4. The Proposed Development

The proposed development would consist of the installation of a solar farm comprising ground mounted solar PV panels with a generating capacity of up to 40MW (DC), including mounting framework, inverters, underground cabling, stock proof fencing, CCTV, internal tracks and associated infrastructure, landscaping, biodiversity net gain and environmental enhancements for a temporary period of 50 years.

Considerable landscaping works are proposed to be incorporated along with the solar panels with a view of effectively screening the development from view and reinforcing the key habitat features within the area. The Public Rights of Way would be routed through wide areas of wildflower planting with additional picnic areas proposed at key locations.

The development is proposed to be temporary being operational for a period of 50 years, after which the site would be restored to its current agricultural function.

Wildflower meadow around panels

Example substation

5. Benefits of the Proposal

Environmental Enhancements

The scheme would deliver key environmental benefits and secure the ongoing management of the land for a period of 40 years. The proposals would incorporate key measures to enhance the key features of the site and deliver a Biodiversity Net Gain as measured using the independent Metric prepared by Natural England. The proposals would incorporate the following environmental benefits:

- Wildflower meadow areas to benefit pollinators in the area
- New tree and hedgerow planting around the perimeter of the site, improving habitat connectivity and screening the development
- New bird and bat boxes fixed to appropriate trees
- Log pile ‘Bug Hotels’ and Bee Hives also to be incorporated at appropriate locations
- Information boards explaining the proposals and landscape measures

Managing potential impacts

The planning application is accompanied by a full suite of technical reporting, through which all potential impacts of the scheme have been assessed in full. Where relevant, appropriate mitigation has been proposed to avoid significant impacts. The technical assessment has covered the following environmental issues:

- Ecology and Ornithology
- Drainage and flood risk
- Landscape and Visual Impacts
- Heritage and Archaeology
- Transport impacts during construction and operation

All reporting can be viewed via the planning application page on the council’s website (once submitted) or via the project website at https://kimblewicksolar.co.uk

Environmental Benefits

Delivers green energy

Allows for agricultural use

Delivers a net gain in biodiversity

Estimated economic output of £700,000 GVA over 14 months.

Social Benefits

Applicant offers to deliver package of Community Benefit Scheme to support locally defined projects

Improvements to Public Rights of Way.

Supports sustainable farm diversification

Supports Energy Security

Economic Benefits

Construction and operational jobs created

£270k additional gross added value.

£75,000 per annum business rate income over the life of the project

6. Planning for Renewable Energy

Planning Policy Context

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. The NPFF states "*the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change".* It proceeds to explain that the planning system should support renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure and that plans should consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure and opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from de-centralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems.

The NPFF makes clear that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need and consequently approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

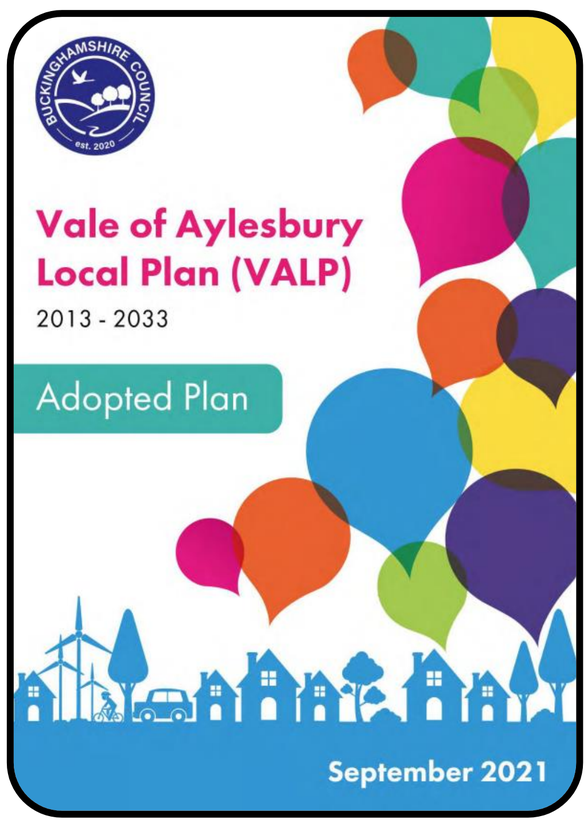
Bucks Climate Challenge

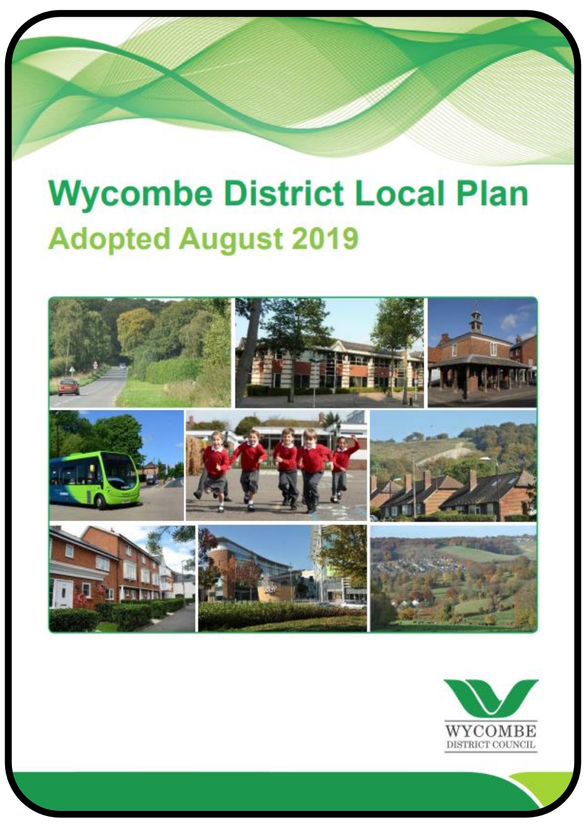
Buckinghamshire Council has shown ambition to tackle the Climate Change through the Bucks Climate Challenge initiative. The aim of the initiative is to reach net zero carbon emissions within the county.

The Council have identified several actions to help reduce emissions. One of which is to generate more renewable energy and improve energy efficiency.

The site sits within both the Aylesbury and Wycombe Areas. As such the Aylesbury Local Plan 2013-2033 and The Wycombe District Local Plan (Adopted August 2019) both of which contain the key Planning Policies against which the proposals must be assessed. Policy 3 (Renewable Energy) of the Aylesbury Local Plan states that:

"*All development schemes should look to achieve greater efficiency in the use of natural resources. Planning applications involving renewable energy development will be encouraged provided that there is no unacceptable adverse impact. Planning permission will normally be granted for off-site renewable energy where it has been demonstrated that all criteria of relevance have been met."*





Kimblewick Solar Farm

7. The Planning Process

2021

- Site selection exercise carried out to identify suitable site

2021-2022

- Technical survey work carried out to assess potential impacts and design suitable landscaping

May 2023

- Public exhibition held to provide an opportunity for local people to provide feedback on proposals

June 2023

- Submission of Planning Application to Buckinghamshire Council

Summer 2023

- Statutory consultation with key stakeholders and technical consultees

Autumn 2023

- Determination of planning application by Buckinghamshire Council

Spring 2024

- Discharge of Planning Conditions to agree further details

2024/ 2025

- Commencement of construction