

Project Rationale

Benefits of Solar Energy

What benefits will it bring?

This project represents an important contribution to meeting the UK's legally binding target under the Climate Change Act 2008 to achieve a 'net zero' carbon account by 2050. Renewable energy developments deliver a clean, secure source of electricity that is generated in the UK using natural resources. Solar power represents a 'clean' source of renewable energy as it doesn't release any harmful emissions or pollutants and is also one of the cheapest forms of new renewable power generation in the UK.

Assisting the Climate Emergency

The proposed project will assist the UK in urgently reducing greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets and the declared Climate Emergency to transition to a low carbon future. Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council declared a climate change emergency in 2019 and set itself five ambitious objectives:

- To reduce carbon emissions from their own estate and operations to net zero by 2030, or a justification for a later date if the review finds this unachievable.
- To comply with statutory obligations to mitigate and adapt to climate change.
- To work with, support, encourage and engage residents, communities, businesses and other partners in initiatives to reduce carbon emissions.
- To embed climate change mitigation and adaptation into their plans, strategies and policies.
- To reduce carbon emissions across the borough by promoting energy efficiency measures, sustainable construction, renewable energy, sustainable transport and behavioural change.

Improving local biodiversity

The proposed solar farm will reduce Welwyn Garden City's carbon footprint^[1] by 16% providing the end user with approximately 914GWh of renewable energy over the lifespan (30 years) of the project. This would release supply capacity back to the National Grid by meeting the equivalent demand of around 54%^[2] of household demand for Welwyn Garden City. This would enable further growth and development within City and its surrounding areas.

Security of supply

Solar power generated in the UK reduces the need to import electricity and gas from abroad. This not only creates energy industry jobs in the UK, but also makes our energy supply and prices more secure. Energy supplied from overseas can vary in price as supply and demand change, but domestic power generation means that UK prices and availability are not reliant on/impacted by price rises or instability in other countries.

Protecting the landscape

Incorporating the existing and proposed new hedgerow planting will be used to contain and screen the proposed solar panels from the surroundings, minimising any visual impact. Based on current specifications, solar panels will be no higher than 3m.

Community benefit contribution

WGC Solar Limited has volunteered to make a donation into a community benefit fund. We will consult with the local community and relevant organisations to agree how best to organise this fund, and feedback on this is welcome.

Employing locally and utilisation of local supply chain

WGC Solar Limited is committed to employing locally and utilising the local supply chain during construction and operation where possible.

Community ownership of renewable generation assets

Feedback from the community to date has indicated that the local residents would like to benefit from the low carbon and low-cost renewable energy that the proposed solar farm will generate. While this is not possible for both technical and commercial reasons, Ripple Energy has developed a community ownership model that would allow the local community to participate in the benefits of an alternative project.

WGC Solar Ltd and Colt have been engaged with Ripple Energy to explore this opportunity and how it could work for the West Welwyn Solar project. As part of a community benefit fund, the project could contribute a set amount of funding for each household in proximity to the solar site, which would pay for a proportion of the cost to build a renewable energy project such as a wind turbine or solar farm. The household would then receive the same proportion of the low carbon electricity produced for the lifetime of the renewable asset. Savings related to electricity generated would be credited onto the household's utility bill each month. Feedback on this concept would be very helpful. More information can be found at <https://rippleenergy.com/>



Data centres are key for everyday life

We rely heavily on data centres for our everyday lives; banking, shopping, connecting with friends and family. None of this would be possible as it is today without the significant work that data centres do. During the Covid-19 pandemic when everyone was asked to work from home, data centres' workload increased dramatically to enable new ways of working. Without the services that data centres provide home working would not have been possible. They also play a fundamental part in helping to deliver our national security by helping keep finances secure and protecting our data from security breaches.

If you have any further questions, please email us at:

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You can visit our project website:

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