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Bonnyknox Solar Farm
Pre-Application Consultation Report

Prepared for Renewable Energy Systems Ltd (RES)

Contents.

1. Background.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 This Pre-Application Consultation ('PAC') Report has been prepared by Cavendish Consulting to explain, in detail, the consultation activity undertaken by Renewable Energy Systems Ltd (RES) ('the Applicant') in relation to construction and operation of a maximum generation capacity 49.9MW solar array and its associated infrastructure on a site of 95.45 hectares, on land located 2km west of Arbirlot, Angus, approximately centred on grid reference E356977, N741022.

1.1.2 The description of the Proposed Development is as follows:

Construction and operation of a solar farm with all associated works, equipment, necessary infrastructure.

1.1.3 A copy of the site boundary can be found in **Appendix 1**.

1.1.4 The Proposed Development is considered "major" development in context of the Town and Country Planning (Hierarchy of Developments) (Scotland) Regulations 2009.

1.1.5 This PAC Report sets out the comprehensive consultation process undertaken by the Applicant, details the comments and feedback received from the consultation process, and demonstrates how the Applicant has responded to comments from members of the public and community groups, and used it, where relevant, to shape and inform the application for the Proposed Development.

1.1.6 The Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) was submitted to Angus Council on 5 June 2024, initiating a statutory 12-week pre-application consultation period. The Applicant corresponded with Angus Council's planning department via email between the first and second rounds of consultation, notifying them that the second consultation would occur beyond the dates indicated in the original PoAN, and providing the alternative date for the second consultation.

2. Consultation overview.

2.1 Best practice

2.1.1 The Applicant understands the value of engaging with and seeking to involve the local people in development proposals, both prior to and following the submission of any application and through to the construction and operation, should the Applicant's proposal obtain consent.

2.1.2 Planning Advice Note ('PAN') 3/2010 – Community Engagement is an update of PAN 81 which advises that in order for the community engagement to be successful, it is important that everyone interested in the future development of the community, village, town, or city they live in should understand the planning process. Developers are advised to involve residents at the earliest opportunity so that they can feel confident that engagement in the process has been meaningful.

2.1.3 PAN 3/2010 highlights that the term "consultation" is used to mean the:

"Dynamic process of dialogue between individuals or groups based on a genuine exchange of views and, normally, with the objective of influencing decisions, policies or programmes of action. The terms 'engagement' and 'involvement' are generally interchangeable and are taken to mean the establishment of effective relationships with individuals or groups. Participation is everything that enables people to influence the decisions and get involved in the actions that affect their lives. In the context of this document engagement is, in effect, giving people a genuine opportunity to have a say on a development plan or proposal which affects them; listening to what they say and reaching a decision in an open and transparent way to ensure they are taking account of all views expressed (page 3, paragraph 1)."

2.1.4 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) (2023) also highlights the important role of effective engagement, stating:

"Throughout the planning system, opportunities are available to engage in development planning and decisions about future development. Such engagement, undertaken in line with statutory requirements, should be early, collaborative, meaningful and proportionate. Support or concern expressed on matters material to planning must be given careful consideration in the determination of development proposals."

2.1.5 The Applicant is committed to undertaking effective and early consultation methods in this way, including tailoring its strategies to suit individual communities. Residents' values and issues of importance vary, and the consultation programme has been designed to reflect that.

2.2 Timeline

2.2.1 The consultation period for the Proposed Development began in June 2024. The PoAN (**Appendix 2**) was submitted to Angus Council on 5 June 2024.

2.2.2 Following the PoAN submission, the Applicant wrote to stakeholders in the form of an email on 6 June 2024 which included details about the development and the submission of the PoAN. A letter (**Appendix 4**) was also attached to the email which gave details of the first consultation event and invited the stakeholders to contact the Applicant if they wished to arrange a meeting to discuss the proposal. A copy of the email can be found in **Appendix 3**.

2.2.3 The email was sent to:

- Arbroath West, Letham and Friockheim Ward Councillors
- Carnoustie and District Ward Councillors

- Royal Burgh of Arbroath Community Council
- Carnoustie Community Council
- Letham and District Community Council
- Angus MP
- Angus South MSP
- North East Scotland Regional MSPs

2.2.4 Two rounds of formal public consultations were held. The first consultation event took place on 26 June 2024 at Hospitalfield House (Hospitalfield, Arbroath, DD11 2NH), where preliminary information on the proposal was shown, and feedback was sought. The Applicant received useful feedback through this initial round of consultation (see section 3).

2.2.5 All information provided at the first consultation event was also available to view on the dedicated project website from 26 June 2024, and an online feedback form was available.

2.2.6 Following this initial round of public consultation in June, a second event was held to provide the local community and stakeholders the opportunity to view and comment on the updated proposal in advance of the submission of an application to Angus Council. This event took place on 24 September 2024 at Hospitalfield House (see section 4).

2.2.7 As with the first round of consultation, information on the proposal was also available to view on the dedicated project website from 24 September 2024, and an online feedback form was also available.

2.2.8 The timings and venues of the public exhibitions, supported by online engagement opportunities, were designed to provide members of the public with the best opportunity to attend, view the proposals and importantly provide feedback.

2.2.9 All comments and feedback received from both consultation periods have been collated and analysed as part of this PAC Report (see Section 6), which also illustrates how feedback has, where possible, helped shape and inform the application for the Proposed Development.

2.3 Contact details

2.3.1 Following the submission of the PoAN, the Applicant created a dedicated project website which provided an outline of the proposals, consultation details, and contact information for the project team.

2.3.2 This website was regularly updated with relevant information throughout all stages of the Proposed Development, including all consultation materials.

2.3.3 To ensure that as many interested parties as possible could access information about the proposals and communicate with the project team, an email address and phone number were also established and published on the project website:

Website: https://www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk/

Phone number: 0800 066 8943

Email address: bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

3. First consultation.

3.1 Overview

3.1.1 The first round of consultation for the Proposed Development took place on 26 June 2024 at Hospitalfield House between 3.00pm and 8.00pm.

3.1.2 The first round of consultation for the Proposed Development was announced on 6 June 2024 when stakeholders were notified of the upcoming public exhibition via a letter (**Appendix 4**).

3.1.3 In addition to notifying political stakeholders (list in section 2.2.3), a newsletter (**Appendix 5**) was sent on 13 June via Royal Mail to 1,904 addresses, within a minimum 3km radius of the site (mailout map can be found at **Appendix 6)**. The newsletter (**Appendix 5**) included details such as the consultation dates, details of the Proposed Development and an introduction to the Applicant. A copy of the newsletter was also issued to political stakeholders (listed in section 2.2.3) on 13 June serving as a reminder of the upcoming event.

3.1.4 In addition, an advertisement (**Appendix 7**) for the first exhibition was placed in The Courier (Angus and Dundee edition) and Angus County Press on 13 June 2024.

3.1.5 A feedback form (**Appendix 8**) was available at the exhibition and online from the day of the event which included an opportunity to provide general feedback on the proposals as well as suggestions for community benefits. The opportunity to provide feedback remained open for two and a half weeks, until 12 July 2024.

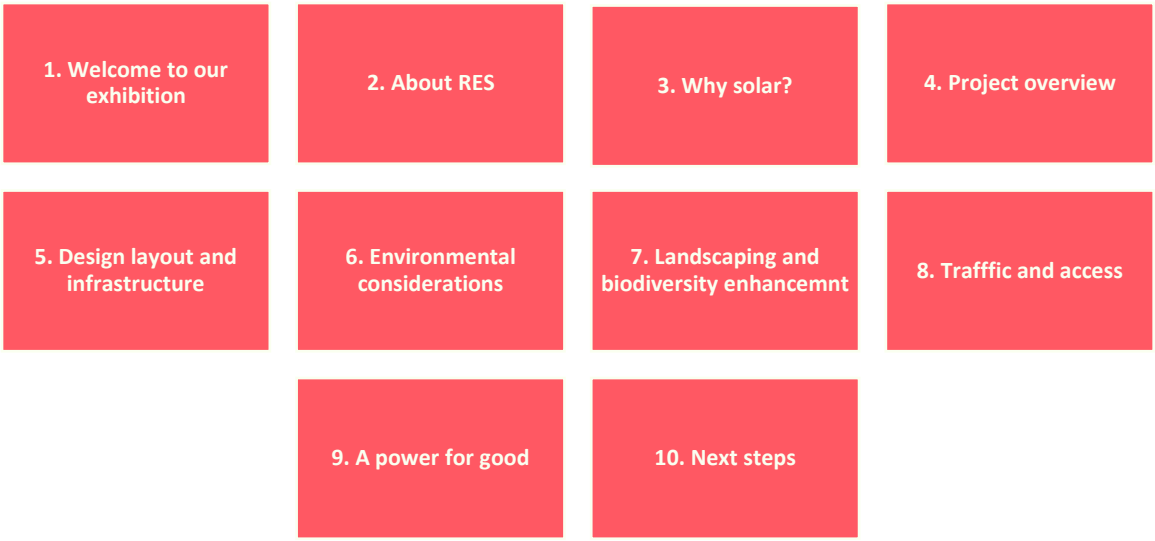
3.2 In-person exhibition event

3.2.1 In total, 46 people attended the first consultation event.

IMAGE FROM FIRST EXHIBITION, 26 JUNE 2024

3.2.2 At the event, ten information boards were on display (**Appendix 9**). Paper copies of the boards were also available and could be taken away on request.

3.2.3 The subjects of the boards were as follows:



3.2.4 The feedback period for the first round of consultation took place from 26 June to 12 July 2024, allowing over two weeks for interested parties to provide their input. A total of 11 completed comment forms were received by the Applicant. A summary of the answers received to the closed questions on the comment form is provided in section 3.2.6.

3.2.5 At all stages of the consultation process the Applicant clearly set out the purpose of the consultation and emphasised that comments made were not representations to the determining authority and that there would be the opportunity for representations to be made to the determining authority once a planning application was submitted.

3.2.6 The below summarises responses to the closed questions on the comment form during the first round of consultation.

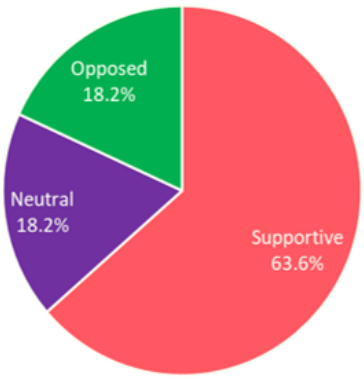
Q1.1 How did you find out about our public exhibition?	81.8% Residents' newsletter	9.1.% Advert in the newspaper	9.1% Other
Q1.2 Before visiting the exhibition how would you describe your knowledge of the proposal?	43.9% Knew a little	27.3% Knew very little	27.3% Knew nothing
Q1.3 Having visited the exhibition, to what extent do you feel you have increased your understanding about the proposal?	72.8% A lot / quite a lot	9.1% A little	18.2% Very little / nothing
Q1.4 Which part of the exhibition did you find most useful?	23.1% Exhibition boards	69.2% Ability to ask project team questions	7.7% Other

Q1.5 Do you have any suggestions for ways in which we could have improved our exhibition?

Summary of responses:

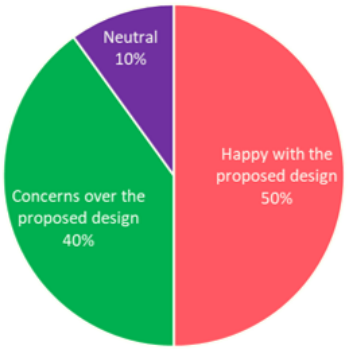
- Hosting the exhibition at the village hall in Arbirlot might have encouraged more local input.
- The exhibition boards were informative, and the Q&A session was effective.
- Concerns raised included road management, wildlife protection, property devaluation, health impacts, and glare for nearby houses.
- More detail of specifics requested, including site size reduction and the security of the 49.9MW supply against physical and cyber risks.
- The exhibition was well-presented, with knowledgeable experts providing valuable insights.

Q2.1 How do you feel in general about the Bonnyknox proposal?



The majority of respondents, 63.6%, expressed overall support for the proposal. Meanwhile, 18.2% remained neutral, and another 18.2% were opposed. These figures suggest that there is a strong level of support for the plans among attendees.

Q2.2 What do you think about the proposed preliminary design layout of the Bonnyknox Solar Farm?



Half of the respondents stated that they were happy with the preliminary design of the Bonnyknox Solar Farm, while 10% were neutral towards the design, and 40% expressed concerns about the preliminary design on display.

Q2.3 Is there anything else you would like to share with us about the proposal?

Summary of responses:

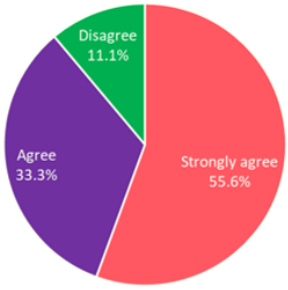
- Concerns over construction traffic
- Queries about whether a community benefit package is included as part of the development
- Concerns over the name of the development

Q3.1 If you have any suggestions for local benefits Bonnyknox Solar Farm may be able to support, please let us know in the box below.

Summary of responses:

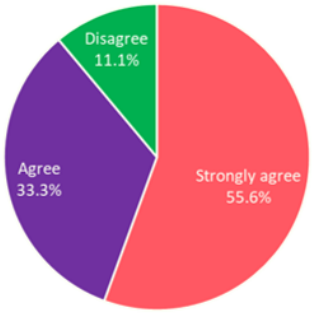
- Support for local environmental initiatives, such as upgrading paths around the Arbirlot waterfall and nature trails, through community benefit funding.
- Improved internet connectivity, including the installation of broadband or fibre, to address slow and unreliable wireless Wi-Fi in the area.
- Enhancements to public access, such as maintaining and improving paths, creating a public right of way around the development, and linking existing paths with a dedicated wildlife area for public and educational use.
- Concerns about directly affected local residents, highlighting the need for compensation for impacts like potential house value reduction, rather than focusing benefits on nearby towns.
- General emphasis on maintaining public access to and through the site to encourage community engagement and outdoor activities.

Q4.1 Do you agree that we are facing a global climate emergency?



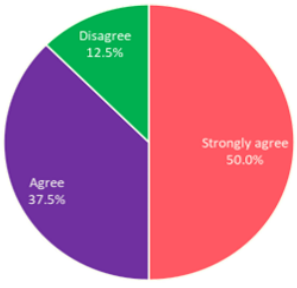
The feedback highlighted that a significant majority of respondents recognise the urgency of climate change. Specifically, 55.6% of participants strongly agreed that we are in the midst of a global climate change emergency, reflecting a deep concern about the current environmental crisis. Additionally, 33.3% of respondents agreed with this sentiment, signalling broad acknowledgment of the issue. However, 11.1% of respondents disagreed, showing a different view on the severity or immediacy of the threat posed by climate change.

Q4.2 Do you agree that generating electricity from renewable sources, and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, can help towards tackling the issue of climate change?



Respondents demonstrated strong support for renewable energy as a solution to climate change. 55.6% of respondents strongly agreed that generating electricity from renewable sources can play a crucial role in addressing the issue of climate change. This majority reflects a strong belief in the importance of clean energy in mitigating environmental impacts. Additionally, 33.3% agreed, indicating broad consensus on the positive role of renewables. 11.1% of respondents disagreed, showing a small portion remains sceptical about the use of renewable energy.

Q4.3 Do you agree that we need to develop solar farms to support greater energy independence and energy security for Scotland?



The feedback reveals strong support for the development of solar farms in Scotland as a means to enhance energy independence and security. A majority of 55% of respondents strongly agreed that solar farms are essential for supporting Scotland's energy autonomy, highlighting widespread recognition of the role renewable energy can play in securing a stable and self-sufficient energy supply. Additionally, 37.5% agreed, further underscoring broad consensus on the importance of solar energy. Only 12.5% of respondents disagreed, indicating that while there is some opposition, the overwhelming sentiment supports the development of solar farms as a key component in achieving greater energy security for Scotland.

4. Second consultation.

4.1 Overview

4.1.1 In September 2024 the Applicant returned to Hospitalfield House to present an updated design for the proposal to the community and outline the changes which had been incorporated into the design following the first round of consultation.

4.1.2 Stakeholders were notified via a letter sent by email (**Appendix 10**) issued on 9 September 2024.

4.1.3 A postcard (**Appendix 11**) was also sent via Royal Mail on 5 September to 1,904 addresses (the same radius as used in June, shown in **Appendix 6**) inviting the community to take part in the second round of consultation.

4.1.4 An advertisement (**Appendix 12**) for the event was again placed in The Courier (Angus and Dundee edition) and Angus County Press on 12 September 2024.

4.1.5 The second public consultation event took place on 24 September 2024 at the Hospitalfield House between 3.00pm and 8.00pm.

4.1.6 A feedback form (**Appendix 13**) was available to be filled out at the event or taken home to fill out at a later date. The feedback form was also available online from 24 September 2024. Respondents were given two and a half weeks to provide feedback, until Friday 11 October 2024.

4.2 In-person exhibition event

4.2.1 The second consultation event was attended by 29 people. Members of the project team were on hand to answer questions and discuss the proposals with members of the public.

4.2.2 Exhibition boards were on display, with eight new boards (**Appendix 14**) combined with two boards from the previous consultation.

4.2.3 A Report on Feedback was also made available as part of the second round of consultation. Hard copies were available at the event, and it was also published on the project website. The report summarised all written feedback received during the first round of consultation and how the Applicant has responded to the feedback. This can be viewed at **Appendix 15** and on the project website **here**.

4.2.4 An interactive map was used at the September event, allowing attendees to mark specific areas of interest or concern. Different colours were assigned to represent various issues, allowing the Applicant to easily identify and categorise feedback (**Appendix 16**).

4.2.5 The subjects of the boards were as follows (please note new boards are shown in blue):

1. Welcome to our exhibition

2. Why solar?

3. About the project

4. Updated design layout and infrastrcuture

5. Environmental considerations

6. Traffic and access

7.Feedback to date

8. A power for good

9. About RES

10. Next steps

Images from second public exhibition, 24 September 2024

4.2.6 In total 9 feedback forms were received over the course of the second consultation period (24 September to 11 October 2024).

4.2.7 The below charts show answers received to the closed questions on the comment form during the second round of consultation.

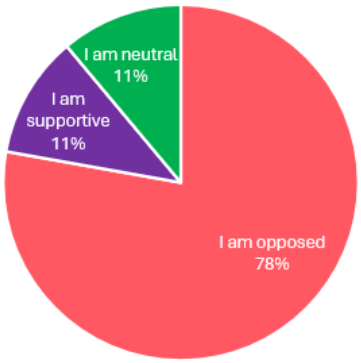
Q1.1 How did you find out about our public exhibition?	50% Postcard through the door	30% Word of mouth	20% Project website	
Q1.2 Before visiting the exhibition how would you describe your knowledge of the proposal?	44.4% Knew a lot	22.2% Knew quite a lot	22.2% Knew a little	11.1% Knew very little
Q1.3 Having visited the exhibition, to what extent do you feel you have increased your understanding about the proposal?	22.2% A lot	55.6% Quite a lot	11.1% A little	11.1% Not at all
Q1.4 Which part of the exhibition did you find most useful?	22.2% Information boards	33.3% Ability to ask project team questions	11.1% Interactive map	33.3% Other

Q1.5 Do you have any suggestions for ways in which we could have improved our exhibition?

Summary of responses:

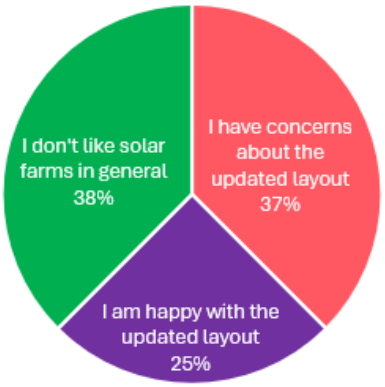
- Avoid board congestion by encouraging discussion groups to step back, allowing others to view boards.
- Concerns about presentation: avoid overly glossy displays.

Q2.1 How do you feel in general about the proposal?



The majority of respondents, 77.8%, expressed opposition to the proposal. Meanwhile, 11.1% remained neutral, and another 11.1% were supportive.

Q2.2 What do you think about the updated design layout of the Bonnyknox Solar Farm?



The responses show a split in opinions on the updated layout. While 25% of respondents are happy with the changes, 37.5% still have concerns. Additionally, 37.5% express general opposition to solar farms, suggesting that some concerns may extend beyond the specific details of this proposal.

Q2.3 Is there anything else you would like to share with us about the proposal?

Summary of responses:

- Appreciation for amendments made but requests for additional safety measures, such as deer warning signs on roads.
- Concerns about misclassification of agricultural land.
- Lack of information on materials used for panel supports, their durability, and potential environmental impact, especially regarding water supply contamination.
- Questions about project details, including fencing design, camera placement, lighting specifications, and their potential impact.
- Criticism of the project's proximity to local residents, raising concerns about its direct effects on their quality of life.

Q3.1 If you know of community initiatives that would benefit from our involvement, please let us know. In particular we welcome recommendations for youth and school initiatives—we'd love to help spark an interest in renewable energy among the next generation.

Summary of responses:

- Concerns about fairness in education, opposing financial influence from renewable companies without balanced perspectives.
- Request for financial support for the Arbirlot Old Kirk Trust to repurpose the closed church into a community hub, addressing the lack of public spaces in the village.
- Suggestions for local benefits include installing EV charge points for houses, a community defibrillator, and improved broadband access.
- Emphasis on the importance of rural communities having dedicated spaces for gathering, distinct from nearby towns like Arbroath.

5. Additional engagement.

5.1 Angus Council

5.1.1 Prior to the first consultation event held on 26 June 2024, the Applicant met with Councillor Jack Cruickshanks at Hospitalfield House.

5.1.2 At the meeting the Applicant discussed the proposals with Councillor Cruickshanks, presented the consultation material and answered his questions ahead of the first event.

5.2 Stephen Gethins MP

5.2.1 Following his election at the 2024 General Election, the Applicant met with the newly elected MP for Angus, Stephen Gethins MP, prior to the second consultation event on 24 September 2024.

5.2.2 At the meeting, the Applicant presented a comprehensive update on the Proposed Development since its launch in June 2024, talked through the consultation material on display at the event, and addressed Mr Gethins' questions, and discussed local initiatives that the Proposed Development could support.

5.3 Arbroath FC Community Trust

5.3.1 Following the launch of the Proposed Development in June 2024, the Applicant was contacted by the Arbroath FC Community Trust to discuss various initiatives that the Trust supports in the area.

5.3.2 A representative from the Trust then met with the Applicant at Hospitalfield House prior to the first consultation event on 26 June 2024 to discuss the community trust.

5.3.3 On 18 November 2024 the Applicant was pleased to provide a donation of £600 for the Arbroath Football Club Community Trust's Community Café, which offers a warm, safe environment and a hot meal to individuals in need. Volunteer-led, the café focuses on combating food poverty and social isolation, supporting vulnerable people in and around Arbroath. It also connects individuals with local agencies like Citizens Advice and mental health services. In addition, all volunteers are trained in Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, enabling them to offer first-line support to those struggling mentally, building trust and relationships with the café's customers.

5.4. Resident engagement

5.4.1 Enquiries were received from some local residents throughout the consultation process, and the Applicant responded by providing answers over the phone and by email to questions wherever possible, confirming details about the Proposed Development, sharing information about the consultation process, and making people aware of the Applicant's newsletter mailing list which they could be added to if they wished to be kept up to date with plans for the Proposed Development.

5.4.2 The Applicant also published a series of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on the project website, addressing many of the concerns and topics raised throughout the first round of consultation.

6. Feedback and responses.

6.1 Feedback from consultation

6.1.1 The first round of consultation introduced the Proposed Development to the local community, offering stakeholders an opportunity to share their feedback which was then used to update the proposals. In the second round, the updated design was presented, once again inviting stakeholders to provide their input.

6.1.2 A feedback form was made available at the consultation events, online and by request, with the option for interested parties to send feedback via multiple channels.

6.1.3 The Applicant's contact details (email, print and phone) were also prominent throughout the consultation, available on all communication materials including the written communications with stakeholders and residents, on the project website, and at each event.

6.1.4 At all stages of the consultation process the Applicant also set out clearly the purpose of the consultation and emphasised that comments made were not representations to the determining authority and that there would be the opportunity for representations to be made to the determining authority once the planning application was submitted.

6.2 Response to key consultation topics

6.2.1 The following section sets out the key topics raised by respondents during the pre-application consultation period.

6.2.2 Many of these issues were addressed within the "Feedback to date" board on display at the second consultation event and the Report on Feedback (**Appendix 15)** document which provided responses to many of the key issues raised during the first round of consultation.

6.2.3 The Applicant has responded to these key themes to show how these issues have been considered, addressed or to highlight where adjustments have been made to the proposal as a direct result of the feedback received. There are detailed planning reports available as part of the submitted planning application, the relevant report(s) has been highlighted in each section below.

Feedback theme	***Applicant response***
Visual impact	A **Landscape and Visual Assessment** accompanies the planning application. During the iterative design process, a number of measures were taken to reduce potential visibility. Solar infrastructure has been removed from fields to the south of the site to reduce potential visibility as well as from some areas to the west and north-east. Our assessment has found that the visual impact will be largely contained within the site, primarily affecting the arable fields, with moderate effects on nearby properties. However, these will gradually soften as mitigation planting matures, blending the development into the landscape. By Year 10, most visual effects will

	be minimal, and following decommissioning, the site will benefit from enhanced landscape features and ecological improvements. Wider views are limited due to topography and vegetation, and local footpaths have little to no visibility of the site. Technical glare modelling was undertaken for the potential impact of the Proposed Development on nearby sensitive receptors, which found no glare towards three of the ten modelled residential receptors, while low impact glare was predicted at four. Once mitigating factors have been taken into account, the residual glare impact is low or none at all receptors, and therefore no mitigation measures beyond those contained within the planning application for the Proposed Development have been recommended. Please see the full **Landscape and Visual Assessment** and **Glint and Glare Assessment** submitted as part of the planning application.
Construction traffic	A **Construction Stage Traffic Management Plan (CTMP)** accompanies the planning application. The CTMP sets out the framework for managing the safe movement of construction and delivery traffic, including how vehicle trips to the site will be spaced out and avoid peak periods where possible to minimise disruption. The proposed construction route for the Proposed Development is via the A92 to minimise construction traffic impact on Arbroath. Construction traffic would access the site off the A92 at the Salmond's Muir junction leading onto Bonnyton Road to the site. As part of the development the Applicant is committed to enhancing the local road network around the site. Indicative passing place locations have been drawn up and are illustrated within the Transport Statement. These passing place locations would be constructed either within the adopted road verge areas or within land under the Applicant's control. This is subject to discussions with the Roads Authority. Please see the full **Construction Stage Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) as part of the Transport Statement** submitted as part of the planning application.
Loss of agricultural land	Solar farms do not pose a threat to food security. One of the biggest threats to food security is the changing climate. According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), climate change could reduce the UK's stock of high-grade agricultural land by nearly three-quarters by 2050[1]. A detailed **Land Classification for Agriculture Report** accompanies the planning application and shows that the area is made up of a mix of Class 3.2 and Class 4.1, with most of the site being Lower Class 3.1 (50%). Soil classification can be influenced by farming practices, for example potato cultivation at this Site, which alters topsoil depth and can artificially elevate land grades. The Proposed Development has been designed as a dual-purpose development, integrating renewable energy with sheep farming. This supports rural employment, strengthens local economies, and creates a more diverse ecological landscape. Grazing sheep help maintain habitats for wildlife while continuing food production. Moreover, where solar farms replace intensively farmed land, they allow the soil to regenerate while providing a stable income for farmers. By improving soil quality, solar farms contribute to the future availability of high-quality agricultural land.

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021-theme-2-uk-food-supply-sources#united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021-theme2-indicator-2-1-15

	Please see the full **Land Classification for Agriculture Report** submitted as part of the planning application.
Inclusion of battery energy storage	During the second public consultation, the Applicant received feedback from the community about the proposed addition of battery energy storage to the Proposed Development. Following further review, including consideration of the benefits that battery energy storage would bring to the Proposed Development compared with the extra infrastructure needed to facilitate this, along with feedback from the local community, the battery energy storage element has now been **removed** from the Proposed Development.
Impact on neighbouring property values	Queries are often raised in relation to the potential of solar farms to impact upon the value of house prices as there can be a perception that there must be a negative effect on house prices. Property value is subjective and can be affected by a range of factors. There is currently no firm evidence on whether solar farms do or do not affect house prices. The Applicant is aware of residents close to other renewable energy projects, who enjoy having renewable energy projects close by and believe that they add value to their community. The Proposed Development aims to ensure that the solar farm is integrated sensitively into the existing landscape, as shown through the decision to remove solar infrastructure from fields to the south of the site to reduce potential visibility for nearby properties.
Impact on the land's ecology and biodiversity	A **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report** has been undertaken to assess potential impacts on local wildlife and habitats. The assessment found that the site lies outside any statutory ecological designations, with four statutory designated sites within 5 km of the site boundary. As the nature of the works will remain centralised within the red line boundary, with no hydrological link, no adverse impact is predicted to any of the designated sites. Within the site itself, the findings confirm that the site is predominantly arable land with low ecological value, with no anticipated impact on nearby designated sites due to a lack of direct connectivity. It is anticipated that new buffer and hedgerow planting will be undertaken post-construction round, as well as implementing a "one-cut" grass maintenance schedule in order to encourage the growth of grassland species. The new planted vegetation coupled with the longer grassland should increase opportunities for bird cover and nesting opportunities. New studies by the RSPB and the University of Cambridge have shown that when solar farms are managed with biodiversity in mind, bird species richness and diversity is higher than when compared to standard arable land (Coping et al, 2025). The "Guynd Den" ancient woodland is associated with the woodland located directly adjacent to the northern site boundary. No tree felling or woodland clearing is required for the installation of the panels, and thus the ancient woodland will not be impacted by the Proposed Development. Note that two silver birch trees may be removed to facilitate the proposed site access to the south of the site, but this does not form part of the ancient woodland and the trees are not protected. Surveys have been carried out to assess protected species such as otters, red squirrels, and pine martens in the wider area, and appropriate mitigation measures will be implemented where necessary.

	The solar farm design includes safeguards to protect local ecology, such as a 10-metre buffer between the panels and woodland to the north and east of the site, and a 12-metre buffer from Crossden Burn, ensuring compliance with flood prevention guidelines. In addition, perimeter fencing will be designed as deer fencing with gaps at the base to allow continued movement of hares, hedgehogs, and other small mammals. By integrating these measures, the Proposed Development ensures minimal ecological impact while enhancing habitat connectivity and biodiversity on site. If consented, the Proposed Development is anticipated to result in a biodiversity net gain on the site, reflecting the Applicant's commitment to improving the natural environment and leaving spaces in better condition than they were found. Please see the full **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report** submitted as part of the planning application.
The need for the development	Scotland's commitment to net zero by 2045 requires a shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy including solar farms as part of a balanced energy mix. Solar energy, as one of the most cost-effective and reliable sources of electricity, is also crucial for improving energy security and reducing reliance on foreign gas imports. By integrating solar into the energy mix, Scotland can advance toward a self-sufficient, decarbonised future, using this abundant and renewable resource to achieve its climate goals. Solar farms also provide additional benefits, supporting agricultural diversification, regenerating soil, and enhancing biodiversity through habitats like wildflower meadows and hedgerows. Advanced bifacial panels further optimise efficiency by capturing reflected and diffuse light, producing more energy in less space. These innovations highlight solar energy's vital role in Scotland's path to net zero.
Impact on private water supplies	The Proposed Development includes plans to install new water pipes around the perimeter of the solar farm, replacing the current private water supplies serving two of the site neighbours. This will safeguard the water supply access for these properties, and improve the quality of the pipes by upgrading them from clay to plastic. This improvement will not only support the needs of the project but also provide long-term benefits to the surrounding community by modernising essential utilities.
Noise	The Proposed Development will operate within strict noise limits to minimise any potential disruption to nearby residents. A comprehensive **Acoustic Assessment** has been undertaken to ensure compliance with regulatory standards, which confirms that that the noise impact resulting from the operation of the site has been assessed to be insignificant. Please see the full **Acoustic Assessment** submitted as part of the planning application.
Contamination from cleaning chemicals and herbicides	To maintain the productivity and efficiency of the solar panels, water would be used to clean the panels. The frequency of cleaning is typically every 6 months, subject to weather conditions. No detergents or chemicals will be used in the cleaning of panels. Vegetation management across solar farms, including at the Proposed

	Development, will primarily be carried out through grass cutting or sheep grazing. Certain areas, particularly beneath the panels where manual cutting is not feasible, must be kept clear to maintain safe and efficient panel operation. In such cases, selective herbicides are applied through spot spraying, typically once a year in late spring. Herbicide use is minimised, and 'total kill' herbicides are avoided to allow grasses to continue growing. Applications are carried out exclusively by qualified operatives in compliance with current regulations and guidelines, particularly regarding use near watercourses and hedges. The introduction of a solar farm with sheep grazing on previously arable land often results in reduced pesticide use, including herbicides, contributing to soil and land recovery. This will help to reduce run off rates by increasing the roughness of the ground, help to increase infiltration by reducing compaction, and improve water quality by reducing erosion and mobilisation of pollutants.
Corrosion of support structures	The panel mounting structures are typically treated with a galvanised coating, either by being dipped in a galvanised paint solution after fabrication or by incorporating the solution during the manufacturing process, to minimise the risk of corrosion. During routine operations and maintenance, technicians will conduct regular inspections of the mounting structures and apply touch-ups or repaint any areas where the galvanised coating may have worn away.

6.2.4 In addition to the above table, written feedback was provided in response to specific queries raised by residents living in close proximity to the Proposed Development. Continuous engagement occurred between the Applicant and nearby residents throughout both consultation rounds, with dialogue remaining ongoing. The feedback received from these residents has played a significant role in shaping the final design of the Proposed Development.

7. Conclusion.

7.1 Concluding statement

7.1.1 The pre-application community consultation approach adopted by the Applicant meets the relevant legislative and regulatory requirements for major development.

7.1.2 From the outset, the Applicant sought to engage and consult fully with the local community and stakeholders regarding the Proposed Development.

7.1.3 The Applicant engaged with stakeholders and the community consistently from the point of the launch of the first round of consultation to the end of the second round of consultation, including individual engagement with neighbours of the Proposed Development and political representatives.

7.1.3 The Applicant has carried out a thorough and comprehensive consultation, and closely followed best practice regarding community engagement and public consultation.

7.1.4 The Applicant is grateful for those who were able to attend the in-person public exhibitions and take the time to view the proposal on the project website and engage with the development via email and telephone.

7.1.5 The Applicant has made several key changes to the Proposed Development application as a result of the feedback received from the community during both rounds of consultation, and these changes have been set out above and listed below.

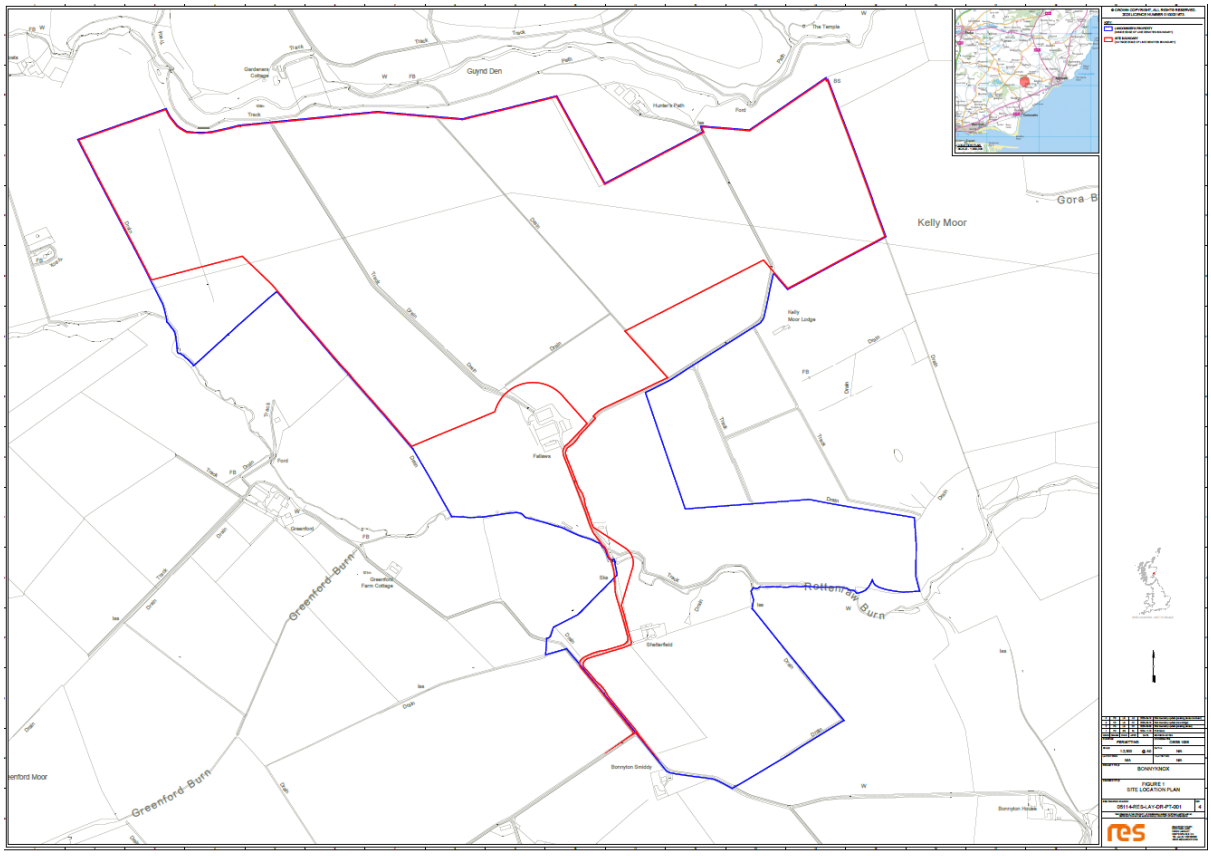
- Solar infrastructure removed from fields south of the site to reduce potential visibility.
- A 10-metre buffer maintained between solar panels and woodland to the north and east.
- A 12-metre buffer established around Crossden Burn, adhering to flood prevention guidelines.
- The existing site track will be preserved for access to the Guynd, with inverters positioned away from the Guynd and the access track to protect its amenity.
- Six laybys will be installed along the proposed site access route, to allow for safe passing and increased visibility for drivers.
- The Applicant plans to install new water pipes around the perimeter of the solar farm, replacing the current private water supplies serving two of the site neighbours.
- The battery energy storage element has been removed based on community feedback and an internal review of the benefits versus the infrastructure needed.

7.1.6 The Applicant is committed to continuing to engage with the local community following the submission of the application, and throughout determination, construction and operations, should the application be consented.

7.1.7 The Proposed Development's website at **www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk** has been and will continue to be updated regularly to enable people to keep up to date with the latest news about the Proposed Development as it progresses. Once the application has been validated by Angus Council, the Applicant will write to stakeholders and members of the community who have asked to be kept updated on the Proposed Development, to provide them with the planning reference number and contact details for the determining authority, should they wish to submit a formal representation.

8. Appendices.

Appendix 1: Proposed Development site boundary



Appendix 2: Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN)

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (Section 35B)
The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013 (Regulations 4 -7)

To be completed for all developments within the national or major categories of development

Name of Council	Angus Council
Address	Angus House Orchardbank Business Park Orchardbank, Forfar Angus, DD8 1AN
Proposed development at [Note 1]	Land located 2km west of Arbirlot, Angus. Approximate grid reference E356977, N741022.
Description of proposal [Note 2]	Construction and operation of a solar farm of up to 49.9MW output and its associated infrastructure.

Notice is hereby given that an application is being made to

[Note 3] Angus Council Council by [Note 4] Renewable Energy Systems Ltd.

Of [Note 5]

Beaufort Court, Egg Farm Lane, Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, WD4 8LR, London, UK

In respect of [Note 6] Public Consultation Events

To take place on [Note 7] Exhibition 1: 25/06/24 from 3-8pm at Hospitalfield House, Arbroath, DD11 2NH.
Exhibition 2: W/C 26/08/24 or 03/09/24 from 3-8pm at Arbirlot Church Hall, Arbroath, DD11 2NX (subject to availability).

[Note 8] The following parties have received a copy of this Proposal of Application Notice

The Royal Borough of Arbroath (host), Letham (neighbouring) and Carnoustie Community Council (neighbouring), Councillors from Arbroath West, Letham and Friockheim Ward and the neighbouring Carnoustie and District Ward will be informed prior to the commencement of any public consultation events. An advert for the first consultation event will be placed in The Courier and Angus World on 13th June 2024. Adverts for the second consultation event will be placed in the same publications at least 7-days prior to the event. A dedicated project website will be launched prior to public consultation. Further information is included within the attached covering letter.

[Note 9] For further details contact Seymour Lindsay-Scott (email: seymour.lindsay-scott@res-group.com)

on telephone number 07833698065

And/or at the following address Beaufort Court, Egg Farm Lane, Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, WD4 8LR, London, UK

[Note 10] I certify that I have attached a plan outlining the site

Signed Seymour Lindsay-Scott

On behalf of Renewable Energy Systems Ltd.

Date 05/06/24

PROPOSAL OF APPLICATION NOTICE

Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2013

NOTES FOR GUIDANCE

[Note 1] – Insert postal address or location of proposed development
[Note 2] – Insert description in general terms of the development to be carried out.
[Note 3] – Insert Council name.
[Note 4] – Insert name of applicant and/or agent
[Note 5] – Insert applicant's and/or agent's postal address
[Note 6] - Insert form of consultation the prospective applicant proposes to undertake e.g. public meeting
[Note 7] – Insert date and venue of consultation
[Note 8] – Insert list of those groups who have been invited to attend
[Note 9] – Insert details as to how the prospective applicant/agent can be contacted (incl. name, address and tel. no)
[Note 10] - Attach plan that outlines the location of the proposed development and is sufficient to identify the site

Pre-application Consultation (PAC)

Where PAC is required, the prospective applicant must, under sections 35B(1) and (2) (of the Act), provide to the planning authority a 'Proposal of Application Notice' at least 12 weeks (section 35B(3)) prior to the submission of an application for planning permission. The Proposal of Application Notice must include the information set out in section 35B(4) and in regulation 6, namely:

i) a description in general terms of the development to be carried out;*
ii) the postal address of the site at which the development is to be carried out, if available
iii) a plan showing the outline of the site at which the development is to be carried out and sufficient to identify the site;
iv) detail as to how the prospective applicant may be contacted and corresponded with; and
v) an account of what consultation the prospective applicant proposes to undertake, when such consultation is to take place, with whom and what form it will take.

* You should provide an outline of the proposal's characteristics, and the identification of its category (e.g. Major development). Any subsequent application needs to be recognisably linked to what was described in the proposal of application notice.

Submission of an Application after Pre-application Consultation Notice

The submission of the proposal of application notice starts the PAC processing clock. After a minimum of 12 weeks, having carried out the statutory requirements and any additional requirements specified by the planning authority, an applicant can submit the application along with the required written Pre-application Consultation Report. Information in relation to the proposal of application notice must also be placed by the planning authority on the list of applications required under section 36A and regulation 21.

Additional consultation activity (responding to the Proposal of Application Notice)

The applicant is required to indicate in the proposal of application notice what consultation will be undertaken in addition to the statutory minimum. The planning authority must respond within 21 days of receiving the Notice to advise the applicant whether the proposed PAC is satisfactory or if additional notification and consultation above the statutory minimum is required in order to make it binding on the applicant. In doing so, planning authorities are to have regard to the nature, extent and location of the proposed development and to the likely effects, both at and in the vicinity of that location, of its being carried out (section 35B(8)). Additional consultation requirements should be proportionate, specific and reasonable in the circumstances. If there is no response to the proposal of application notice by the planning authority within 21 days, only the statutory minimum PAC activities will be required.

Scottish Ministers expect planning authorities to develop and maintain up to date lists of bodies and interests with whom applicants should consult in particular types of case. These lists should be available to applicants, who can draft proposal of application notices in light of that information. Further advice on planning community engagement activity can be found in Planning Advice Note 81: Community Engagement – Planning With People.

Minimum consultation activity

Consultation with community councils - Under regulation 7 an applicant must consult every community council any part of whose area is within or adjoins the land where the proposed development is situated. This includes community councils in a neighbouring planning authority.

The public event - Regulation 7 also requires the holding of at least two public event for members of the public where they can make comments to the prospective applicant on their proposals. This 'public event' must be advertised at least 7 days in advance in a newspaper circulating in the locality of the proposed development. The advertisement for the public event must include:

- a description of, and the location of, the proposed development;
- details as to where further information may be obtained concerning the proposed development; the date and place of the public event;
- a statement explaining how, and by when, persons wishing to make comments to the prospective applicant relating to the proposal may do so; and
- a statement that comments made to the prospective applicant are not representations to the planning authority. If the applicant submits an application there will be an opportunity to make representations on that application to the planning authority.

Applicants will gain less from poorly attended or unrepresentative PAC events and should ensure that processes are put in place that will allow members of the community to participate meaningfully in any public event. The public event should be reasonably accessible to the public at large, including disabled people. It may be appropriate for the public event to take place over a number of dates, times and places. Applicants should ensure that individuals and community groups can submit written comments in response to the newspaper advertisement.

There is a need to emphasise to communities that the plans presented to them for a proposed planning application may alter in some way before the final proposal is submitted as a planning application to the planning authority. Even after PAC, and once a planning application has been submitted to the planning authority, communities should ensure that any representations they wish to make on the proposal are submitted to that authority as part of the process of considering the planning application.

Any personal data that you have been asked to provide on this from will be held and processed in accordance with Data Protection Legislation.

Appendix 3: Stakeholder email introducing the Proposed Development

Bonnyknox Solar Farm - Project Introduction

[redacted]

Reply | Reply All | Forward

Thu 06/06/2024 15:30

You replied to this message on 26/07/2024 09:20.

RES, Bonnyknox Solar Farm - Project Introduction - Councillor Cruickshanks.pdf
127 KB

313625 Bonnyknox Solar PoAN Covering Letter_.pdf
183 KB

313625 Bonnyknox Solar PoAN Form.pdf
98 KB

Location Plan (05114-RES-LAY-DR-LE-007).pdf
1 MB

Good afternoon Councillor Cruickshanks,

I hope this email finds you well.

Please see attached a letter from Seymour Lindsay-Scott, New Sites Manager at RES, regarding their submission of a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) to Angus Council for a solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 8km west of Arbroath. A copy of the PoAN, covering letter and location plan is also attached for your records.

Should you have any questions or wish additional information please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Appendix 4: First consultation stakeholder letter

Renewable Energy Systems Limited
Third Floor, STV, Pacific Quay
Glasgow G51 1PQ, United Kingdom

6th June 2024

[redacted]

Bonnyknox Solar Farm: Project Introduction

I am writing to introduce RES's proposal to develop a solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 8km west of Arbroath and to let you know that we have submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) to Angus Council, a copy of which is attached to this letter. If consented, the project will have the potential to generate enough clean, green energy for around 15,000 homes every year.

RES

RES is the world's largest independent renewable energy company, working across 24 countries and active in wind, solar, energy storage, biomass, hydro, green hydrogen, transmission and distribution. As an industry innovator for over 40 years, RES has delivered more than 24GW of renewable energy projects across the globe and supports an operational asset portfolio exceeding 41GW worldwide for a large client base.

Drawing on our decades of experience in the renewable energy and construction industries, RES has the expertise to develop, construct and operate projects of outstanding quality which contribute to a low carbon future by providing a secure supply of sustainable, low cost, clean green energy. RES is committed to finding effective and appropriate ways of engaging with all its stakeholders, including local residents and businesses, and believes that the views of local people are an integral part of the development process. RES is also committed to developing long term relationships with the communities around its projects, proactively seeking ways in which it can support and encourage community involvement in social and environmental projects near its developments.

RES is the power behind a clean energy future where everyone has access to affordable zero carbon energy. We bring together global experience, passion, and the innovation of 4,500 people to transform the way energy is generated, stored and supplied.

About the Proposal

The proposal is for a 49.9MW solar development which would produce enough energy to power around 15,000 homes.

Solar projects like Bonnyknox can be quick to deploy, enable more energy to be generated domestically improving energy security and contribute to Scotland's Net Zero targets. They are also the cheapest form of new electricity generation, alongside other renewable technologies. This makes developments like Bonnyknox not just good for the environment but also for the consumer.

Renewable Energy Systems Limited
Third Floor, STV, Pacific Quay
Glasgow G51 1PQ, United Kingdom

Bonnyknox Solar Farm is being specifically designed to be dual purpose, enabling continued agricultural use, in the form of sheep grazing. Furthermore, the solar farm would be completely reversible at the end of its life and the low intensity regime allows the regeneration of soil quality, ensuring the availability of high-quality agricultural acreage for the future.

Solar farms also have significant potential to enhance biodiversity, hosting a range of habitats including wildflower meadows, hedgerows, nectar-rich areas for pollinators, and woodland. A typical solar farm uses around just 5% of the total site area with the rest of the land remaining undisturbed, creating significant opportunities to provide a range of ecological benefits.

Consultation

RES believes in meaningful and effective consultation, and we aim to engage early with the local community and key stakeholders in order to facilitate constructive dialogue. We will shortly be undertaking a range of consultation activities including a drop-in consultation event on Wednesday 26th June 2024 at the Music Room, Hospitalfield House, Arbroath DD11 2NH between 3pm and 8pm.

The consultation event will provide a first opportunity for the community to view the plans, ask questions of the project team, and submit valuable feedback. For those unable to attend the event, consultation material and the ability to submit feedback will be available via our dedicated project website: www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk.

We would be delighted to meet with you to discuss this project in greater detail and to answer any questions you may have. To arrange a meeting, either in-person or remotely, [redacted]

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Appendix 5: First consultation newsletter

Bonnyknox Solar Farm

Project Introduction – June 2024

About the Proposal

RES is exploring the potential for a solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 8km west of Arbroath, and has submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) to Angus Council.

The proposal is for a 49.9MW solar development which would produce enough energy to power around 15,000 homes[1].

RES is now at the stage of consulting with the local community to get feedback on our early-stage proposal.

The feedback will be taken into account, along with the results of site surveys and assessments, as we refine the design.

Please join us at our event to find out more:

Wednesday 26th June 2024, 3pm to 8pm

Music Room, Hospitalfield House
Hospitalfield, Arbroath, DD11 2NH

Consultation

We are keen to engage with the local community and as part of our pre-application consultation we are holding a public exhibition in the local area to enable people to find out more about the proposal and provide us with their views. RES staff will be on hand to answer any questions for more information, and comment forms will be available to gather feedback.

All information provided at the public exhibition will also be available at **www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk** from **26th June 2024**.

The public exhibition initiates a consultation period being run by RES to gather comments on the proposal. **Please provide feedback on the preliminary design by Friday 12th July 2024.**

Comment forms will be available to complete and submit during the public exhibition. Online forms will also be available on the website above from the day of the public exhibition and can submitted online or downloaded and submitted via email to **bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk**. Hard copies can be sent by post to **Cavendish Consulting, SPACES, 1 West Regent Street, Glasgow, G2 1RW.**

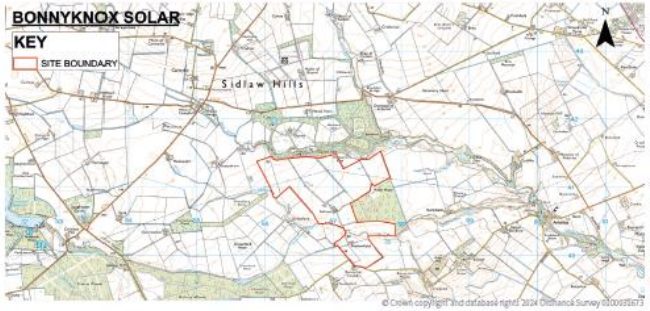
Please note that comments submitted to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Angus Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be made.

[1] The homes figure has been calculated by taking the predicted annual electricity generation of the site (using an average solar capacity factor of 11.2%) and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from DESNZ showing that the annual GB average domestic household consumption is 3,239 kWh (January 2024).

Bonnyknox Solar Farm

Solar projects like Bonnyknox can be quick to deploy, enabling more energy to be generated domestically, improving energy security and contributing to Scotland's Net Zero targets. They are also the cheapest form of new electricity generation, alongside other renewable technologies. This makes developments like Bonnyknox not just good for the environment but also for the consumer.

Bonnyknox Solar Farm is being specifically designed to be dual purpose, enabling continued agricultural use, in the form of sheep grazing. Furthermore, the solar farm would be completely reversible at the end of its life and the low intensity regime allows the regeneration of soil quality, ensuring the availability of high-quality agricultural acreage for the future.



RES

RES is the world's largest independent renewable energy company, working across 24 countries and active in wind, solar, energy storage, biomass, hydro, green hydrogen, transmission and distribution. As an industry innovator for over 40 years, RES has delivered more than 24GW of renewable energy projects across the globe and supports an operational asset portfolio exceeding 41GW worldwide for a large client base.

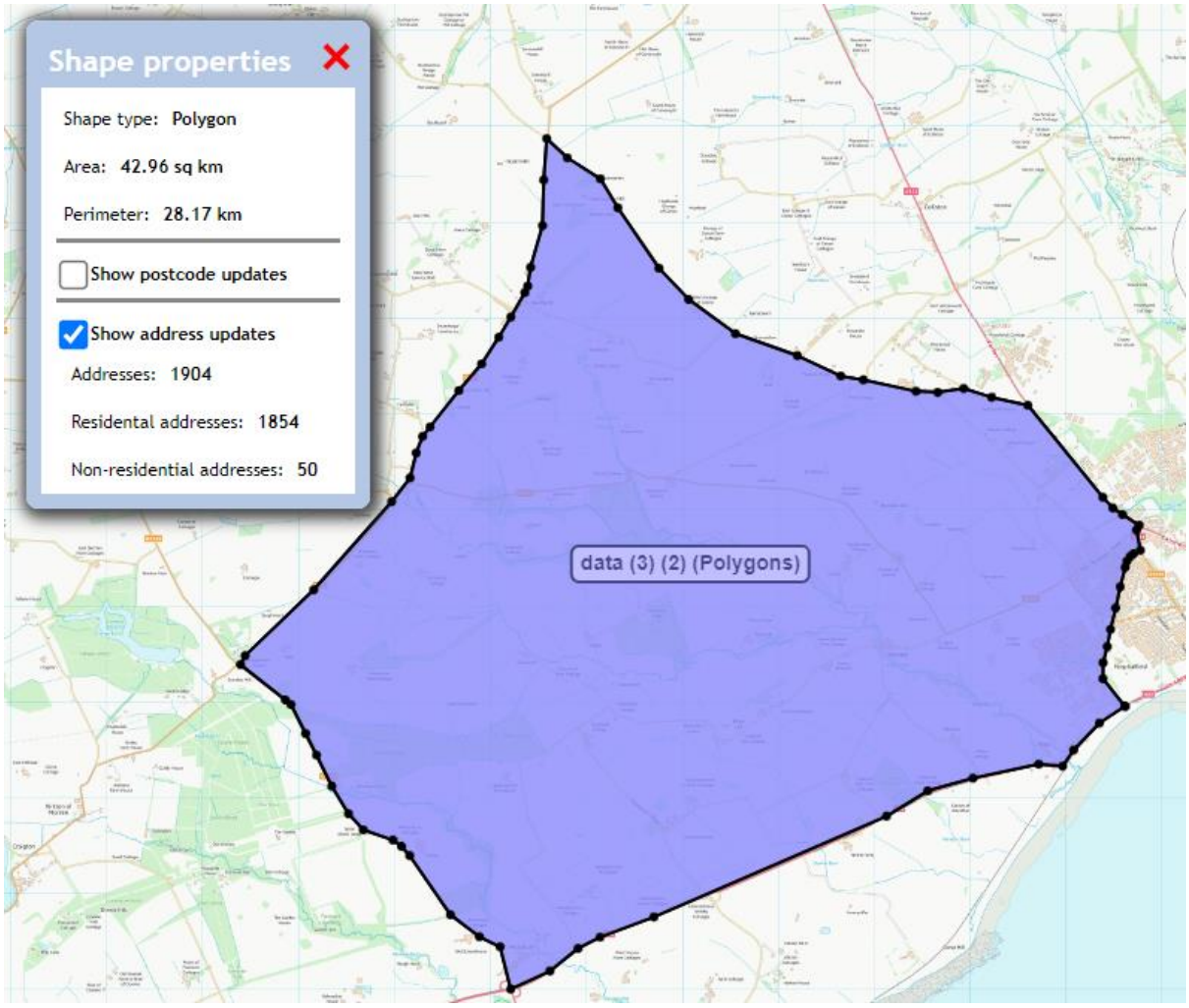
Drawing on our decades of experience in the renewable energy and construction industries, RES has the expertise to develop, construct and operate projects of outstanding quality which contribute to a low carbon future by providing a secure supply of sustainable, low cost, clean green energy. RES is committed to finding effective and appropriate ways of engaging with all its stakeholders, including local residents and businesses, and believes that the views of local people are an integral part of the development process. RES is also committed to developing long term relationships with the communities around its projects, proactively seeking ways in which it can support and encourage community involvement in social and environmental projects near its developments.

RES is the power behind a clean energy future where everyone has access to affordable zero carbon energy. We bring together global experience, passion, and the innovation of 4,500 people to transform the way energy is generated, stored and supplied.

[redacted]

www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk

Appendix 6: Mailout radius



Appendix 7: First consultation advertisement

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
Public Consultation Event

res
power for good

RES is currently exploring the potential for a new solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 8km west of Arbroath.

We invite you to attend our upcoming consultation event which will provide information on the proposed development as well as an opportunity to discuss the proposals, ask questions of the project team and provide feedback.

26th June 2024
3.00pm – 8.00pm
Music Room, Hospitalfield House, Arbroath, DD11 2NH

The exhibition material will also be available to view **(from 26th June 2024)** on the dedicated project website: **www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk**

Further information relating to the proposed development may be obtained by contacting **0141 264 2831** or by email at: **bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk**.

Persons wishing to make comments on the proposals may do so at the event, via the website (using the online feedback form), by email, or in writing to:

C/O Cavendish Consulting,
1 West Regent Street,
Glasgow, G2 1RW

Please note that all comments should be returned no later than **Friday 12th July 2024.**

Please note that comments submitted to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Angus Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be made.

Appendix 8: First consultation feedback form

res
power for good

Bonnyknox Solar Farm Proposal
Comment Form

RES believes in meaningful and productive consultation, and we aim to engage early with the local community and key stakeholders to facilitate constructive consultation. This helps to identify issues and concerns, as well as benefits and opportunities, which we can then consider when developing the design of the proposal. At the public exhibition we have presented preliminary design drawings. Feedback from the local community on the preliminary design is an important part of our pre-application consultation and we would be grateful if you could take the time to fill out this comment form with your feedback. Please provide feedback by **Friday 12th July 2024.** Comments will still be accepted after this date but may not be considered in relation to the design development.

Please note that comments submitted to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Angus Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be made.

1 Bonnyknox Solar Farm: Public Exhibition

1.1 How did you find out about our public exhibition?

- ☐ Newsletter through the door
- ☐ Advert in local newspaper
- ☐ Project website – www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Other (please specify)

1.2 Before visiting the exhibition how would you describe your knowledge of the proposal?

- ☐ Knew a lot
- ☐ Knew quite a lot
- ☐ Knew a little
- ☐ Knew very little
- ☐ Knew nothing at all

1.3 Having visited the exhibition, to what extent do you feel you have increased your understanding about the proposal?

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Quite a lot
- ☐ A little
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Nothing at all

1

1.4 Which part of the exhibition did you find most useful?

- ☐ The information boards
- ☐ Ability to ask the project team questions
- ☐ Other (please specify)

1.5 Do you have any suggestions for ways in which we could have improved our exhibition?

2 Bonnyknox Solar Farm: Proposal

Your views on the proposal for Bonnyknox Solar Farm – specifically the preliminary layout of the project where people's comments can have a direct influence – will be considered in relation to the design development of the project.

2.1 How do you feel in general about the proposals?

- ☐ I am supportive
- ☐ I am neutral
- ☐ I am opposed

Further comments:

2.2 What do you think about the proposed preliminary design layout of the Bonnyknox Solar Farm?

- ☐ I am happy with the proposed layout
- ☐ I am neutral towards the proposed layout
- ☐ I have concerns about the proposed layout
- ☐ I don't like solar farms in general

Further comments:

2.3 Is there anything else you would like to share with us about the proposal?

3 Local Benefits

3.1 We firmly believe that solar developments should provide meaningful benefits locally and we will work with the local community to gain feedback on their priorities and deliver projects that will help to secure long-term economic, social and environmental benefits. This approach will help to deliver a tailored package of benefits that are aligned with the local communities' priorities.

Some examples from communities that we've worked with include improvements to village halls, sports team sponsorship, funding for schools and local community groups, community defibrillators and improvements to local footpaths and/or signage.

If you have any suggestions for such benefits Bonnyknox Solar Farm may be able to support, please let us know in the box below.

4 Climate Change, Energy Security and Renewables

The below section is optional and designed to help us understand people's thoughts on how renewables can help to tackle climate change and improve energy security.

4.1 Do you agree that we are facing a global climate change emergency?

- ☐ I strongly agree
- ☐ I agree
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ I disagree
- ☐ I strongly disagree

Further comments:

4.2 Do you agree that generating electricity from renewable sources, and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, can help towards tackling the issue of climate change?

- ☐ I strongly agree
- ☐ I agree
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ I disagree
- ☐ I strongly disagree

Further comments:

4.3 Do you agree that we need to develop solar farms to support greater energy independence and energy security for Scotland?

- ☐ I strongly agree
- ☐ I agree
- ☐ I don't know
- ☐ I disagree
- ☐ I strongly disagree

Further comments:

5 Your details

Please provide your name and contact details below in order to authenticate this comments form. Providing this information gives context to your feedback, facilitates a better understanding of community views and priorities, and enables us to respond to any questions raised. However, **if you are not comfortable providing us with your full contact details, please include your postcode as a minimum.**

Your contact details will be treated by RES and Cavendish Consulting with the strictest of confidence, in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018. We may at times share your contact details, in confidence, with third parties who we employ to help process your comments or update you on the project and by providing your details below you consent to this. You may write to RES or Cavendish Consulting at any time to ask that your contact details be removed from our records and from any third parties we work with.

Name	
Email	
Address	
Postcode	

If you would like to be kept up to date with the project, please tick this box ☐

When you have completed the comment form, please put it in the box provided. Comment forms can also be sent by email to bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk or by post to: C/o Cavendish Consulting, 220 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5SG.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this comment form, your feedback is important to us.

Appendix 9: First consultation boards

Welcome to our exhibition

Thank you for taking the time to attend our consultation event.

We are seeking your views on the preliminary design for a new solar farm that we are exploring on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot.

We consider pre-application consultation a crucial part of the solar farm development process and we aim to engage early with the local community and key stakeholders in order to facilitate constructive consultation.

This helps to identify issues and concerns, as well as benefits and opportunities, which we will consider when developing and refining the design and delivery of the proposals.

The public exhibition forms part of our pre-application consultation and is designed to give you the opportunity to:

- learn more about the proposal
- discuss any questions or views with our project team
- provide written feedback to RES on the proposal.

Please take time to read the information provided and talk to our project team about any questions that you may have. All consultation feedback submitted to RES will be reviewed by the project team over the coming weeks as we continue the design process.

Image for illustrative purposes only

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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About RES

RES has been at the forefront of wind energy development for over 40 years and delivered more than 26GW of renewable energy projects worldwide. We employ more than 4,500 passionate people across the globe and are active in 24 countries, working across onshore and offshore wind, solar, energy storage, green hydrogen, transmission and distribution.

Sustainability lies at the core of our business activity and values, and we have been leading efforts to create a future where everyone has access to affordable zero carbon energy. By listening, discussing, and working together, we can build clean energy project proposals that power positive change for everyone.

Find out more at res-group.com

RES in Scotland

RES is a privately-owned company with a proud history in Scotland. We grew out of Sir Robert McAlpine, a British family-owned firm with over 140 years of experience in construction and engineering including the Glenfinnan Viaduct in the Highlands and the Emirates Arena and Sir Chris Hoy Velodrome in Glasgow.

From our Glasgow office we have been developing, constructing and operating energy projects in Scotland since 1993.

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Why solar?

Scotland is committed to achieving net zero by 2045. As part of this progression towards decarbonisation and reducing reliance on fossil fuels, there is a need to invest in renewable technology and make the UK an independent and self-sufficient energy producing nation.

Solar is one of the cheapest sources of new electricity generation and will play a key role in improving Scotland's energy security, while supporting the transition away from fossil fuels. As Scotland strives to be a net-zero carbon economy by 2045, solar is not just an option, it is a necessity as part of a balanced energy mix. Solar is a great resource to assist in this transition as it is a free and inexhaustible resource.

By producing solar energy domestically, Scotland can secure our energy market for the future and become less reliant on expensive foreign gas imports for electricity and heating.

RES solar farms are specifically designed to be dual purpose, combining continued agricultural use and renewable generation.

Where a solar farm is installed on land which has been intensively farmed, it enables the ground underneath to recover. Solar farms can help regenerate soil quality and contribute towards the continued availability of high-quality agricultural acreage for future generations.

Solar farms provide valuable diversification opportunities for farmers, helping them to continue to invest locally, employ locally and farm in a sustainable manner.

Solar farms have significant potential to enhance biodiversity, hosting a range of habitats including wildflower meadows, hedgerows, nectar-rich areas for pollinators, and woodland. A typical solar farm uses around just 5% of the total site area with the rest of the land remaining undisturbed, creating significant opportunities to provide a range of ecological benefits.

RES solar farms utilise bifacial solar panels which as the name suggests, have two sides of solar cells, enabling additional energy generation from the reflected and diffused light on the rear-side of the panels. Solar panels do not require direct sunlight to produce energy – diffuse sunlight is sufficient, and a grass surface reflects enough light to justify the use of bifacial modules. The use of bifacial panels means that there is potential to produce more electricity in less space.

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Project overview

Our proposal is for a 49.9MW solar development on land at Fallaws Farm in Arbirlot, which is approximately 5km west of Arbroath. The land is currently used for arable farming.

The proposed development could produce enough energy to power around 15,000[1] homes.

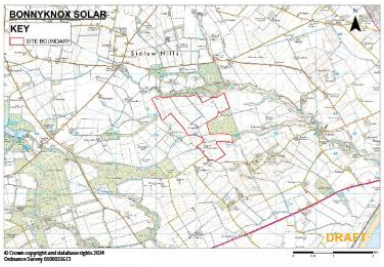
The site was chosen because it has good solar resource, no ecological constraints, straightforward access and has a viable grid connection.

If the solar farm is developed, the energy generated will be connected via a new 33kV link to the Arbroath substation.

If consented, Bonnyknox Solar Farm will play an important role in mitigating climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, contributing to Scotland's net zero targets. Additionally, using a renewable resource like solar energy ensures a sustainable energy supply for future generations.

We will hold a second public exhibition in late summer 2024, ahead of submitting any planning application, to present an updated design for Bonnyknox Solar Farm. At the second exhibition, we will refer to the written feedback received from this exhibition and explain any changes made to the design in response to the feedback.

This proposal will have an installed generating capacity of less than 50MW, and so the application will be considered and determined by the local planning authority – which in this case is Angus Council. We currently hope to submit an application around Autumn 2024.



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024 Ordnance Survey 0100031673

Proposed site boundary shown within red outline

[1]The homes figure has been calculated by taking the predicted annual electricity generation of the site (using an average solar capacity factor of 11.3%) and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from BEIS[2] showing that the annual GB average domestic household consumption is 3,239 kWh (January 2024).

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Design layout and infrastructure

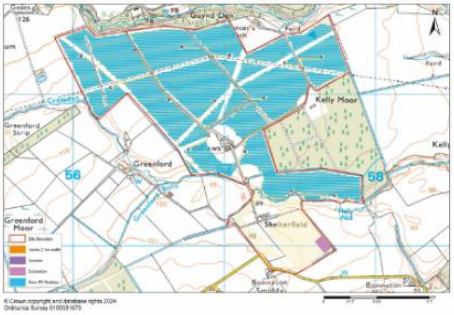
The plan below shows the preliminary layout for Bonnyknox Solar Farm.

The preliminary layout is based on initial findings from environmental and technical surveys which are ongoing. We are currently consulting on this layout and as such, it is subject to change.

The total number of panels and the height will be informed by ongoing surveys and assessments and feedback from the community and stakeholders and will be detailed in the planning application.

In addition to the solar panels, the site infrastructure is expected to include:

- A network of on-site access tracks
- A substation/transformer with security fencing
- Inverters on hardstandings
- Temporary construction compound(s)
- Deer fencing around the perimeter of the solar farm
- Landscaping and natural screening



Preliminary indicative site layout

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Environmental considerations

RES will design the solar farm so that it will fit sensitively in the surrounding landscape.

A number of surveys and assessments will be carried out to ensure any potential impact upon the environment, landscape, heritage and local residents is appropriately assessed and mitigated. Potential cumulative impacts, with other developments in the area, will also be assessed.

The assessments to be carried out will include:

- Ecology
- Flood risk & surface water management
- Landscape and visual
- Heritage & Archaeology
- Glint and Glare
- National Land Capability for Agriculture
- Traffic and transport
- Acoustics

The results of these surveys, along with feedback from the local community and stakeholders, will be taken into account as the design of the solar farm is refined and finalised. The assessments will accompany any planning application that is made.

Image for illustrative purposes only

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Landscaping and biodiversity enhancement

Bonnyknox Solar Farm has significant potential to enhance biodiversity, hosting a range of habitats including wildflower meadows, hedgerows and nectar-rich areas for pollinators. A typical solar farm uses around just 5% of the total site area with the rest of the land remaining undisturbed, creating significant opportunities to provide a range of ecological benefits.

At Bonnyknox Solar Farm, as with all RES developments, our goal is to deliver a biodiversity net gain as part of the development. We aim to retain all existing hedgerow and woodland, where possible, and create new hedgerow and woodland to benefit a range of local species. New and infill native planting will provide visual screening from the solar farm as well as wildlife corridors and vital resources for mammals, birds and invertebrates.

Species-rich meadows and grasslands are among the most threatened habitats across the UK. Proposed species-rich grassland planting can support healthy populations of insects, birds, bats, amphibians and many other animals. Grassland soils also provide useful ecosystem services by sequestering carbon and locking up harmful pollutants.

Wildflower meadows can provide habitat for pollinators such as butterflies, bees and hoverflies and reptile hibernaculum, hedgehog houses, bee banks, bird boxes and invertebrate hotels can further enhance the biodiversity of the site.

A Landscape and Ecological Management Plan (LEMP) will form part of the planning application and will illustrate our immediate and long-term commitment to deliver landscape planting as well as the protection and enhancement of biodiversity around the site. The LEMP will provide landscaping specifications for new vegetation in accordance with relevant standards, as well as information on the timings and aftercare regime for all planting.

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Traffic and access

Component and material deliveries are a key phase in the construction of any solar project.

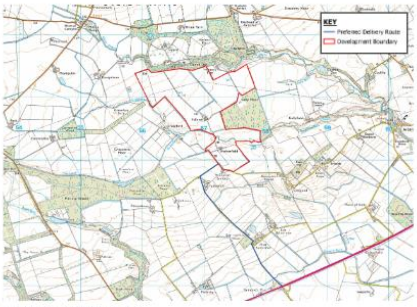
Currently our proposed construction route for the development at Fallaws Farm in Arbirlot would be via the A92 to minimise construction traffic impact on Arbroath.

Construction traffic would access the site off the A92 at the Salmond's Muir junction leading onto Bonnyton Road to the site.

The preliminary plan below shows our current preferred proposed delivery route, and access point, currently under consideration which could be used for the delivery of materials and access for construction and maintenance.

We will consult with the relevant Highways authorities, community councils, the emergency services, the local community and other relevant bodies to produce a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to support any future planning application. The CTMP would outline the overall framework for managing the safe movement of construction and delivery traffic as well as itemising the expected number of traffic movements and timing restrictions.

The traffic movements will be limited to avoid morning and evening peak times, where possible. There will also be a dedicated Community Liaison Officer to engage with local residents throughout the construction and operational phases, if the solar farm is consented.



Preferred construction route based on current proposals

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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RES is committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, local contractors and employees are used in all aspects of solar farm development. The major opportunities arise during the construction phase when suitably qualified local firms are often invited to bid for different aspects of construction. We encourage our contractors to source construction materials locally (i.e. within the county) and to use local transport and plant hire companies where possible, in addition to local services and amenities.

RES also believes that our renewable energy schemes should also provide meaningful benefits locally and we are inviting input from the local communities on their priority aims and projects in their area which the project may be able to support. Examples could include supporting community assets, apprenticeships, fuel poverty schemes, etc.

We look forward to continuing to work with the community as our proposals are developed.

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Next steps

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about our proposal for Bonnyknox Solar Farm.

Please do make sure you share your views on these early proposal with us. You can do this in one of three ways:

- By completing a feedback form at our event
- By scanning the QR code below, or visiting our website, to submit a feedback form online
- By getting in touch with our team using the details below to request a hard copy feedback form

We are gathering feedback on these initial proposals until **Friday 12th July 2024.**

Following this, we will review and consider all feedback as we continue to progress the proposal.

A further round of consultation will then take place in late August/early September where the updated proposals will be presented and the community will have another opportunity to share their views. Another drop-in event will be held as part of this round of consultation and the website will also be updated with all of the information as well as the online feedback form.

The feedback from this round will then once again be reviewed and considered as the application is prepared for submission to Angus Council.

In support of the submitted application, a Pre Application Consultation Report will be prepared which will outline all of the consultation and engagement activity undertaken by RES, the feedback received from the community and stakeholders, and how RES has responded to and considered the feedback in its submitted application.

bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

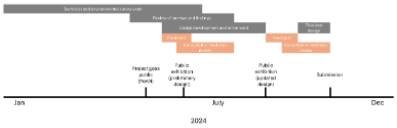
0800 066 8943

www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk

C/o Cavendish Consulting, 220 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5SG

www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk

Timeline:



Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

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Appendix 10: Second consultation stakeholder letter

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RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS LTD
3rd Floor, STV, Pacific Quay
Glasgow, G51 1PQ

[redacted]

9 September 2024

Dear [redacted]

I would like to take this opportunity to update you on our proposal for Bonnyknox Solar Farm, located approximately 5km west of Arbroath, and invite you to our second public consultation event on **Tuesday 24 September in the Music Room, Hospitalfield House (Hospitalfield, Arbroath, DD11 2NH) between 3-8pm.**

As you know, RES is exploring the potential for a solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 5km west of Arbroath, and submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) to Angus Council in June this year. RES has since supplied a slightly amended PoAN in August to notify Angus Council of a change in date for the second consultation event. The proposal is for a 49.9MW solar development which would produce enough energy to power around 15,000 homes[1].

Since our public exhibitions in June 2024, where we presented our preliminary plans for the solar farm, we have been refining the design in response to feedback received and ongoing surveys and assessments.

As part of our continuing pre-application consultation, we are holding a second public exhibition in the local area to present updated plans for the solar farm, ahead of submitting a planning application later this year. Members of the project team will be on hand to provide further detail and answer any questions. Comment forms will be available to gather feedback.

All information provided at the public exhibition will also be available at www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk from 24 September 2024. Feedback on the proposals will be accepted until Friday 11 October 2024.

We would be delighted to meet with you to discuss this project in greater detail and to answer any questions you may have. To arrange a meeting, either in-person or remotely, please contact Fergus Johnston on 0141 674 8680 or by email at fergus.johnston@cavendishconsulting.com.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

[1] The homes figure has been calculated by taking the predicted annual electricity generation of the site (using an average solar capacity factor of 11.2%) and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from DESNZ showing that the annual GB average domestic household consumption is 3,239 kWh (January 2024).

Appendix 11: Second consultation residents' postcard

About the proposal

RES is exploring the potential for a solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 5km west of Arbroath. The proposal is for a 49.9MW solar development which would produce enough energy to power around 15,000[1] homes.

Since our public consultation in June 2024, where we presented our preliminary plans for the solar farm, we have been refining the design in response to feedback received and ongoing surveys and assessments.

Consultation

As part of our continuing pre-application consultation, we are holding a second public exhibition in the local area to present updated plans for the solar farm, ahead of submitting a planning application later this year.

Our team will be on hand to provide further information and answer any questions. Comments forms will be provided to gather feedback. All information provided at the public exhibition will also be available at **www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk** from **24 September 2024**.

Comment forms will be available to complete and submit during the public exhibition. Forms will also be available on the website above from the day of the public exhibition and can submitted online or downloaded and submitted via email to **bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk**.

Hard copies can be sent by post to **Cavendish Consulting, 220 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5SG**

Please provide your feedback by Friday 11 October 2024.

Please join us at our event to find out more:
Tuesday 24 September 2024, 3-8pm
Music Room, Hospitalfield House, Hospitalfield, Arbroath, DD11 2NH

Get in touch

Seymour Lindsay-Scott, New Sites Manager
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk
0141 264 2831
C/o Cavendish Consulting, 220 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5SG

Please note that comments submitted to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Angus Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be made.

[1]The homes figure has been calculated by taking the predicted annual electricity generation of the site (using an average solar capacity factor of 11.2%) and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from DESNZ showing that the annual GB average domestic household consumption is 3,239 kWh (January 2024).

Appendix 12: Second consultation advertisement

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
Public Consultation Event

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Since our public exhibitions in June 2024, where we presented our plans for a solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 5km west of Arbroath, we have been refining the design in response to feedback received and ongoing surveys and assessments.

As part of our continuing pre-application consultation, we are holding a second public exhibition in the local area to present updated plans for the solar farm, ahead of submitting a planning application later this year.

24 September 2024
3.00pm – 8.00pm
Music Room, Hospitalfield House, Arbroath, DD11 2NH

The exhibition material will also be available to view (**from 24 September 2024**) on the dedicated project website:
www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk

The event will provide updated information on the proposed development as well as an opportunity to discuss the proposals, ask questions of the project team and provide feedback.

Further information relating to the proposed development may be obtained by contacting **0141 674 8680** or by email at: **bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk**.

Persons wishing to make comments on the proposals may do so at the event, via the website (using the online feedback form), by email, or in writing to:

C/O Cavendish Consulting,
220 St Vincent Street,
Glasgow G2 5SG

Please note that all comments should be returned no later than **11 October 2024.**

Please note that comments submitted to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Angus Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be made. Normal neighbour notification and publicity will be undertaken, and the public will have the opportunity to make formal representations regarding the proposals at that time.

Appendix 13: Second consultation feedback form

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Bonnyknox Solar Farm Proposal

Comment Form

Since our public exhibition in June 2024, where we presented our plans for a solar farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot, approximately 5km west of Arbroath, we have been refining the design in response to feedback received and ongoing surveys and assessments.

Today's exhibition presents the updated layout design for the solar farm and provides you with an opportunity to submit written feedback to RES on the updated design. Your feedback has the potential to influence and improve the overall quality of any future planning application from a community perspective.

We would be grateful if you could take the time to fill out this comment form with your feedback. Please provide feedback by **Friday 11th October 2024.** Comments will still be accepted after this date but may not be considered in relation to the design development.

Please note that comments submitted to RES at this time are not representations to the determining authority (Angus Council). There will be an opportunity to submit representations to the determining authority should an application be made.

1 Bonnyknox Solar Farm: Public Exhibition

1.1 How did you find out about our public exhibition?

- ☐ Postcard through the door
- ☐ Advert in local newspaper
- ☐ Project website – www.bonnyknox-solarfarm.co.uk
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Other (please specify)

1.2 Before visiting the exhibition how would you describe your knowledge of the proposal?

- ☐ Knew a lot
- ☐ Knew quite a lot
- ☐ Knew a little
- ☐ Knew very little
- ☐ Knew nothing at all

1

1.3 Having visited the exhibition, to what extent do you feel you have increased your understanding about the proposal?

- ☐ A lot
- ☐ Quite a lot
- ☐ A little
- ☐ Very little
- ☐ Nothing at all

1.4 Which part of the exhibition did you find most useful?

- ☐ The information boards
- ☐ Ability to ask the project team questions
- ☐ Interactive map
- ☐ Other (please specify)

1.5 Do you have any suggestions for ways in which we could have improved our exhibition?

2 Bonnyknox Solar Farm: Proposal

Your views on the proposal for Bonnyknox Solar Farm has the potential to influence and improve the overall quality of the planning application from a community perspective.

2.1 How do you feel in general about the proposal?

- ☐ I am supportive
- ☐ I am neutral
- ☐ I am opposed

Further comments:

2.2 What do you think about the updated design layout of the Bonnyknox Solar Farm?

- ☐ I am happy with the updated layout
- ☐ I am neutral towards the updated layout
- ☐ I have concerns about the updated layout (please find further information in the box below)
- ☐ I don't like solar farms in general

Further comments:

2.3 Is there anything else you would like to share with us about the proposal?

3 Local Benefits

3.1 We firmly believe that solar developments should provide meaningful benefits locally and we are working with the local community to gain feedback on their priorities and deliver projects that will help to secure long-term economic, social and environmental benefits. This approach will help to deliver a tailored package of benefits that are aligned with the local communities' priorities.

The options below have been selected from ideas presented from members of the community during the first phase of the consultation.

Please tick three priorities you believe would most benefit the community.

- ☐ Contributions to the existing community trust in Arbirlot
- ☐ Improving paths and recreational access around the site
- ☐ Wildlife area on the solar farm site
- ☐ Improving broadband / fibre in the local area
- ☐ Funding for community initiatives

Other (please specify)

3.2. At RES, we are committed to inspiring the next generation and are keen to engage with the local community to educate young people about renewable energy and the many exciting career opportunities within the renewable energy industry.

If you know of community initiatives that would benefit from our involvement, please let us know. In particular we welcome recommendations for youth and school initiatives—we'd love to help spark an interest in renewable energy among the next generation.

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Bonnyknox Solar Farm Proposal

Comment Form

4 Your details

Please provide your name and contact details below in order to authenticate this comments form. Providing this information gives context to your feedback, facilitates a better understanding of community views and priorities, and enables us to respond to any questions raised. However, **if you are not comfortable providing us with your full contact details, please include your postcode as a minimum.**

Your contact details will be treated by RES and Cavendish Consulting with the strictest of confidence, in line with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) 2018. We may at times share your contact details, in confidence, with third parties who we employ to help process your comments or update you on the project and by providing your details below you consent to this. You may write to RES or Cavendish Consulting at any time to ask that your contact details be removed from our records and from any third parties we work with.

Name	
Email	
Address	
Postcode	

If you would like to be kept up to date with the project, please tick this box ☐

When you have completed the comment form, please return to a member of staff at the sign-in desk. Comment forms can also be sent by email to bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk or by post to: C/o Cavendish Consulting, 220 St Vincent Street, Glasgow G2 5SG.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this comment form, your feedback is important to us.

Appendix 14: Second consultation boards

Welcome to our exhibition

Welcome to the second public exhibition for the proposed Bonnyknox Solar Farm on land at Fallaws Farm, Arbirlot.

At today's exhibition we're pleased to present the updated layout design for the solar farm, following our initial round of engagement earlier this year.

Further to this round of engagement, the feedback received from the community, and a range of surveys and assessments, our latest design for Bonnyknox Solar Farm has been developed. At this second round of consultation, the layout is much further progressed, though there may be further changes, and we still very much welcome and value your feedback on the updated design. Your feedback has the potential to influence and improve the overall quality of the planning application from a community perspective.

All consultation feedback submitted to RES will be reviewed by the project team over the coming weeks as we continue the design process.

Image for illustrative purposes only

Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

Why solar?

Scotland is committed to achieving net zero by 2045. As part of this progression towards decarbonisation and reducing reliance on fossil fuels, there is a need to invest in renewable technology and make the UK an independent and self-sufficient energy producing nation.

Solar is one of the cheapest sources of new electricity generation and will play a key role in improving Scotland's energy security, while supporting the transition away from fossil fuels. As Scotland strives to be a net-zero carbon economy by 2045, solar is not just an option, it is a necessity as part of a balanced energy mix. Solar is a great resource to assist in this transition as it is a free and inexhaustible resource.

By producing solar energy domestically, Scotland can secure our energy market for the future and become less reliant on expensive foreign gas imports for electricity and heating.

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Bonnyknox Solar Farm
bonnyknoxsolarfarm@consultationonline.co.uk

About the project

In June 2024, we submitted a Proposal of Application Notice (PoAN) to Angus Council for a 49.9MW solar development on land at Fallaws Farm in Arbirlot, which is approximately 5km west of Arbroath. The land is currently used for arable farming.

The proposed development could produce enough energy to power around 15,000 homes[1]. The site was chosen because it has good solar resource, no ecological constraints, straightforward access and has a viable grid connection. If the solar farm is developed, the energy generated will be connected via a new 33kV link to the Arbroath substation.

Design evolution

We held our first round of public consultation in June and are grateful for the feedback received from the community at our event and via our website. Following this feedback period, we have completed further surveys and assessments on the site. The findings from this work, together with feedback from the first round of consultation, has resulted in a number of design changes, which are set out as part of this second round of consultation.

RES is proud to have been innovators in the development of the global renewable energy market and we continue to seek new and pioneering ways to improve the efficiency and generation potential of our schemes.

Following recent technological and commercial advancements, we propose to include battery storage units as part of the proposed development to help increase the flexibility and generation opportunities for Bonnyknox Solar Farm.

Energy storage will play a key part in managing the increasingly complex supply and demand needs of the 21st century. The grid network must be finely balanced; electrical demand must match electrical generation at all times. If this balance is not achieved, it can lead to blackouts and the failure of grid circuits.

The addition of battery storage units would enable excess generation from the solar farm to be stored, then released back to the grid network during times of no or low generation from the solar panels, for example during winter.

This proposal will have an installed generating capacity of less than 50MW, and so the application will be considered and determined by the local planning authority – which in this case is Angus Council. We currently hope to submit an application around Winter 2024.

[1]The homes figure has been calculated by taking the predicted annual electricity generation of the site (using an average solar capacity factor of 11.2%) and dividing this by the annual average electricity figures from sources showing that the annual consumption is 3,200 kWh (January 2024).

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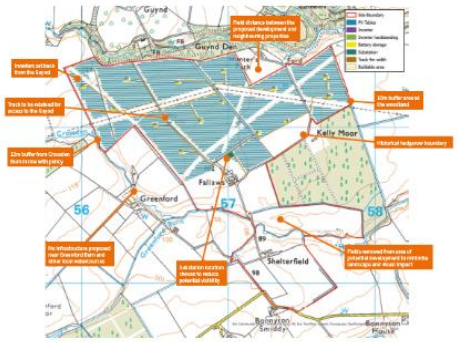
Updated design layout and infrastructure

The map below illustrates the updated design of the solar farm, shaped by a series of technical assessments and community feedback.



Since the preliminary design was presented at the June exhibition, several significant modifications to the design have been made. Key design changes include:

- Removal of solar infrastructure from fields to the south of the site to minimise potential visibility;
- A 10-metre buffer will be installed between the solar panels and woodland to the north and east;
- A 12-metre buffer between solar infrastructure and Crossden Burn, in compliance with relevant flood prevention guidelines;
- To ensure accessibility and minimise disruption, the existing track through the site will be preserved for access to the Guynd. Inverters will be strategically placed away from the Guynd, and from this access track to it, to protect amenity value.

These updates reflect a commitment to balancing the operational efficiency of the solar farm with environmental protection and community feedback.

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Environmental considerations

RES has been working to ensure the design of solar farm proposals fits sensitively into the surrounding landscape.

A number of surveys and assessments have been carried out to ensure any potential impact upon the environment, landscape, heritage and local residents is appropriately assessed and mitigated. Potential cumulative impacts, with other developments in the area, has also been assessed. The assessments that have been carried out include:

Ecology

Landscape

Heritage & Archaeology

Glint and Glare

National Land Capability for Agriculture

Flood risk & surface water management

The results of these surveys, along with feedback from the local community and stakeholders, have helped shape the design of the solar farm proposal.

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Traffic and access

Component and material deliveries are a key phase in the construction of any solar project.

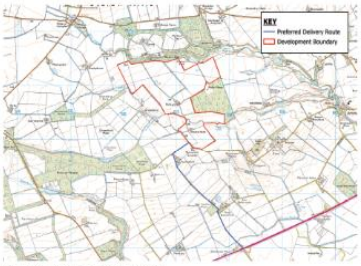
Currently our preferred construction route for the development at Fallaws Farm would be via the A92 to minimise construction traffic impact on Arbroath, Airbirlot and the nearby Primary School.

Construction traffic would access the site off the A92 at the Salmond's Muir junction leading onto Bonnyton Road to the site. The plan below shows our current preferred delivery route and access point, which could be used for the delivery of materials and access for construction and maintenance.

The proposed route is 2.6 km from the A92 to the site boundary, with good connections via slip roads and underpasses. Bonnyton Road is a wide single carriageway. We are discussing whether there is any requirement from the highways officers for additional passing places along Bonnyton Road, which could be developed within existing verge areas.

Further details will be contained within any future planning application. Where possible, traffic movements will be scheduled to avoid peak morning and evening periods. Additionally, we will appoint a dedicated Community Liaison Officer to engage with local residents throughout the construction and operational phases, should the solar farm receive consent.

We have been actively engaging with Angus Council highways officers and independent transport consultants to capture these proposals through the development of a comprehensive Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) that will be submitted with any future planning application. The CTMP will detail the framework for managing the safe movement of construction and delivery traffic, including expected traffic volumes and timing restrictions.



Preferred construction route based on current proposals

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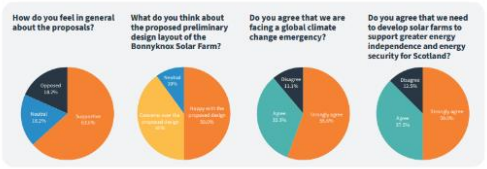
Feedback to date

We received a range of feedback during our first round of consultation and are grateful to those who took the time to share their views with us. The below shows some of quantitative data about the proposals.



In addition to these responses, some people also asked questions about the impacts of the proposals when giving their feedback. We have responded to these main themes of feedback below.

Feedback theme	RES response
Visual impact: Some feedback expressed concern that the solar farm will impact views for nearby properties.	RES is carefully assessing potential visual impacts and explore measures to reduce potential visibility.
Construction traffic: Some residents felt that the local road network is not adequately equipped to handle the heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) required for the construction of the solar farm, and raised concerns about traffic congestion and road safety.	Currently our proposed construction route for the development at Fallaws Farm in Arbirlot would be via the A92 to minimise construction traffic impact on Arbroath. Construction traffic would access the site off the A92 at the Salmond's Muir junction leading onto Bonnyton Road to the site. A Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) will support any future planning application and we are currently engaging with Angus Council highways officers on this.
Nearby properties being devalued: We received questions about whether neighbouring properties of the development will decrease in value due to their close proximity to the solar farm.	Queries are often raised in relation to the potential of solar farms to impact upon the value of house prices as there can be a perception that there must be a negative effect on house prices. Property value is subjective and can be affected by a range of factors. There is currently no firm evidence on whether solar farms do or do not affect house prices.
Loss of agricultural land: Some feedback during the first round expressed concern that the development of the solar farm will result in the loss of valuable agricultural land, which could have long-term implications for local farming activities and food production.	Bonnyknox Solar Farm is proposed on Grade 2 and 3 land, which is not the highest grade of agricultural land. If consented, the land will be used for sheep grazing once the solar farm is constructed, thus allowing continued agricultural use. Climate change poses the greatest threat to food security in the UK, as it disrupts growing seasons, affects crop yields, and increases the frequency of extreme weather events like floods and droughts. Rising temperatures and changing rainfall patterns also exacerbate pests and diseases, further straining the agricultural sector and endangering the stability of the country's food supply.

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A power for good

RES is committed to ensuring that, wherever possible, local contractors and employees are used in all aspects of solar farm development. The major opportunities arise during the construction phase when suitably qualified local firms are often invited to bid for different aspects of construction. We encourage our contractors to source construction materials locally (i.e. within the county) and to use local transport and plant hire companies where possible, in addition to local services and amenities.

RES also believes that our renewable energy schemes should also provide meaningful benefits locally and we are inviting input from the local communities on their priority aims and projects in their area which the project may be able to support. Examples could include supporting community assets, apprenticeships, fuel poverty schemes, etc.

We look forward to continuing to work with the community as our proposals are developed.

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About RES

RES is the world's largest independent renewable energy company, working across 24 countries and active in wind, solar, energy storage, green hydrogen, transmission and distribution. As an industry innovator for over 40 years, RES has delivered more than 27GW of renewable energy projects across the globe and plans to bring more than 22GW of new capacity online in the next five years.
As a service provider, RES also has the skills and experience in asset management and operations and maintenance to support a portfolio exceeding 41GW worldwide for a large client base.

Drawing on our decades of experience in the renewable energy and construction industries, RES has the expertise to develop, construct and operate projects of outstanding quality which contribute to a low carbon future by providing a secure supply of sustainable, low cost, clean green energy. RES is committed to finding effective and appropriate ways of engaging with all its stakeholders, including local residents and businesses, and believes that the views of local people are an integral part of the development process. RES is also committed to developing long term relationships with the communities around its projects, proactively seeking ways in which it can support and encourage community involvement in social and environmental projects near its developments.

RES is the power behind a clean energy future where everyone has access to affordable zero carbon energy. We bring together global experience, passion, and the innovation of 4,500 people to transform the way energy is generated, stored and supplied.

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Next steps

Thank you for taking the time to find out more about our proposals for Bonnyknox Solar Farm.

Please do make sure you share your views on these proposals with us. You can do this in one of three ways:

- By completing a feedback form at our event
- By scanning the QR code below, or visiting our website, to submit a feedback form online
- By getting in touch with our team using the details below to request a hard copy feedback form

We are gathering feedback on these initial proposals until **Friday 11th October 2024.**

The feedback will be reviewed and considered as the application is prepared for submission for consideration and determination to Angus Council.

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Timeline:

JUNE 2024	Submit Proposal of Application Notice to Angus Council
JUNE 2024	Begin first round of public consultation on early proposals with a public exhibition
JULY 2024	End of feedback period for the first round of public consultation
JULY - AUGUST 2024	Review feedback, and carry out further surveys and assessments to update the design
SEPTEMBER 2024	Begin second round of public consultation on updated proposals
WINTER 2024	Prepare the application for submission to Angus Council
SUMMER 2025	Target planning decision date by Angus Council

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Appendix 15: Report on Feedback

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Bonnyknox Solar Farm

Report on Feedback

September 2024

1. Introduction

Purpose of this report

RES has considerable experience in developing solar farm projects throughout the UK and strongly believes in the importance of community consultation to identify issues and concerns, as well as benefits and opportunities, which can be considered when developing and designing a project.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the written feedback received from the community during the June 2024 public exhibition and subsequent consultation period.

Each section focuses on a key topic area and summarises the key themes within the feedback.

June 2024 Consultation

RES held a public exhibition event in the local area in June 2024, as part of its pre-application consultation for the proposed Bonnyknox Solar Farm. The event provided people with the opportunity to learn more about the project, discuss the proposals with the project team, and provide written feedback to RES on the preliminary design.

26 June 2024

Music Room, Hospitalfield House, Arbroath, DD11 2NH
3-8pm

A range of information was made available, with RES staff on hand to discuss the proposal and answer any questions. A two-week consultation period followed the exhibitions, for people to submit written feedback to RES on the proposal and preliminary design.

2. General Overview

More than 40 people attended the first consultation event. Strong interest in the proposals was observed among the local community, many of whom reside nearby to the proposed site for the solar farm.

RES asked a series of multiple-choice questions on the consultation itself to determine whether the local community found it a useful exercise and how future consultations could be improved.

The table below shows the responses to these questions.

How did you find out about our public exhibition?	81.8% Residents' newsletter	9.1% Advert in the newspaper	9.1% Other
Before visiting the exhibition how would you describe your knowledge of the proposal?	43.9% Knew a little	27.3% Knew very little	27.3% Knew nothing
Having visited the exhibition, to what extent do you feel you have increased your understanding about the proposal?	72.8% A lot / quite a lot	9.1% A little	18.2% Very little / nothing
Which part of the exhibition did you find most useful?	23.1% Exhibition boards	69.2% Ability to ask project team	7.7% Other

Table 1: Feedback on the consultation

Awareness

The feedback shows that a vast majority (81.8%) of consultation attendees were made aware of the consultation via the resident's newsletter, which was issued to over 1900 addresses within a minimum 3km radius of the proposed site. 9.1% of respondents stated that they were made aware of the consultation from the adverts placed in The Courier (Angus Edition) and Angus World on Thursday 13th of June. An additional 9.1% of respondents chose "Other" for this question, explaining that they had learned about the consultation through "word of mouth."

Knowledge & Understanding

Before attending the exhibition, a significant portion of attendees had limited knowledge of the proposal, with 43.9% stating they knew a little, 27.3% knowing very little, and another 27.3% knowing nothing at all. However, after visiting the exhibition, there was a marked increase in understanding with a substantial 72.8% of attendees reporting that their understanding had increased "a lot" or "quite a lot", while 9.1% felt their knowledge had improved "a little". Only 18.2% indicated that they gained very little or no additional understanding. This demonstrates that the consultation significantly enhanced attendees' knowledge and understanding of the proposals.

Useful Aspect

The majority of attendees (69.2%) found the ability to ask questions and discuss the proposals directly with the project team to be the most useful part of the exhibition, compared to 23.1% who valued the exhibition boards and 7.7% who found other aspects most helpful.

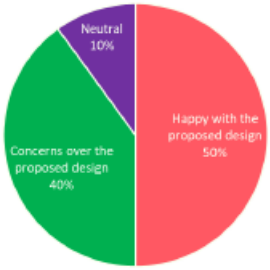
3. Sentiment

Respondents were asked for their views on the proposal for Bonnyknox Solar Farm – specifically the preliminary layout of the project where people's comments can have a direct influence on the final design.

How do you feel in general about the Bonnyknox proposal?

The majority of respondents, 63.6%, expressed overall support for the proposal. Meanwhile, 18.2% remained neutral, and another 18.2% were opposed. These figures suggest that there is a strong level of support for the plans among attendees.

What do you think about the proposed preliminary design layout of the Bonnyknox Solar Farm?



Half of the respondents stated that they were happy with the preliminary design of the Bonnyknox Solar Farm, while 10% were neutral towards the design, and 40% expressed concerns about the preliminary design on display.

4. Key Themes Raised in Feedback

4.1 Visual Impact

Some respondents expressed concern that the solar farm will impact the views for nearby properties.

RES response:

RES is carefully evaluating the potential visual impacts of the project and exploring ways to reduce visibility, as we understand how important the natural landscape is to the community. The site was specifically chosen for its location away from more populated areas and because it does not fall within any designated landscapes.

For neighbouring properties that may have some views of the proposed development, a comprehensive landscaping plan will be implemented to help minimise visibility. Additionally, RES will conduct a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVA) to support the planning application, ensuring that all potential impacts are thoroughly considered and addressed.

Following feedback from the community, we have updated the design of the solar farm to remove panels from the south of the site, as well as parts of the west and northeast, to reduce potential visibility.

4.2 Construction Traffic

Some respondents and consultation attendees stated that the local road network is not adequately equipped to handle the heavy goods vehicles (HGVs) required for the construction of the solar farm, raising concerns about traffic congestion and road safety.

RES response:

Our preferred construction route for the development at Fallaws Farm would be via the A92. This has been chosen to minimise the impact on Arbroath and other local communities.

Construction traffic would access the site from the A92 at the Salmond's Muir junction, leading onto Bonnyton Road, which is only 2.6 km from the site. This route benefits from good connections, including slip roads and passing places.

Bonnyton Road is wide enough to accommodate HGV traffic, and we are proposing the development of four passing places along this road, within existing verge areas, to help manage traffic flow. Additionally, we plan to add another passing place near the site access point to further improve road safety and reduce congestion.

To minimise disruption, we will schedule construction traffic to avoid peak morning and evening periods, and a dedicated Community Liaison Officer will be appointed to engage with residents throughout the construction and operational phases, should the solar farm be approved.

We have been actively working with Angus Council highways officers and independent transport consultants to develop a comprehensive Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) which will be submitted with the planning application and will detail how we will safely manage the movement of construction and delivery traffic, including expected traffic volumes and timing restrictions.

4.3 Nearby Properties Being Devalued

Some residents also raised concerns that neighbouring properties of the development will decrease in value due to their proximity to the solar farm.

RES Response:

Currently, there is no firm evidence to suggest that solar farms do or do not affect house prices.

While Scottish and UK law does not provide a right to a view over neighbouring land or property, we understand the importance of designing projects that are sensitive to the surrounding environment. We have actively engaged with nearby residents to assess the views from their properties and, based on their feedback, have made adjustments where possible. These include increasing setbacks and adding screening measures, such as hedges, to minimise the visual impact.

4.4. Loss of Agricultural Land

Concerns were raised that the development of the solar farm will result in the loss of valuable agricultural land, which could have long-term implications for local farming activities and food production.

RES Response:

The proposed Bonnyknox Solar Farm will be located on Grade 2 and 3 land, which is considered lower-quality agricultural land. If approved, the site will continue to support agricultural use through sheep grazing once the solar farm is constructed, ensuring that farming activities can coexist with renewable energy production.

It should be noted that one of the biggest risks to food security is the changing climate. According to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), climate change could reduce the UK's stock of high-grade agricultural land by nearly three-quarters by 2050[1].

5. Community Benefit

RES is strongly committed to ensuring that solar developments generate meaningful local benefits, and we are committed to engaging with the community to gather feedback on their priorities and deliver projects that contribute to long-term economic, social, and environmental sustainability. This collaborative approach enables us to create a tailored package of benefits aligned with the specific needs of the local community.

As part of the consultation, respondents were invited to propose initiatives that the Bonnyknox Solar Farm could support. These suggestions have been summarised below.

1 https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021/united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021-theme-2-uk-food-supply-sources#united-kingdom-food-security-report-2021-theme2-indicator-2-1-15

Summary of community suggestions:

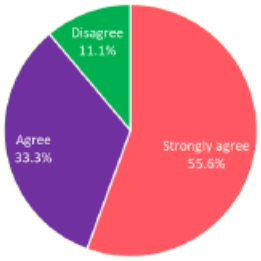
- A community trust in Arbirlot helps maintain the village environment and seeks to upgrade paths around the waterfall and nature trails. Community benefit funds could support these upgrades.
- Creating a wildlife area for public and educational use would be welcomed.
- Local residents, directly impacted by the development, should be compensated, not just those in nearby towns.
- Need for improved paths and site access.
- Enhancing public access to the countryside would encourage locals to enjoy the scenic area.
- A public right of way around the development, linking to existing paths, would be appreciated.
- Broadband / fibre installation during solar farm construction, which would increase local support for the project.
- The area lacks reliable internet access; improving it would be beneficial.

As part of the second round on consultation, we are again asking the community to provide feedback on what type of initiatives the Bonnyknox Solar Farm should support, and are asking the community to rank their prioritisations for community benefit.

6. Climate Change

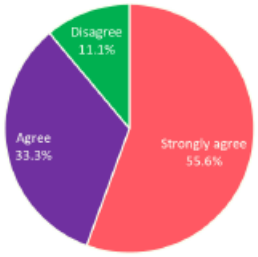
Respondents were also asked a series of questions to help RES understand people's thoughts on how renewables can help to tackle climate change and improve energy security.

Do you agree that we are facing a global climate emergency?



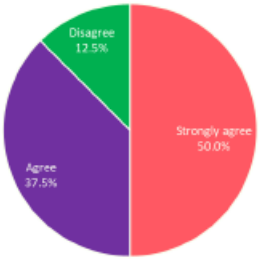
The feedback highlighted that a significant majority of respondents recognise the urgency of climate change. Specifically, 55.6% of participants strongly agreed that we are in the midst of a global climate change emergency, reflecting a deep concern about the current environmental crisis. Additionally, 33.3% of respondents agreed with this sentiment, signalling broad acknowledgment of the issue. However, 11.1% of respondents disagreed, showing a different view on the severity or immediacy of the threat posed by climate change.

Do you agree that generating electricity from renewable sources, and reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, can help towards tackling the issue of climate change?



Respondents demonstrated strong support for renewable energy as a solution to climate change. 55.6% of respondents strongly agreed that generating electricity from renewable sources can play a crucial role in addressing the issue of climate change. This majority reflects a strong belief in the importance of clean energy in mitigating environmental impacts. Additionally, 33.3% agreed, indicating broad consensus on the positive role of renewables. 11.1% of respondents disagreed, showing a small portion remains sceptical about the use of renewable energy.

Do you agree that we need to develop solar farms to support greater energy independence and energy security for Scotland?



The feedback reveals strong support for the development of solar farms in Scotland as a means to enhance energy independence and security. A majority of 55% of respondents strongly agreed that solar farms are essential for supporting Scotland's energy autonomy, highlighting widespread recognition of the role renewable energy can play in securing a stable and self-sufficient energy supply. Additionally, 37.5% agreed, further underscoring broad consensus on the importance of solar energy. Only 12.5% of respondents disagreed, indicating that while there is some opposition, the overwhelming sentiment supports the development of solar farms as a key component in achieving greater energy security for Scotland.

8

Appendix 16: Second consultation interactive map

- Visual impact
- Construction
- Water
- Local Access
- Environmental considerations
- Historical area
- Grid connection
- Other

Share your thoughts on areas we should focus on - whether it's a concern or an opportunity, add a sticker to make your voice heard!