

OUSE VALLEY

SOLAR FARM



An Invitation to Public Consultation Events

Tuesday 9th November 17.30-20.30: Kings Academy Ringmer

Wednesday 10th November 12.30-19.00: Ringmer Village Hall

Friday 12th November 14.00-16.00: Depot Cinema, Lewes



**OUSE VALLEY
SOLAR FARM**
FOR COMMUNITY BENEFIT

An aerial photograph showing a large array of blue solar panels installed on a green grassy field. The panels are arranged in a grid pattern, with white lines separating them. The perspective is from above, looking down at the panels.

OVESCO is the Sussex based community energy company with a vision for a future in which 100% of our energy needs are generated locally from renewable sources.

OVESCO wants to work with you to create a solar farm that will benefit your community. That is why Ovesco is proposing to prepare and submit a planning application to Lewes District Council for a community solar farm, to be owned by and for the benefit of the community on land at Norlington Farm, north of Norlington Lane, Ringmer.

It is estimated that the solar farm will have an installed capacity of approximately 17MW of clean renewable electricity for distribution to the national grid. This is equivalent to the annual electrical needs of over 4,000 family homes across East Sussex.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE OUSE VALLEY SOLAR FARM?

- «The project will support the UK's urgent need to transition to a low carbon future, producing significant amounts of renewable energy.
 - «It will assist Lewes District Council to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national and international targets, as well as their own targets of achieving carbon neutrality by 2030.
 - «It will contribute towards the security of energy supply in the Lewes District through the provision of local, community led renewable energy supply.
 - «To help future proof the site for an involving dynamic energy market, provision is made for battery energy storage onsite to store electricity generated from the solar array and then supply the grid network when peak energy requires it most. This addition helps make the renewable energy output of the solar farm a secure and reliable part of the local energy supply network.
 - «A solar farm as a temporary development, which enables agricultural land to rest for the period of operation.
 - «In addition to energy production, a solar farm supports biodiversity by allowing small animals, birds, insects and wildflowers to flourish.
 - «No protected landscape, heritage or ecological designations will be affected by the solar farm.
 - «We anticipate that construction will be complete in approximately 4 months from commencement.
 - «The proposed solar farm will not require Government subsidy and local people will be given the opportunity to invest in the project and become shareowners as a community energy project.
 - «OVESCO is committed to using local suppliers during construction and operation where possible.
- As a community energy company we will always develop projects considerably
- We will only develop solar farms on low productivity land and believe that the delivery of each project can be achieved in harmony with its surroundings.

NET ZERO BY 2050

According to the UN, climate change is the 'defining crisis of our time and it is happening even more quickly than we feared'.

We have to create more renewable energy.



The UK Government has committed to reducing economy-wide greenhouse gas emissions by at least 68 percent by 2030, compared to 1990 levels. In addition to this, the Government has made a legal commitment to cut carbon emissions to net zero by 2050. This will require a rapid and expanded deployment of low carbon power, including solar.

Lewes District Council has laid out plans to reach carbon neutrality after declaring a climate emergency in 2019 when councillors unanimously backed a motion for the authority to declare a climate emergency and become carbon neutral by 2030.

OVESCO is the Sussex based community energy company with a vision for a future in which 100% of our energy needs are generated locally from renewable sources.



OVESCO invests time and money to improve our current and future environment to combat climate change. Since 2007 OVESCO has successfully developed, and now manages a range of fifteen local solar projects. Our projects are founded on local investment, keeping money circulating locally, while achieving real carbon reductions and stable, long-term financial returns. We develop clean, green energy projects and educate and advise the Sussex community (particularly Lewes District) on energy efficiency, reduction and clean technologies. As a

community energy company all surplus income is used for the benefit of the community.

OVESCO's mission is to continue to reduce carbon emissions across the South-East and to enable Lewes and surrounding villages to become Carbon Neutral. This mission will be achieved through developing and managing local smart, efficient and responsible community-owned renewable energy projects, specialising in solar photovoltaic (PV) generators and their associated infrastructure.

POWERED BY YOU

We work with local communities to deliver renewable energy projects in East Sussex. Ouse Valley Solar Farm will be owned by members of the local community. Everyone will have the opportunity to become investors and become an owner of the solar farm.

Once we have received planning permission and are ready to start the preparations for construction, the local community will have the opportunity to invest in the project. Everyone who invests will receive a maximum annual return on their investment with their capital returned over the life time of the project.

The project is expected to produce a reliable income stream from which interest can be paid to local investors and into a community benefit fund. All surplus income must be dispersed for the benefit of the community.



OUR CONSULTATION APPROACH

OVESCO firmly believes that it is vital that local communities are able to see and shape planning applications on projects such as this. The objectives of the consultation are therefore:

- To inform local people about OVESCO's proposals in a clear and concise way.
- To develop local understanding of the project and to gain feedback to refine the proposal.
- To create a process through which local people can comment on the formal proposals, and
- To explore how the scheme could kickstart community involvement in renewable energy

Ongoing Community consultation will run throughout the pre-planning process and beyond. OVESCO will arrange to meet local neighbours on an informal basis to discuss specific arrangements that may affect them such as viewpoints and screening options. OVESCO has informally contacted Ringmer Parish Council and will build on this to identify any issues of concern to the Council.

We therefore invite you to provide feedback on our draft proposals in the following ways:

1. Fill in the feedback form that accompanies this public consultation brochure.

Please read through the leaflet and provide feedback to us by way of the free post feedback form that came with the brochure.

2. Attend our public consultation events on Tuesday 9th November and Wednesday 10th November in Ringmer and Friday 12th November in Lewes.

You are invited to attend one of our public consultation events where you can see our plans, learn more about our proposal and talk to the project team.

The events will be held at:

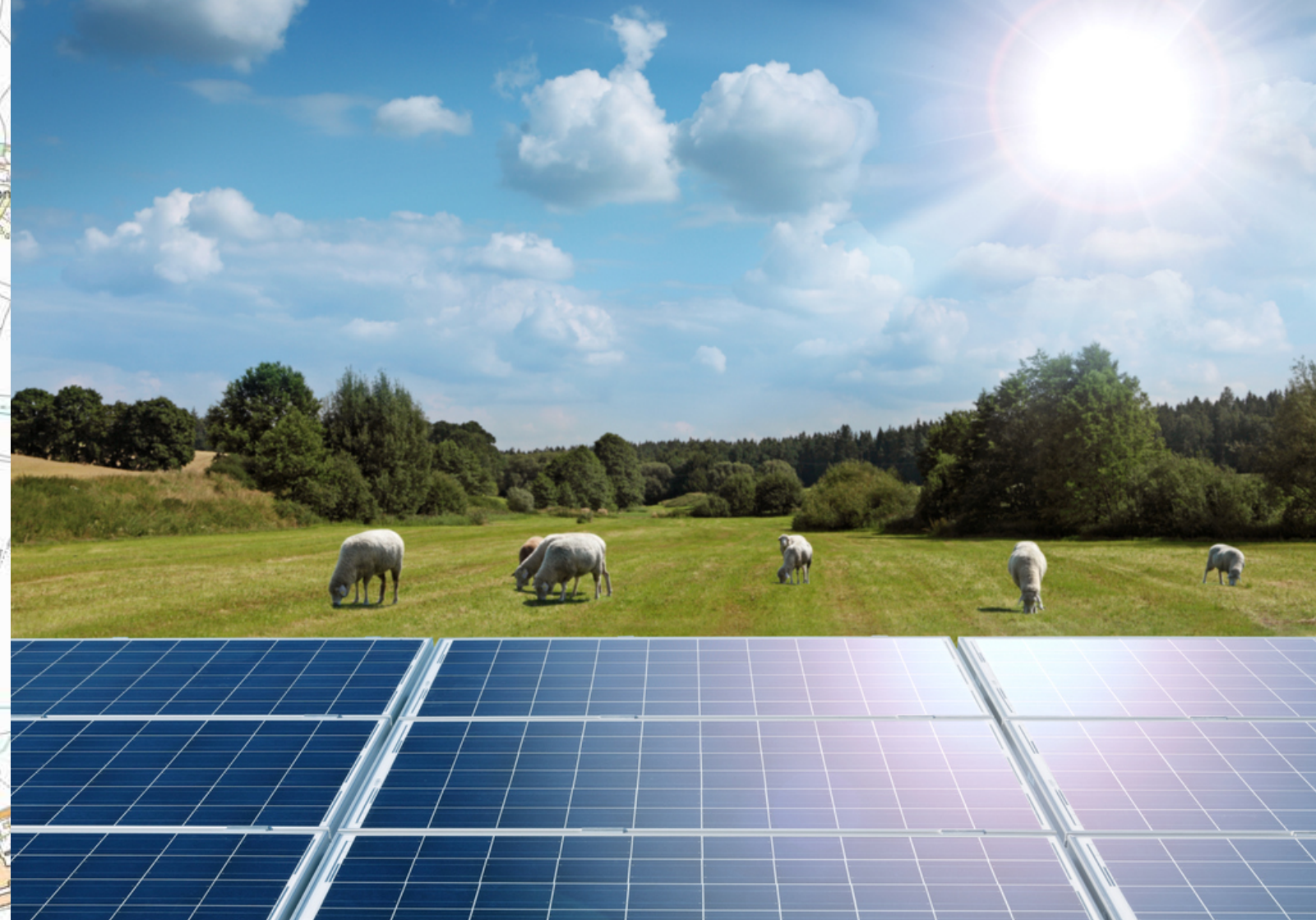
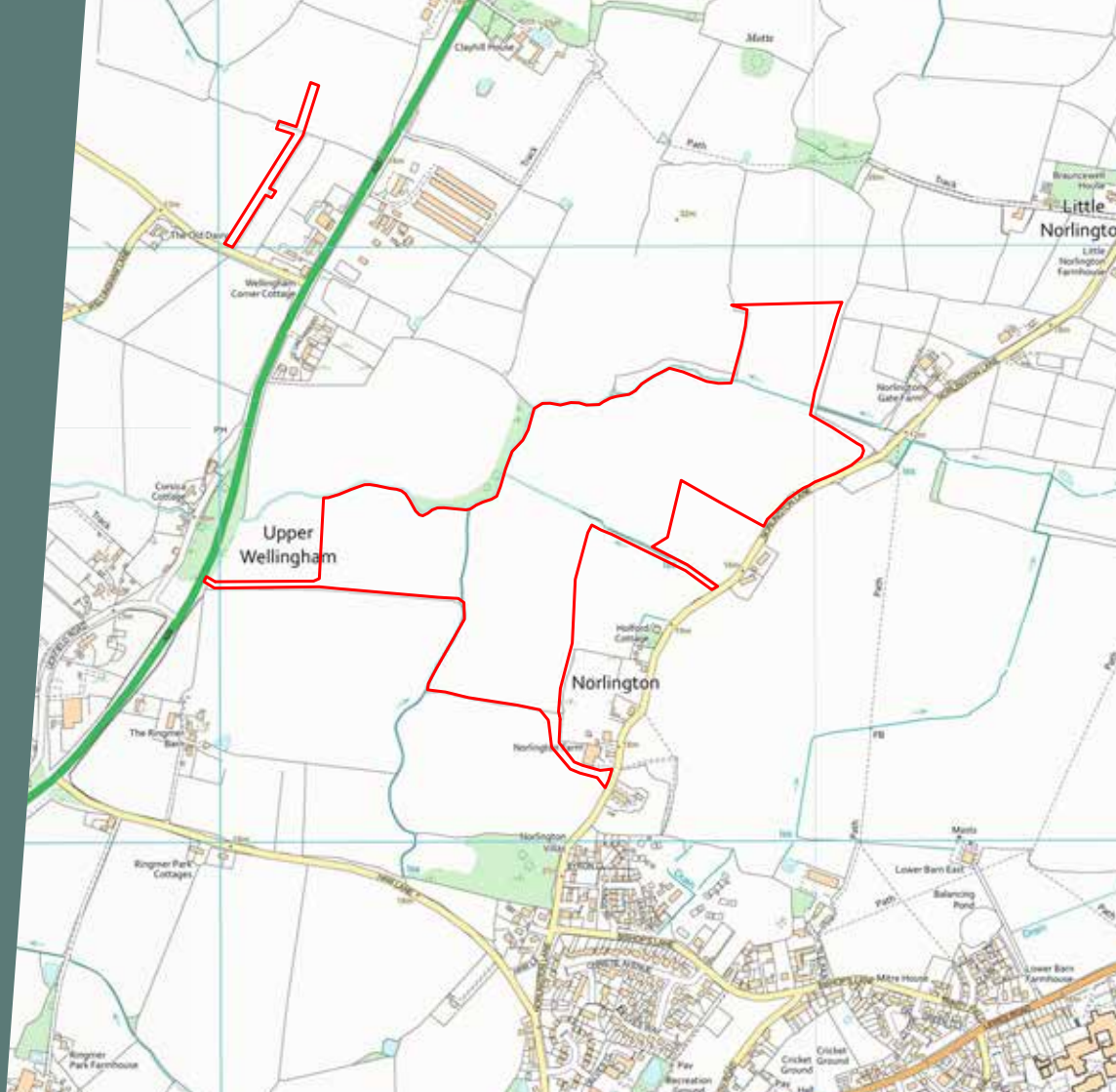
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| Tuesday 9th November 17.30-20.30: | Kings Academy Ringmer
(Steve Green Room), Lewes Road, Ringmer, East
Sussex BN8 5RB |
| Wednesday 10th November 12.30-19.00: | Ringmer Village Hall (Jack Hart Room), Lewes Road,
Ringmer, East Sussex BN8 5QH |
| Friday 12th November 14.00-16.00: | Depot Cinema (Studio Room) Pinwell Road, Lewes,
East Sussex BN7 2JS |

Visit the dedicated public consultation website: <https://ovesco.co.uk/ouse-valley-solar-farm/>. We have set up a dedicated public consultation website, where you can find information about our draft proposals and provide feedback.



WHERE IS THE PROPOSED OUSE VALLEY SOLAR FARM?

OVESCO is developing Ouse Valley Solar Farm on a parcel of land circa 26 hectares (around 65 acres) at Norlington Farm, to the south east of Barcombe Reservoir, on the east side of the A26 road and to the west of Ringmer.





PLANNING

A planning application will be lodged with Lewes District Council. All relevant designs, elevations studies and reports will be submitted. The project is subject to planning approval and further consultation will be conducted as part of the planning process.

CONSTRUCTION

If approved by Lewes District Council after the consultation period and application process, the solar farm would be built over a period of circa four months. The aim would be to complete by September 2022. Construction Traffic- During the four month construction phase daily deliveries would be required. A traffic management plan would be agreed with East Sussex Highways to minimise disruption during construction within the local area. Once commissioned and operational there would be very little traffic to the site during its lifetime.

PROPOSED TIMELINE

	Dec 21
	Jan 22
PLANNING APPLICATION	Feb 22
	Mar 22
	Apr 22
COMMUNITY SHARE OFFER	May 22
	Jun 22
	Jul 22
CONSTRUCTION & COMMISSIONING	Aug 22
	Sep 22

COMMUNITY COMMITMENTS

Biodiversity - Hedgerows provide a species rich environment and taking the fields out of arable rotation will allow considerable biodiversity net gain over the lifetime of the solar farm. Additional hedgerow planting would be provided, and gaps filled along some of the existing boundary hedgerows to minimise visual impact and to maximise biodiversity. Bat boxes, bird boxes, bug hotels, log piles and skylark mitigation will be added within the site and along boundaries.

Public Footpath - No rights of way will be removed or diverted as a result of the proposal. All appropriate safety measures will be in place during construction. An education area is proposed adjoining the footpath.

Potential Visual Impact - Mitigation measures being proposed will reduce the visibility of Ouse Valley Solar Farm from outside the site. The solar farm is enclosed by tree canopies and hedging to the north. The solar farm will be visible in part from the public footpath. A landscape visual impact assessment will be undertaken and the findings will inform the final design to mitigate identified areas of impact.

Flood Risk - A topography survey is being undertaken. A flood risk assessment and drainage strategy will be implemented to mitigate or avoid potential flood issues.

Archaeology - All archeologically sensitive areas will be identified, and appropriate mitigation considered within design.

Community benefit fund - All surplus income from the project will be returned to the community. The community benefit fund will be used in two ways: on future additional decarbonisation and energy efficiency projects; and on wider engagement with the community through education and addressing fuel poverty.

Please do contact ousevalleysolar@ovesco.co.uk if you wish to find out more about scheme.

OVESCO is grateful for the support of the Rural Community Energy Fund in developing this project.

Feedback form

OUSE VALLEY Solar Farm

To return your completed feedback form please tear it from the brochure and pop it in the post by **19 November 2021**. Alternatively, you can return your form via email to feedback@alpacacommunications.com

Title:	Name:		
Address:			Postcode:
Email:	Telephone:		

1. Has this local public exhibition been helpful in understanding our proposal? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not sure
2. With regards to the proposals you have read about within this public exhibition, are you:
☐ In favour ☐ In objection ☐ Of no opinion
3. Please use this space to provide any comments on the proposal. We would welcome your feedback on all aspects of the emerging design shown at this public exhibition.

Please provide your contact details if you wish to get a response. Any information provided will only be used for the purpose of the planning application to the Local Planning Authority and will not be disclosed with any third parties. **Your contact details will not be listed on the planning application documentation.**

Freepost

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