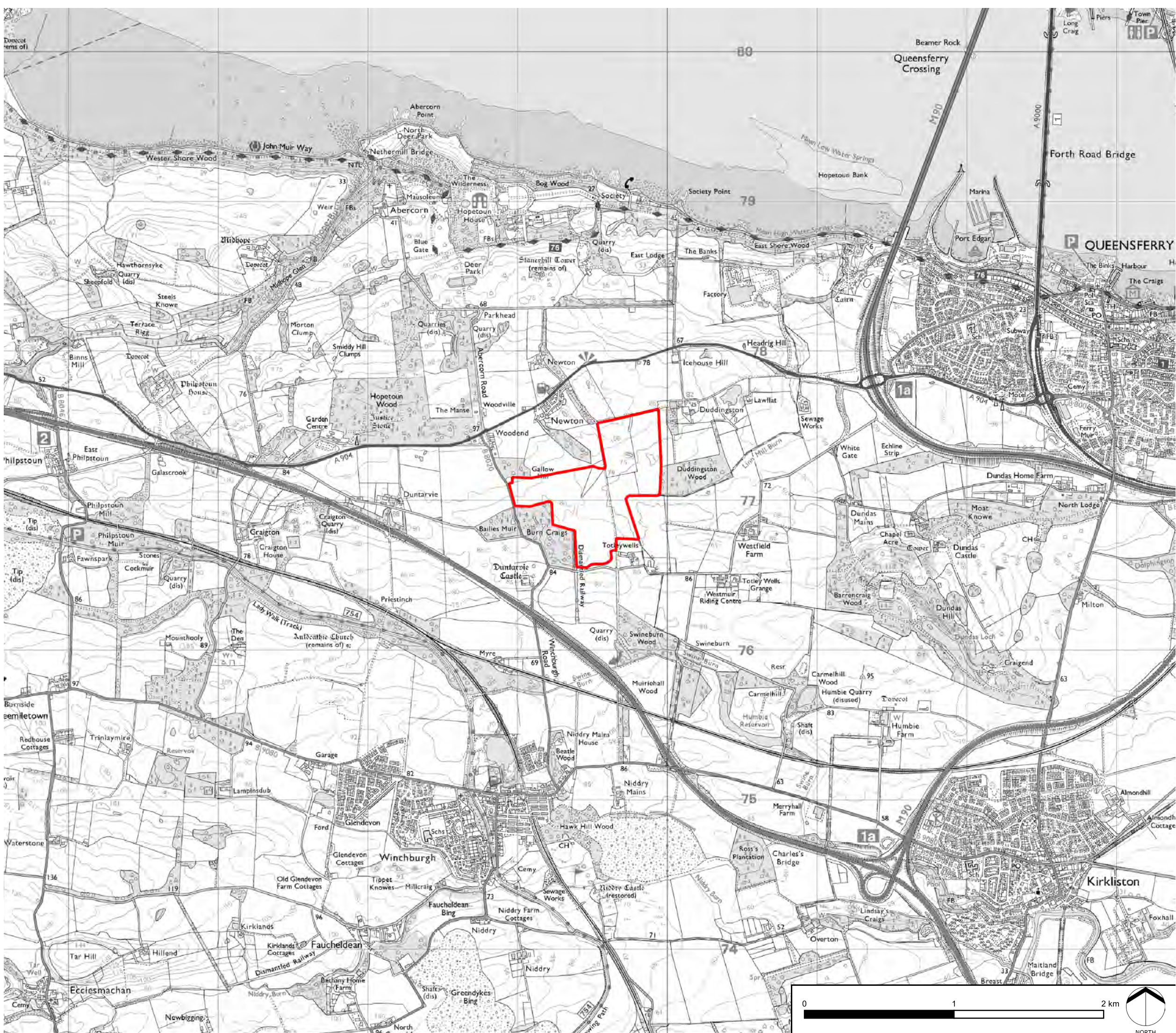


Welcome

Welcome to the public consultation for Aithrie Solar Farm

Ampyr Solar Europe is seeking to develop a new solar farm with battery storage in West Lothian on land located between Duddingston and Newton.

The solar project aims to produce 29.9MW of renewable solar electricity making a significant contribution to the climate targets set by West Lothian Council and will directly contribute to Scottish Government’s targets for new solar capacity. The battery storage will help to balance supply and demand on the grid, storing electricity generated by the solar panels when it is not required and discharging to the grid when demand is high.



The Planning Process

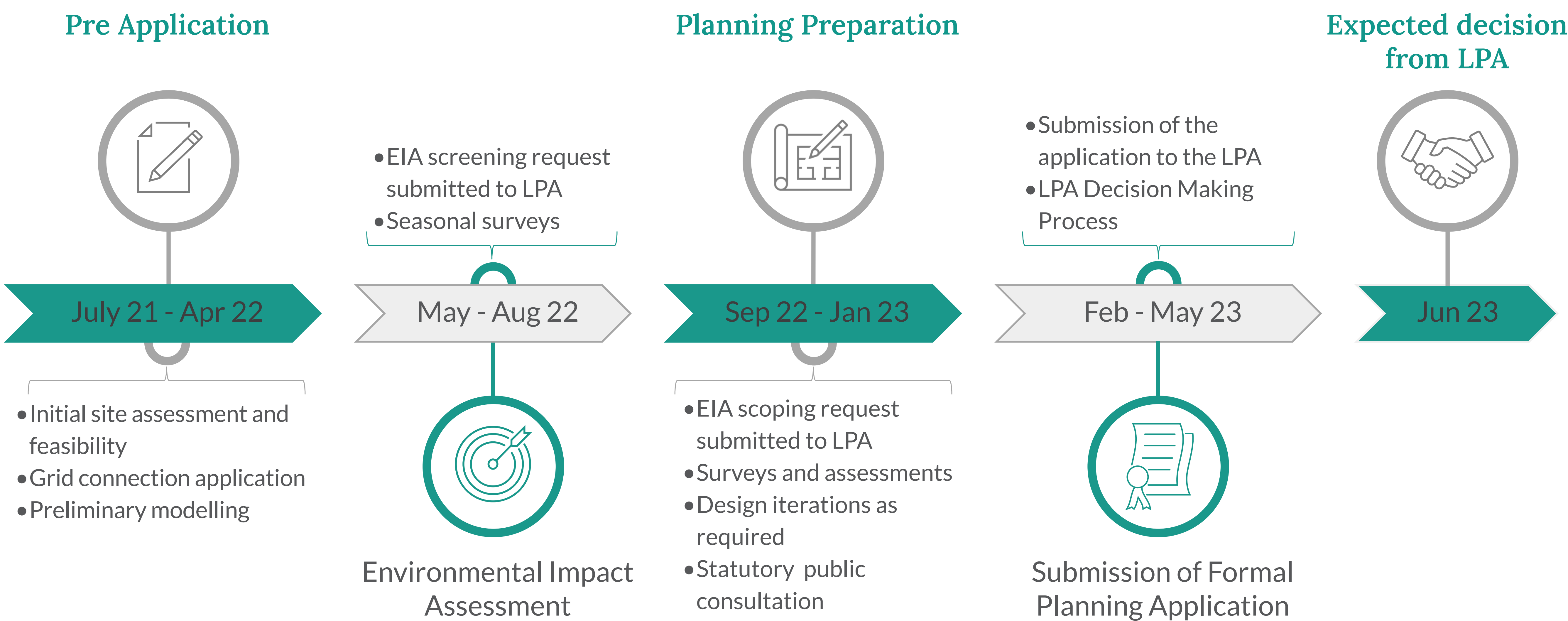
We are holding a Public Information Day session, which will enable us to share our outline plans and receive feedback from the local community to help develop the proposals. We will continue to gather feedback from stakeholders and the local community over the next few months. We will then submit an application to West Lothian Council, the Local Planning Authority (LPA), which will decide if planning permission is granted.

About Us

Ampyr Solar Europe has been created by highly experienced partners to help accelerate the transition to a zero-carbon future and to realise the huge potential of that shift for investors, for power users and for communities.

We propose to export energy created by this solar farm into the local grid distribution network via our point of connection at Broxburn.

Timeline



AMPYR

Solar Europe

Benefits of Solar Energy

What benefits will it bring?

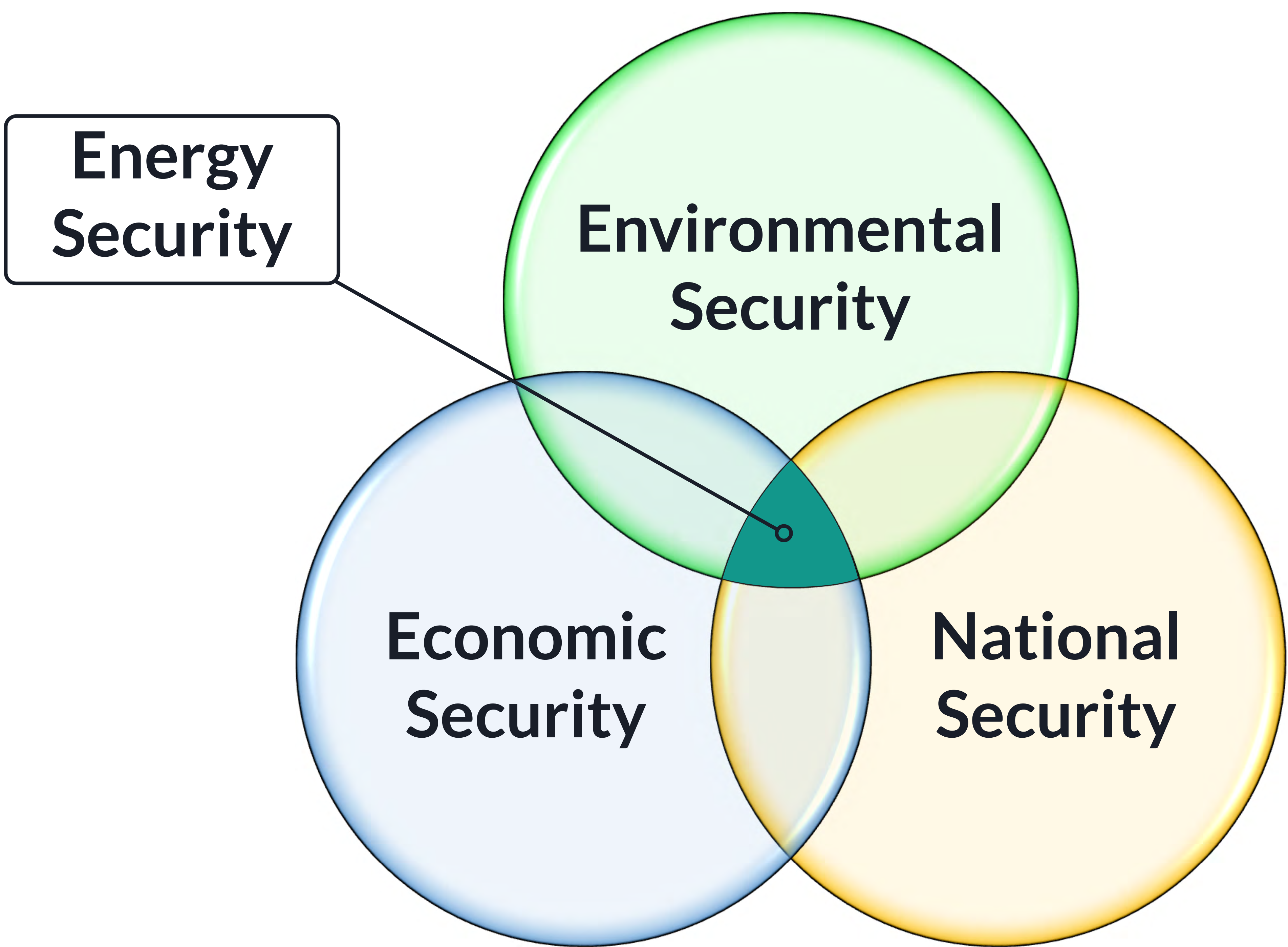
This project represents an important contribution to meeting the UK’s legally binding target under the Climate Change Act 2008 to achieve a ‘net zero’ carbon account by 2050. Renewable energy developments deliver a clean, secure source of electricity that is generated in the UK using natural resources. 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 Scotland 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.

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 Scotland, 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.



Improving local biodiversity

The proposed solar farm will bring significant ecological and biodiversity enhancements as part of a comprehensive management plan. The current agricultural activity on the land is rotated between arable and temporary grassland. The land underneath the panels will be laid to permanent grassland and left undisturbed, with the potential for sheep grazing on rotation, at a suitable stocking density, therefore allowing the land to rest, leading to improved biodiversity on site.

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 3.5m.

Employing locally and utilisation of local supply chain

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

Community Benefit Contribution

Ampyr Solar Europe 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.

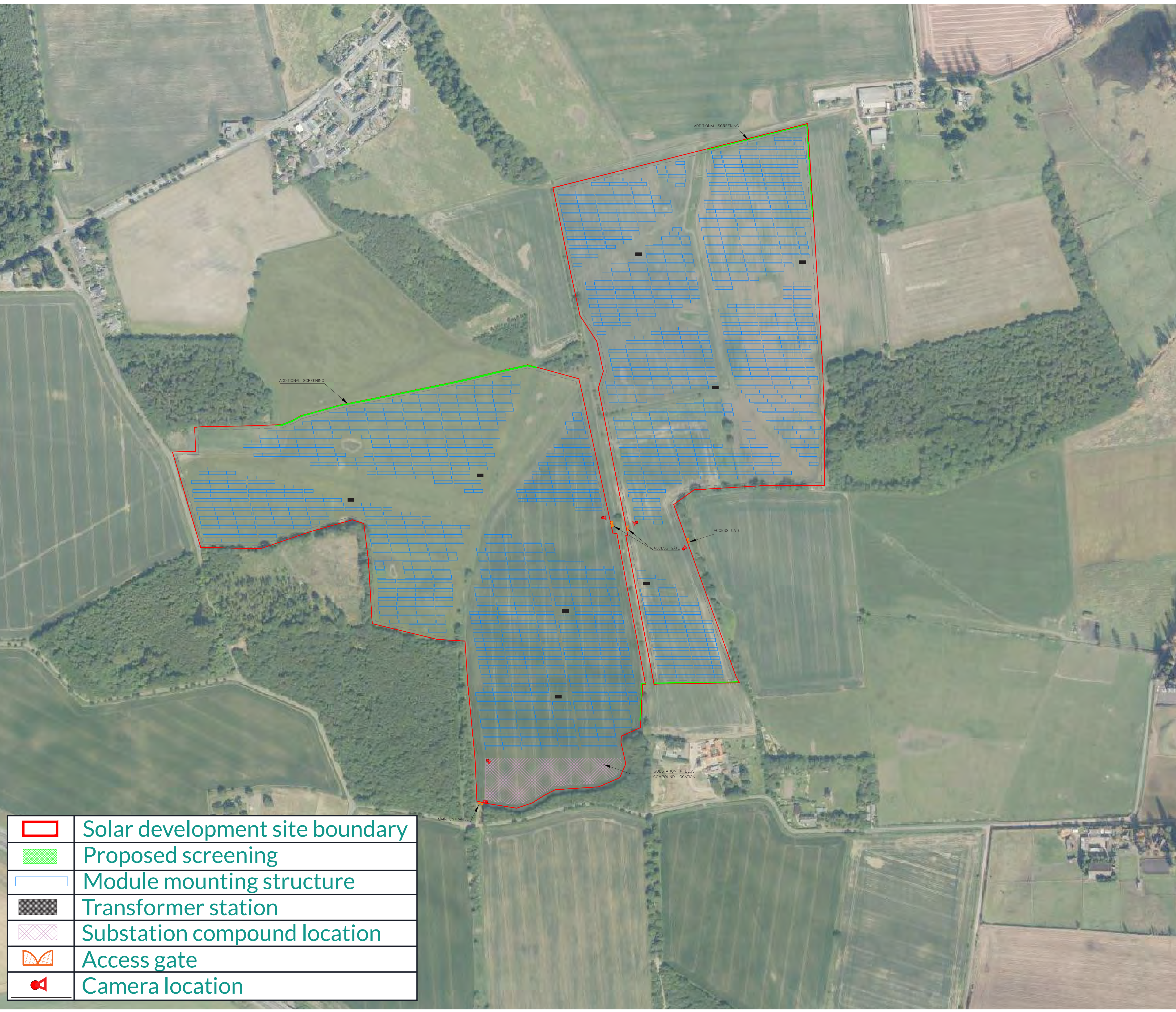


Proposals

Site location

The site is set in a rural landscape between the villages of Duddingston and Newton. The proposed development area is located in the West Lothian district, adjacent to the Queensferry Bridge crossing.

The site lies in an area of gently undulating open, arable, and agricultural land interspersed and surrounded by a network of hedgerows, coupes of trees and scattered farm and residential properties.



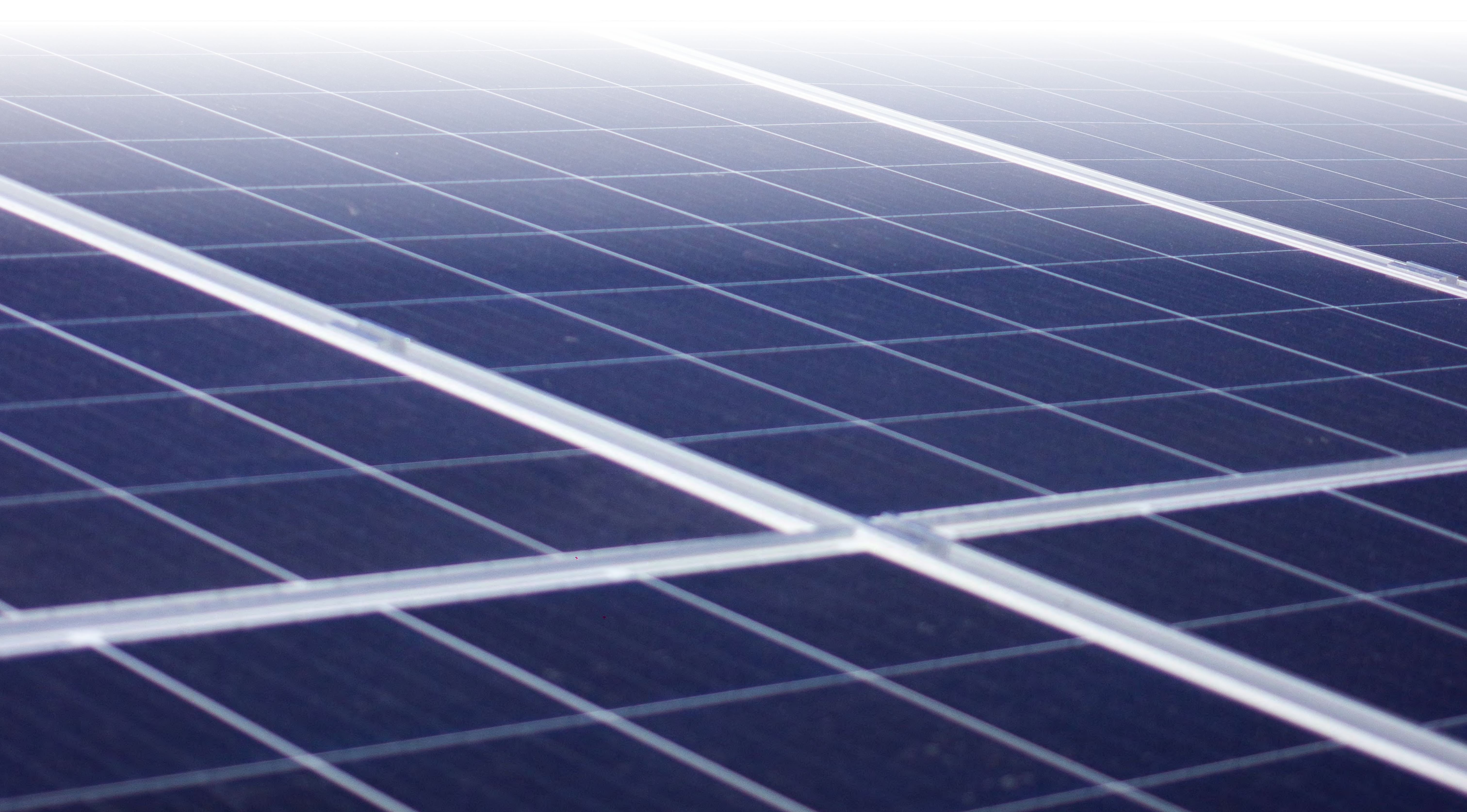
Project detail

The proposals comprise a solar farm covering approximately 121.5 acres (49.2 hectares) with the expected generating capacity of the project being 29.9MW. The solar farm would comprise of rows of solar panels mounted on metal frames (tables) secured into the ground via simple piled metal stanchions accompanied by lithium-ion batteries. The layout will be designed, where possible, to protect public footpaths and landscaping measures will include enhancing and improving the network of hedgerows around and within the site.

- It will consist of:
- Erection of approximately 82,500 Solar panels, mounted on either “South facing fixed tilt” OR “East-West oriented single axis tracking” metal frames. Minimum ground clearance of 500mm and maximum panel height of up to 3,500mm.
 - The PV panels would be laid out in arrays of long rows running across the site.
 - The framed mounting system would be screwed or pile driven, therefore no foundations would be required.
 - Up to 8 inverter stations, including transformer and protection equipment, to convert the direct current (DC) generated by the PV modules to alternating current (AC) which is compatible with the grid.
 - Proposed access by way of a new vehicular junction from the M9 to Winchburgh Road, connecting to the minor road running along the south of the site.
 - One central operations and maintenance building, to house the control and monitoring system, and provide work area for the O&M personnel.
 - One substation, adjacent to the central operations and maintenance building.
 - Minimum 3 pole mounted CCTV security cameras.
 - Ancillary works including access junction and access tracks.
 - Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) – lithium-ion batteries contained in metallic (and appropriately coloured) containers mounted on a level permeable hard core surface, extending to an area of circa 8,000 sq m, contained within a compound enclosed by a 2m mesh style perimeter fence. All battery units would arrive at the site pre-fabricated with self-contained temperature and protection equipment. The containers (approximately 20) would have dimensions of approximately 12,500mm in length x 2,500mm;
 - Temporary construction compound.
 - Perimeter fencing.
 - Associated landscaping; and
 - Underground cabling in the PV area.



AMPYR Solar Europe



Landscape & Visual

Landscape context

The site is located in an area of countryside to the southwest of Queensferry. It is situated just south of the village of Newton, occupying a series of undulating, arable fields between the A904 and the M9. There are a number of small woodlands around the perimeter of the site and field boundaries within it are marked by scattered trees, post and wire fences and some sections of remnant hedgerows.



[1] View looking over northern part of site

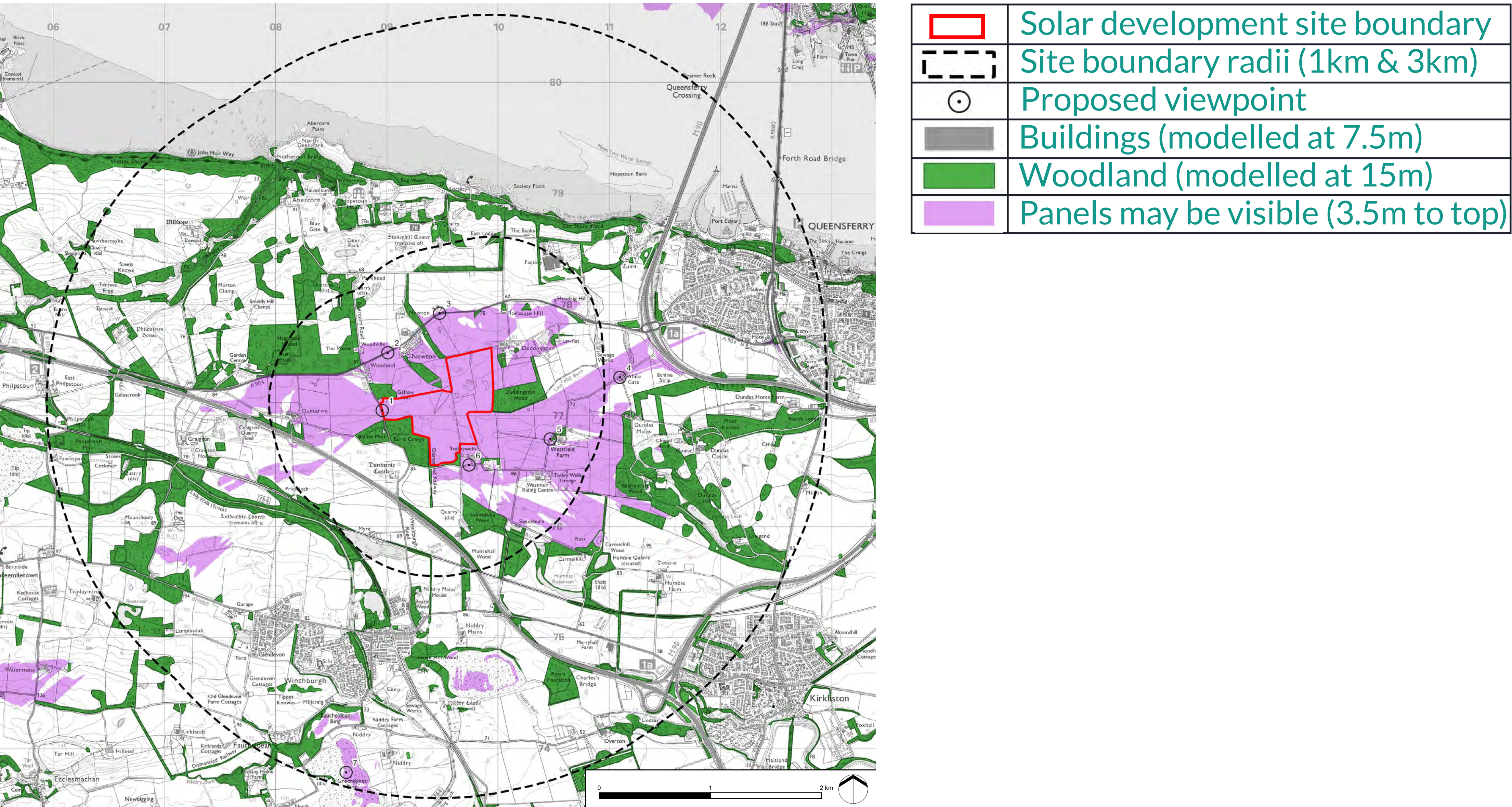


[2] View looking over western part of site

Zone of Theoretical Visibility

A preliminary Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) analysis has been undertaken for the site to identify those areas where solar panels may potentially be visible within the surrounding landscape. It shows those areas where panels may be theoretically visible, coloured purple on the plan, taking account of topography (landform) along with screening that may be provided by above ground features such as larger tree belts, woodlands and buildings.

The preliminary ZTV has been based on a model that includes solar panels everywhere within the site boundary in order to test the maximum potential visibility and therefore presents a ‘worst case’ of potential visibility. As the site design is developed and refined, the ZTV will be updated to reflect the finalised proposals and will be used to inform the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) that will be submitted as part of the planning application.



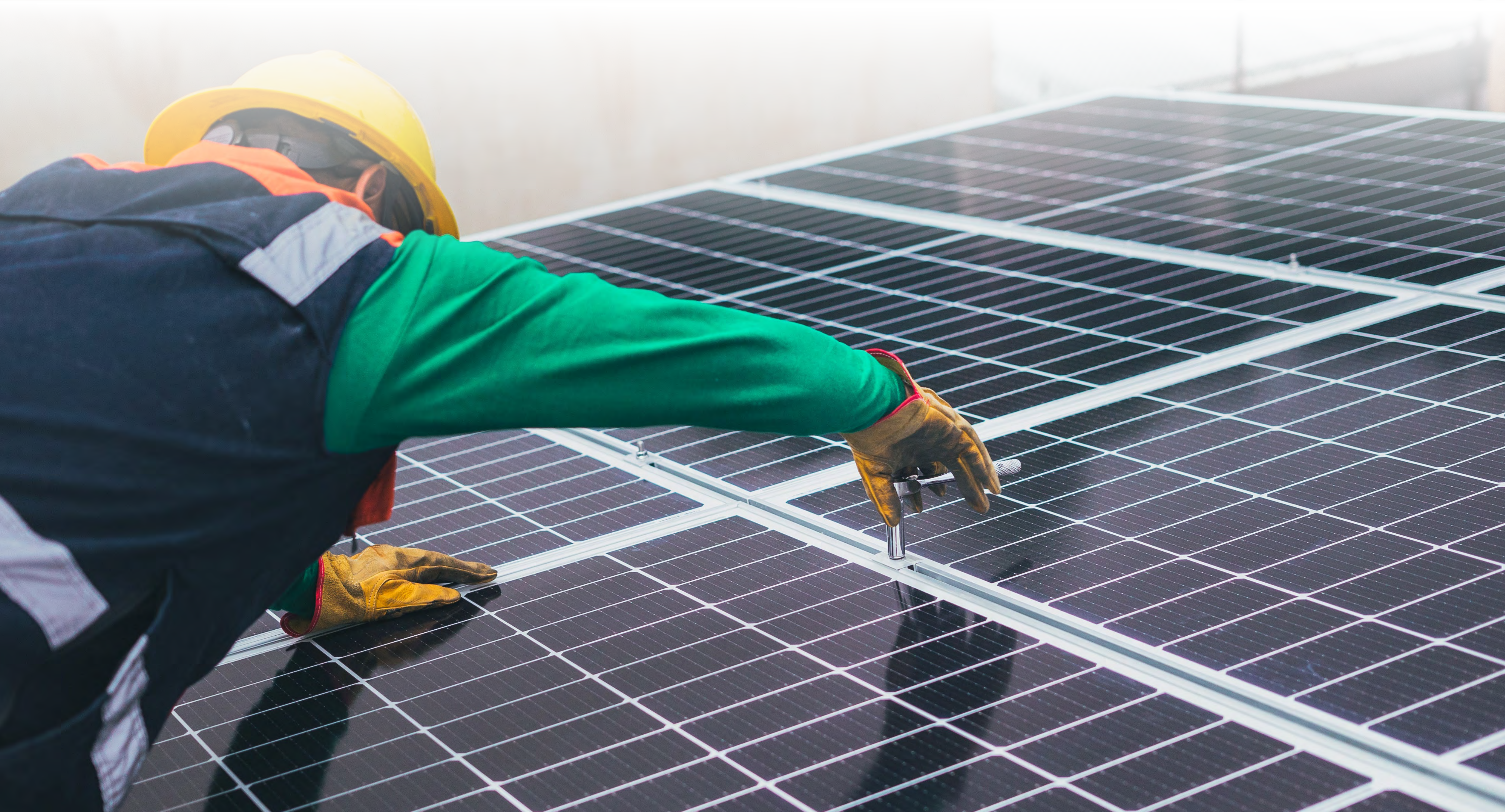
[3]Zone of Theoretical Visibility

Viewpoints

The LVIA will also be informed by a number of representative viewpoints from which photography and visualisations of the proposed development will be provided. The proposed locations for these are marked on the ZTV and will be subject to agreement with West Lothian Council and other consultees.

Landscape mitigation

The final proposals will include a range of landscape mitigation measures in order to help screen the proposed development and help it to integrate into the surrounding landscape. These will be developed as the scheme design evolves but will include the introduction of native species hedgerows and trees, reflecting the character of existing vegetation in the area and may also include new areas of woodland.



Environmental

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will be carried out to assess the likely environmental effects on the environment, landscape, heritage and local people as a result of the proposed development.

The results of the EIA will be presented in the planning application that we intend to submit to West Lothian Council. The planning application documents will be available to comment on.



[1] Several areas of modified grassland are present across the Study Area with a large component of the western site having a dense cover of clover



[2] Small tortoiseshell (*Aglais urticae*) on a dandelion flower; northern boundary farm access track

Ecology and biodiversity

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been undertaken for the proposed development site, comprising an ecological desk study and extended habitat survey to identify habitats present within and around the site as well as the potential for protected or otherwise notable species to be present. Ornithological surveys have also been undertaken.

Any sensitive features or habitats and ornithological constraints that have been identified, as well as potential biodiversity enhancement measures, will be incorporated into the design of the solar farm and committed mitigation for the planning application.

Mining report

A Preliminary Coal Mining Risk Assessment (CMRA) has been undertaken to identify potential risks associated with historic mining and potential mitigation for the proposed development. Solar panels will be appropriately sited to take account of potential mining instability in areas where shallow workings have been identified. Founded infrastructure (e.g. the substation) will be sited where possible in areas with no identified risk associated with underground mining in coal or oil-shale seams. A suitable pre-construction ground investigation will be undertaken in areas of former mine workings to further assess ground conditions.

Flood risk

A detailed Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment will be undertaken in accordance with relevant national and local guidance. The hydrological features within and in proximity to the site will be fully taken into account to ensure there is no increase in flooding on or near the development.

Heritage

There are no recorded archaeological monuments located on the site. There are two Gardens and Designed Landscapes within 2km of the site (Hopetoun House and Dundas House). There are five Scheduled Monuments and a number of Category A Listed Buildings located between 1-2km from the site. Potential impacts on the settings of these will be considered in the environmental assessment.

Pipelines

Multiple buried pipelines were identified within close proximity to the site. Consultation with pipelines and utilities infrastructure operators has been undertaken to provide clear information on the locations and routes of such features and any stand-off requirements or other measures such as construction phase consultation and risk management. Placement of solar panels and buildings within pipelines easement areas will be avoided through careful site design.

Where pipelines will need to be crossed, further consultation will be undertaken with the operators during the design works to determine the protection measures to be put in place.

Transport

An assessment of construction traffic impacts on the local road network will be undertaken, in consultation with the local Authority. Suitable construction traffic route(s) and management measures will be outlined. Traffic associated with operation of the development, after it is constructed, is anticipated to be minimal.

Glint and glare

An assessment of potential glint and glare impacts on local receptors is being undertaken and will be reported in the EIA Report.



AMPYR Solar Europe



Construction, operation & decommissioning

Construction and ongoing operations

The construction process for a solar farm of this nature would generally take between 4 - 6 months. We are still investigating our preferred route for construction traffic and operational access, but one of the options under consideration is using the new M9 junction that exits onto Winchburgh Road and accessing the site from the road to the south. More information will be made available on the project website as this assessment work is completed.

All construction traffic will be subject to a Construction and Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that will be agreed with the Local Authority. This will agree specific points, such as delivery times, restrictions, and routes to ensure that construction traffic does not have a detrimental impact to the local road network. Once the solar farm is in place it requires little upkeep with occasional maintenance visits.

Security fencing will be required around the perimeter of the site to reduce the possibility of theft or vandalism. We also need to install Close Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras. These will be kept to a minimum and located to reduce any visual impact and respect privacy. Fencing will be permeable to small animals and there will be no audible alarms or visible lighting at the site.



Decommissioning

The solar farm will be designed with an operational life of 30 years. At the end of the solar farm's lifespan all hardware can be easily removed, and the land returned to its previous use. The site's designation as agricultural land will not change as a result of this application and will not change after decommissioning.



Providing feedback

We would like the opportunity to understand the views of the local community on these proposals before we submit our application. We'd therefore like to invite you take part in the consultation on the proposals and provide your feedback by filling in a form.

As part of the planning process, we are required to prepare and submit a report detailing the consultation undertaken and how feedback has been taken into account.

You can get in touch with us and provide your feedback via:

Project website

Project documents and plans detailing the nature and location of the project are available at <https://www.aithriesolar.co.uk> You can also access all materials available here at public consultation event.

Email

Written feedback can be provided utilising the project email address contact@ampyrsolareurope.com

Online form

Available at the 'Get in touch' tab on the website

Feedback forms

Available online via the website and here at the public consultation events. Alternatively, a hard copy can be submitted by post

Post

Written feedback can be provided utilising the project address Aithrie Net Zero Limited, Ampyr Solar Europe, 25 Eccleston Place, Victoria, London, SW1W 9NF

Telephone

0203 574 9314 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm excluding public holidays or leave a message at any time)

