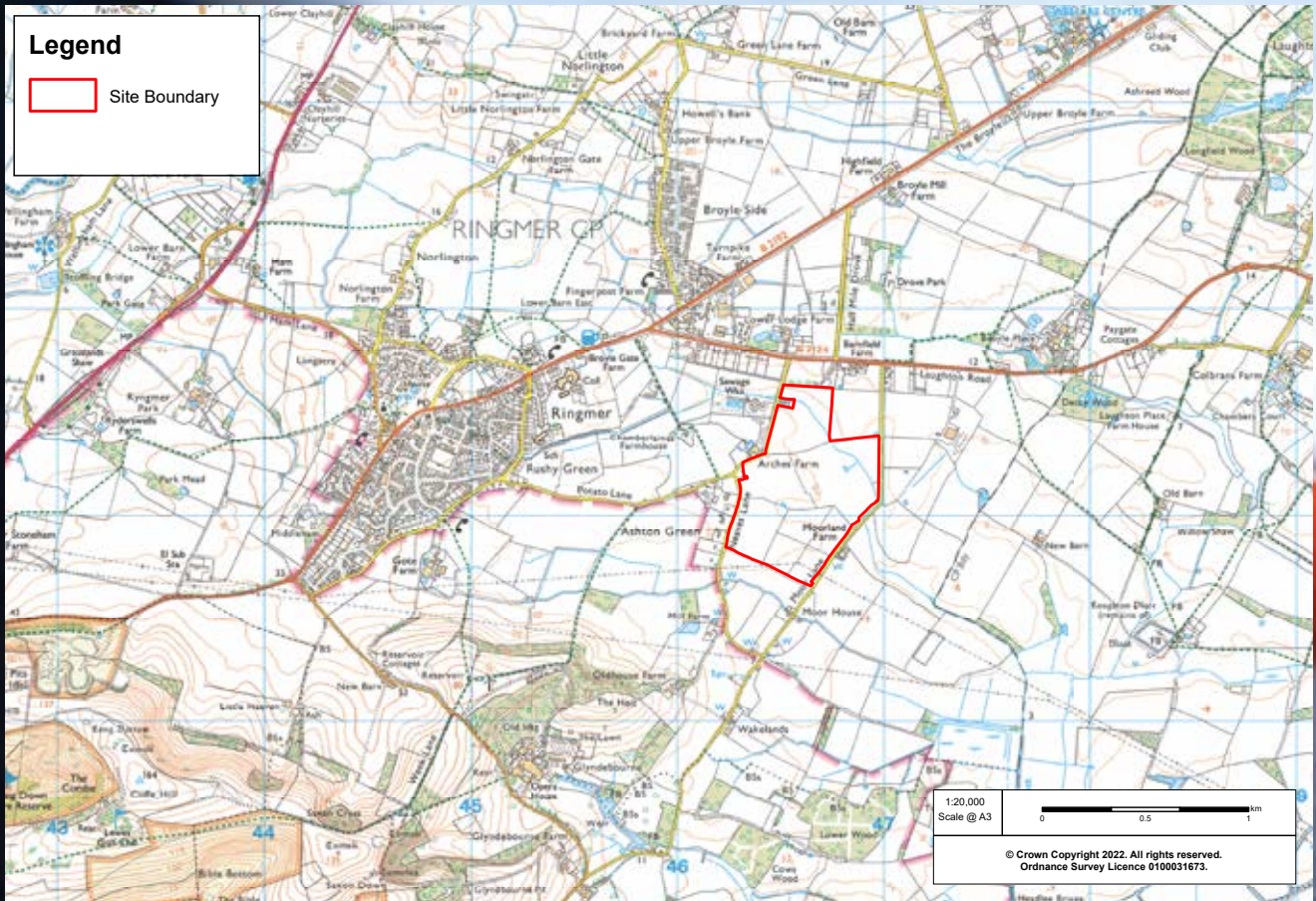
The Oldhouse Solar Farm Proposal

We are proposing a renewable energy development, in the Lewes District, approx. 1 kilometre (km) east of Ringmer, and 4.2km north-east of Lewes, East Sussex.

The site comprises approx. 44 hectares (ha) used for arable farming and rough grazing, sits adjacent to the sewage water treatment works on Neaves Lane, and is bound by Moor Lane to the east of the Site, Neaves Lane to the west and the B2124 Laughton Road to the north. The boundary of the South Downs National Park is located approx. 100m south-west of the site.

The Proposed Development will comprise the installation of solar panels and their supporting infrastructure. If consent is granted, Oldhouse Solar Farm will contribute to achieving Lewes District Council's goal of net-zero emissions by 2030, having a generating capacity of up to 25 megawatts (MW); enough power to supply up to 6350 UK homes*.

*Installed capacity (in MW) multiplied by the number of hours in one year (8,760) multiplied by the average load factor for each technology divided by the average annual household energy consumption (3.831MWh) (being the average annual household energy consumption during 2021, 2020 and 2019 as published within Energy Consumption in the UK 2022, BEIS, 2022).



The **site location** of the Proposed Oldhouse Solar Farm

The Proposed Development

The main component of the Proposed Development consists of rows of solar panels mounted on metal frames. There will be a 4-5 metres (m) distance between each row of panels, with panels being set at an angle between 15-25 degrees and at a height of approx. 3m.

Security fencing and associated infrastructure, planting and biodiversity benefits will also form part of the proposals. Existing greenery will provide screening, and additional planting will enrich biodiversity. It is anticipated that land would continue to be used for sheep grazing, allowing the Site to remain in agricultural use.

A substation compound will be installed and is proposed to be located in the north-eastern area of the site, adjacent to the site access point off Moor Lane. A 132-kilovolt (kV) overhead line travels across the south-eastern corner of Site providing a means for connection onto the National Grid. It is considered this is an excellent site for a solar farm as it is suitably sunny, well screened and has an available grid connection nearby.

Construction and access

The solar farm will be constructed, owned, operated and maintained by SPR. Site access is proposed off Moor Lane, approx. 480m south of the Moor Lane/B2124 T-junction. At this stage, construction routes are still being considered in order to determine the best and most viable route.

It is expected that there would be approx. 10-15 HGVs travelling on to site per week at the peak of construction, for approx. four months of an overall nine-month build programme.

The construction period would comprise the following stages:

- Access, onsite tracks and infrastructure – construction of a new access, internal onsite tracks and construction compound
- Mobilisation – delivery of plant, equipment and construction materials
- Assembling of components – delivery of solar panels and other components and installation on site.

Once operational the Proposed Development would require ongoing maintenance and, roughly once a month, site visits to check and service the installation



The need for renewable energy

Policy at the 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.

Key UK Government policies that showcase the need for renewable energy are:

- 2008 – the Climate Change Act set a legally binding target to reduce its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050, compared to 1990 levels.
- 2019 – the 80% target was raised to 100% by 2050.
- 2021 – the Net Zero Strategy was published, setting out how the net zero target would be met, making it clear that solar and wind generation are the backbone to achieving a secure, affordable and low carbon energy supply.

At the local level, Lewes District Council declared a Climate Emergency motion in 2019 and made it clear that it considers tackling climate change to be the District's most important issue.

The UK is still heavily reliant upon fossil fuels for electricity generation and the continued transition towards renewable energy is expected to lead to a reduction in electricity bills and provide greater energy security for all consumers, whilst reducing GHG emissions and helping to meet climate change objectives. Solar generation plays an important part in the UK energy mix and, along with wind, is now one of the lowest cost forms of new, large-scale electricity generation in the UK.



Environmental considerations

We are currently undertaking a range of environmental assessments to inform the site design and for submission alongside the planning application. These include:

- Landscape and visual impact
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Heritage and archaeology
- Traffic and access
- Glint and glare
- Noise
- Flood risk
- Agricultural land classification.

The work carried out to date has informed the current design of the proposed Oldhouse Solar Farm. Where required, suitable mitigation will be designed into the scheme. The overall aim is to design a layout that has the least environmental impact whilst optimising the renewable energy generation from the Site.



Benefits of Oldhouse Solar Farm

If approved, Oldhouse Solar Farm will provide a source of renewable electricity which in turn, will assist in reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

The Proposed Development has the potential to provide a significant contribution to meeting the climate emergency net zero commitment and contribute to local and national aims of continuing to move towards renewable energy generation.

The Proposed Development will also provide job creation in its manufacturing, installation and maintenance.



Community benefits of the Oldhouse Solar Farm

SPR has been working alongside communities across the UK and Ireland for over two decades and is committed to being a responsible developer of renewable energy and a good neighbour in the communities where we operate.

We are keen for nearby communities to share in the benefits of our projects and, to date, we have shared over £1.5 million in community benefit funding to communities surrounding our onshore windfarms in England. These communities are empowered to decide how to direct their funds towards local initiatives that best serve the needs of their community. Funds can be used to deliver a wide range of activities and we ask that these sit within one of the following categories:

- Net Zero/emission reduction
- Environmental
- Community facilities and services
- Skills and employment
- Heritage
- Community and local events
- Sport and recreation
- Youth and education.

Communities across the country have used their funding to improve energy efficiency and reduce the running costs of their community buildings by adding solar panels, insulation or by replacing inefficient windows and doors.

At Coldham Windfarm in Cambridgeshire, funds have been used to deliver a series of environmental activity sessions for adults and children to engaging them in their local environment. Activities included pond dipping, bug hunting, animal footprint ID, wildlife-themed games, fire lighting, natural art, fossil hunting and sensory games.

Although referring to a wind farm development, the community benefit example above shows how the community funding could be used to benefit the community close to the Oldhouse Solar Farm. The community benefit fund would consist of a one-off payment once the solar farm is fully operational.



Powering your community

We are committed to being a responsible developer of renewable energy and strive to be a good neighbour in all areas of our work. We encourage as many people as possible to get involved in and to learn more about our projects, particularly in understanding the local economic and social benefits our developments can create. As we progress with Oldhouse Solar Farm, we will engage with communities, stakeholders and Lewes District Council to understand how benefits could be delivered to best meet the needs of the local area, should the Proposed Development be consented.



Next steps

We welcome your feedback on our initial proposal to help us refine the details of Oldhouse Solar Farm. Please use our feedback form to provide us with your comments.

We will use the findings from environmental surveys, technical studies, and consultation feedback to continue to shape the design of the Proposed Development ahead of submitting an application to Lewes District Council in December 2023.

Please note that any comments made to SPR on the proposal at this stage are not representations to the planning authority. When the application for consent is submitted to the Council, statutory consultation will be undertaken. At that time, you will have the opportunity to make a formal representation on the proposal.

You can view more detailed information and ask questions via our website:

www.scottishpowerrenewables.com/oldhouse-farm

These contacts can also be used for requests for any further information, submitting comments or asking questions regarding the Proposed Development at any time.

Email: OldhouseSolar@scottishpower.com

Post: **Oldhouse Solar Farm Project Team · ScottishPower Renewables · 9th Floor · Scottish Power Headquarters · 320 St Vincent Street · Glasgow G2 5AD**

Thank you for attending the Oldhouse Solar Farm Public Information Event.