



Kingsway
Solar

Summer update newsletter

2025

Welcome to our summer update newsletter for Kingsway Solar. Through this newsletter, we provide an overview of our stage one consultation, the responses we received and how we have been working to prepare an initial project design, which we are continuing to develop and expect to present later this year during our stage two consultation.

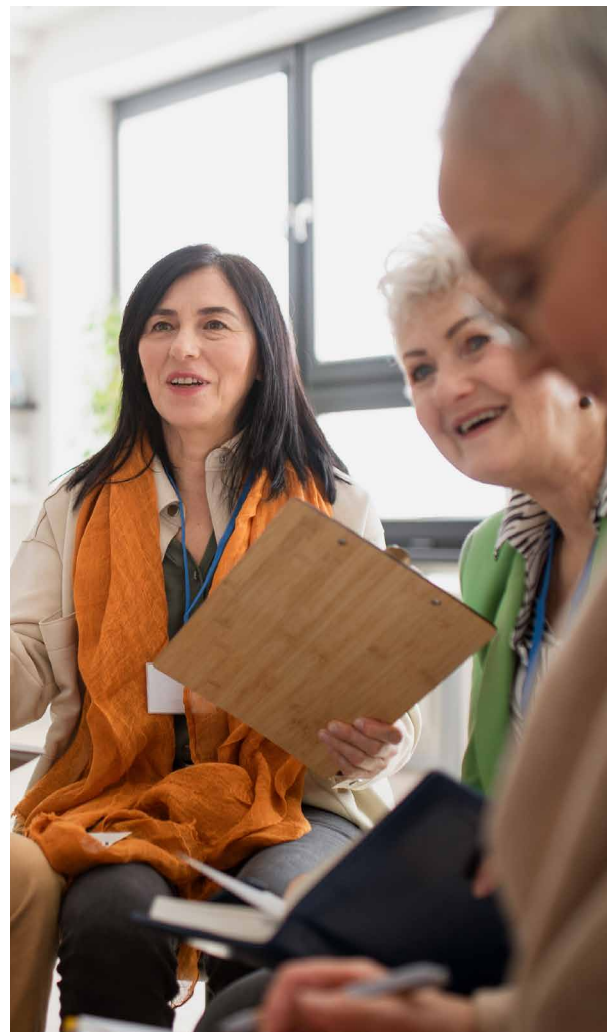
Kingsway Solar is a proposed solar farm and battery storage project to be located on parcels of land around the areas of Balsham, West Wratting, Weston Colville, and Weston Green in Cambridgeshire. It will also include an approximate 15 km grid connection to National Grid's planned Burwell South substation, due to be located to the south of the existing substation at Burwell (the exact location to be determined by National Grid). **The project would have the capacity to generate up to 500 megawatts (MW) of electricity and power approximately 175,000 homes.**

Between 31 October and 12 December 2024, we held our stage one consultation on Kingsway Solar. This was to introduce the project, explain its benefits and the need for solar, and to gather early feedback from the local community to help inform the development of an initial project design.

The consultation process

Kingsway Solar is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project and we are therefore required to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero in accordance with the Planning Act 2008. The Secretary of State will appoint an Examining Authority who will examine the application and make a recommendation to the Secretary of State who will decide if the Scheme should be approved.

While the decision sits with the Secretary of State, the views of local communities, landowners, authorities, statutory undertakers and other stakeholders and interest groups are important and will be carefully considered.





Stage one consultation

We were pleased to meet nearly 500 people across the three in-person events and an online webinar held during the consultation period. We valued the opportunity to hear directly from local people and understand your views on our early stage proposals, including on the land parcel areas and grid connection corridors, as well as your thoughts on environmental considerations and ideas for community benefits.

We received nearly 700 responses to the stage one consultation and would like to thank everyone who took part by attending an event or providing feedback. Our team has been carefully reviewing all feedback to identify recurring themes, key concerns, and valuable ideas that could enhance the project's benefits and reduce the potential impacts. Where feasible, we will incorporate the feedback into the initial project design, which we are continuing to develop, and will present during our stage two consultation.

The feedback you provided covered a variety of topics. Some of the key recurring feedback themes are detailed below, including how we have been exploring ways to address it. During our stage two consultation, we will provide further details on how we have sought to address and incorporate this feedback within the initial project design.



Land use and agriculture / food security

There were concerns about impacting the current land use and wanting to protect high quality agricultural land to support UK food production. We will reduce the potential disruption to local farming practices as much as possible, and Kingsway Solar will not degrade the quality of soils. We are exploring options to retain some agricultural land use and we will include areas within our land parcels that are not required for infrastructure.



Landscape and visual impact

Many respondents raised concerns about a negative visual impact of the solar, battery energy storage systems and overhead line infrastructure on the landscape and character of the area. We are assessing the visual impact and working with specialists to develop indicative natural planting and screening proposals where necessary, to complement existing screening.



Biodiversity and ecology

The feedback highlighted concerns about the impact on a rich variety of wildlife and habitats, and there were requests for this to be protected and enhanced. We are looking at ways to protect, preserve and manage any existing areas and features of environmental significance. We are also exploring opportunities to enhance existing, and create new, habitats to encourage greater ecological diversity. Our environmental impact assessments to identify and understand how Kingsway Solar may have an effect on the environment are ongoing, and our preliminary findings related to biodiversity and ecology will be presented during our stage two consultation.



Proximity to residential areas

Many respondents expressed a strong concern with the proximity of the project to residential areas. In particular, respondents were concerned with the size of Land Parcel C and its location close to local villages. We are currently developing an initial project design while mitigating the impact on local people as much as feasibly possible. This includes reviewing the possible location of infrastructure within the land parcel areas in relation to residential properties.



Site selection

Feedback highlighted concerns about the location of the project and whether alternative sites had been considered. There was a multi-stage approach to site selection, led by the grid connection into National Grid's planned new Burwell South substation. The constraints and opportunities were considered for a number of factors, and we are developing an initial project design to minimise the effect on the environment and local communities as much as possible.



Community benefits

There were many suggestions for how Kingsway Solar could provide community benefit to support local people. Some of the initial ideas received include improving local Public Rights of Way (PRoW), developing green amenities, providing compensation such as through subsidised energy, supporting local education facilities, installing rooftop solar on local buildings, developing electric vehicle charging points, and more. We welcome all suggestions on how local people should benefit and expect to share more information on community benefits during our stage two consultation later this year, where we will be encouraging further suggestions.

Next steps

Since our stage one consultation, we have been reviewing the feedback received and continuing our detailed environmental and technical surveys to inform the development of Kingsway Solar. This includes a variety of ongoing surveys for our Environmental Impact Assessment, which is also used to inform the development of our initial project design.

As part of our programme of surveys, we have contacted local landowners to help arrange access to the land. This has included for walkover surveys to map and categorise habitats, assess the suitability for species to be present in the area, check for breeding birds and undertake Great Crested Newt surveys.

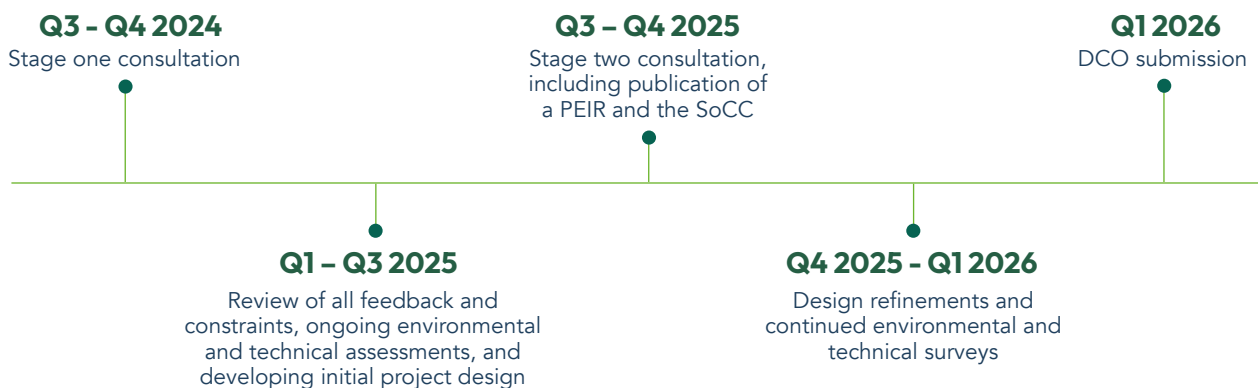
Our surveys and design work is ongoing, and our stage two consultation is therefore planned to begin in late summer / early autumn 2025. Before the consultation takes place, we will prepare a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC) which will be shared and reviewed by Cambridgeshire County Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council and East Cambridgeshire District Council.

The SoCC will set out how we will undertake our stage two consultation, including how consultation will be made accessible, how it will be advertised and how local communities and stakeholders with an interest in the project can provide feedback.

As part of stage two consultation, we will also publish our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) which will explain how the project will interact with the environment, and provide consultees with an informed view of the identified likely significant effects.

Following the stage two consultation, we will review and have regard to all the responses received as we continue to refine the project design. We will set out a summary of the responses provided in a Consultation Report, which will detail how we have had regard to the feedback received. We expect to complete and submit our DCO application to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero during Q1 2026. See below for our expected project timeline.

Expected project timeline



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