

Who Are We?



Lightsource bp is a global leader in the development and management of solar energy projects. We work closely with local businesses and communities to supply clean, dependable and competitively priced energy, and we're dedicated to securing a low-carbon future, in the UK and worldwide.

Community engagement

We're keen to hear the opinions of the local community to better shape our project for resubmission. We will be holding an information event to provide details about our project ideas at this stage, and we welcome your feedback. The information event will be held on 6th June at

Hett Moor Village Hall
Hett Village
DH6 5LY

Drop in any time between 4pm and 6pm



Find out more






If you have queries in relation to this project, please contact the project team by calling **0333 200 0755**, or emailing info@lightsourcebp.com, quoting "Hett Moor". You can also message us on Facebook or write to us at Lightsource bp, 7th Floor, 33 Holborn, London, EC1N 2HU.

Community Information Pack

Proposed solar farm at Hett Moor Farm, Thinford Lane, Thinford, Spennymoor, Durham DH6 5JZ



Statistics

-  **49.9MWac** installed capacity
-  Equivalent to the energy needs of **14,400** households
-  **258** acres of land
-  **14,900** tonnes of carbon emissions saved
-  Equivalent to taking over **8,200** cars off the road

Lightsource bp is resubmitting a proposal for a solar farm at Hett Moor Farm, Thinford Lane, Thinford, Spennymoor, Durham DH6 5JZ. We will fund the development of a solar farm to be connected into the local electricity network, with an output power capacity of 49.9MWac.

The project was originally submitted in 2021, and planning permission was refused by Durham Planning Committee in June 2022. We've since taken into account the comments received on the first application and have amended our designs for resubmission. We maintain that this site, chosen after careful consideration, is an ideal location for a solar project, and in the light of the UK Government's reaffirmed commitments to renewable energy we strongly feel that this proposed solar farm would be an important asset in shifting County Durham towards a more sustainable future.

An important part of the planning process is engaging with local communities to provide more information on our proposals and gather feedback. While we've updated our original proposal, the new plans are still under review and we're keen to hear the opinions of the local community to better shape our project for resubmission. With that in mind, we're holding an information event to display our plans and gather feedback. Members of the Lightsource bp team will be on hand to answer any questions about the proposal from local residents and interested parties.

This project will contribute towards the UK's 2050 net zero targets.

Get involved!

6th June 2023 at:

COMMUNITY INFORMATION EVENT

Hett Moor Village Hall
Hett Village
DH6 5LY

Drop in any time between 4pm and 6pm

We've set up a dedicated webpage for this proposed project at www.lightsourcebp.com/uk/projects/hett-moor, with further project information and opportunities to get in touch with us to discuss the proposal.

Our initial thoughts

Proposed solar farm at Hett Moor Farm, Thinford Lane, Thinford, Spennymoor, Durham DH6 5JZ

Our initial plans were formulated following a wide range of environmental assessments, including landscape and visual, heritage and archaeology, ecology and ornithology, flooding and more. We've also taken into account the comments received during the initial application, and have adapted our plans accordingly. The proposal below is not yet finalised, and we welcome any thoughts and feedback from the local community to help us further shape our plans.

Continued Agricultural Use

These fields are currently used for agriculture. Our proposal includes plans to create a meadow grassland which can be lightly grazed by sheep, so the land under the solar installation will maintain an agricultural purpose.



Access (→)

Proposed construction and operational access will be from the existing Farm access points.

Green Lane

A green lane will be created with space either side of the public footpath to maintain openness. To further screen the solar panels native hedgerows will be planted either side.

Agricultural Land Grading

We have conducted an Agricultural Land Classification Survey which has classified the land as Grade 3b, which is not best and most versatile land.









New Vegetation Planting







We will submit a detailed planting plan as part of the planning application, which will focus on screening potential views of the installation using vegetation and increasing biodiversity.

Green Open Spaces

The installation has been designed to leave wide spaces around the site boundaries and between the row of panels to avoid shading the panels. This will leave the majority of the fenced solar array area as uncovered grassland.



-  Trees and vegetation. For native hedgerows, new maintenance regime to be maintained at a height of 3m and above
-  Creation of new hedgerows
-  Enhancement of existing hedgerows with infill hedgerow planting
-  New tree planting
-  New woodland planting
-  Emorsgate EM1-Basic General Purpose Meadow Mixture, or similar approved

-  Footpath
-  Bridleway
-  Cycle Route
-  Civil Parish (CP)
-  Power line
-  Site boundary

Change to proposal – removal of panels

To reduce the landscape and visual effect we have removed rows of panels from the south-west of the site and are proposing to increase the hedgerow planting.

Change to proposal – landscaping

After reviewing the proposed development, we have decided to increase hedgerow planting along the field boundaries and access tracks within the site. This will help to break up the appearance of the rows of solar panels. While developing the layout we have sought to maintain the majority of the existing vegetation onsite. We will submit a detailed planting plan as part of the planning application, which will focus on screening potential views of the installation using vegetation and increasing biodiversity.

Views and Screening

The established field boundaries provide excellent screening from the A688. These will be enhanced with additional planting and maintenance.

FAQS

Why is this project important?

Solar is a passive form of technology, generating electricity without creating any waste products or pollutants. This makes it an ideal energy source for the UK, as we work towards the 2050 net zero targets.

Why solar rather than agriculture?

It isn't a choice - solar installations can do both. The proposed layout for the solar installation has been designed in such a way that most of the open grassland on the site will be suitable for grazing small livestock, allowing the land to retain the potential for agricultural use.

How will the equipment be protected?

The solar farm will be enclosed by a timber and wire agricultural fence about 2 metres in height, and CCTV cameras will monitor the boundary fence and area within the solar farm. These will be specifically positioned to make sure they do not impinge on the privacy of residents.

How are the panels kept clean?

Generally, rainfall helps to keep the panels free of dust and dirt. Several times a year, the panels will be thoroughly cleaned using specialist equipment, to make sure the installation is in the best possible condition.

Do solar farms pose a health risk?

No - solar is a passive technology which doesn't produce any harmful by-products. All electrical equipment we use meets the Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive and are CE marked.

Will the solar farm cause traffic disruption?

Once the solar farm is in place it requires very little maintenance and approximately monthly visits in regular cars or 4x4s would cause no traffic disruption. Whilst the solar farm is being constructed, a traffic management plan will be put in place.

This map is a combination of Ordnance Survey map reference: NZ 28902 35105 and aerial imagery dated [2018]

