

# Welcome to the Burcot Farm Solar Park Public Consultation



PUBLIC POWER  
SOLUTIONS

# About Public Power Solutions

- We are a renewable energy development company, working UK-wide, wholly-owned by Swindon Borough Council.
- We bring with us the ethos of the public sector coupled with the focus and commerciality of the private sector.
- We believe in harnessing the benefits of clean energy for local communities and public service organisations, and we get things done in the right way.
- Our schemes bring genuine community benefits, including community funding “pots” for the lifetime of the development.
- We’re not new to the market; we’ve been doing this for several years and have already developed 200MW of solar and battery storage for both public and private landowners.

*"Public Power Solutions have been a fantastic company to partner with in developing our solar farm at Wroughton. The energy and professionalism shown by the team as we navigated the complex planning system and ultimately secured approval for this project, was outstanding. The ethical and open way the public were approached and enthused, ensured that confidence in the company, and its partners, was gained and given very vocal local support. PPS are certainly a company to work with if you want to achieve success in renewables."*

**Matt Moore, Head of Site and Sustainability, Science Museum Group**

**WINNER**  
SOUTH WEST  
**GREEN**  
**ENERGY**  
**AWARDS**  
2016



**Winner of the Association for Public Sector Excellence Award, 'Best Renewable Energy or Energy Efficiency Initiative' for Chapel Farm Solar Park, September 2017.**

**Winner of Regen South West Green Energy Award, 'Most Proactive Public Sector Organisation' November 2016.**



# Benefits of solar

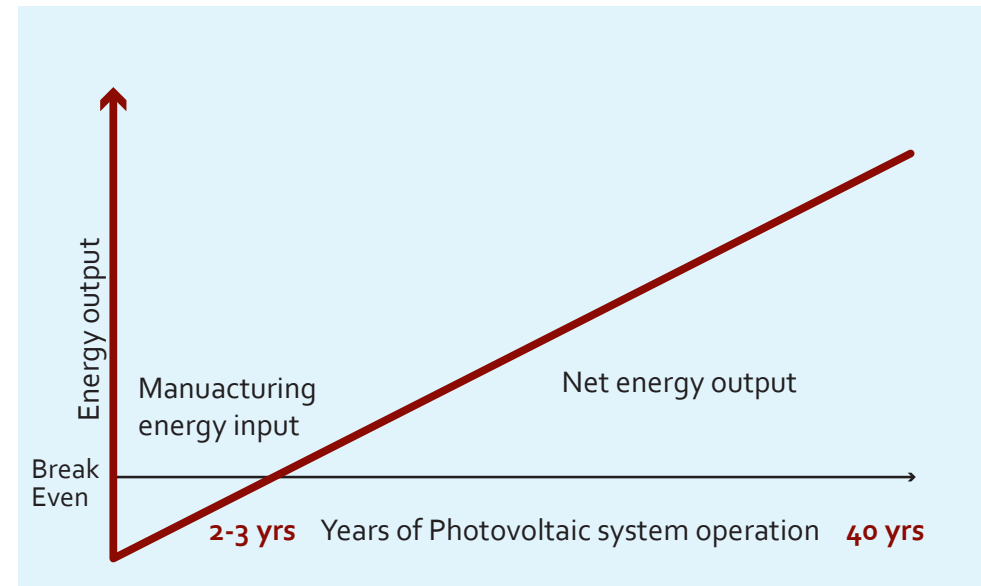
- Climate change emergency - contribution to “net zero”
- Reduce reliance on fossil fuels and associated air pollution
- Low cost technology, operating viably without subsidies (keeping energy costs low)
- Biodiversity and grazing benefits
- Real community benefits

# Benefits of battery storage

- Increases flexibility of power generation
- Helps keep local grid stable
- Efficient use of grid connection

# Environmental payback of solar

Studies show that on average a solar farm pays back its energy and carbon production cost within 2-3 years.



SOURCE: 'THE RENEWABLE ENERGY HUB UK'





# Wider benefits of solar farms

In addition to providing clean, cheap energy, solar arrays also provide a great opportunity to improve local biodiversity and financial support for community projects.

## Biodiversity gain

- Improved grassland
- Hedgerow reinforcement
- Introduction of bird houses
- BRE biodiversity guide: [CLICK HERE >](#)

## Community fund

PPS also include a community fund, paying out annually to help fund schemes of local importance over the lifetime of the scheme.

## Grazing

PPS also include the opportunity for sheep grazing in all our solar schemes.



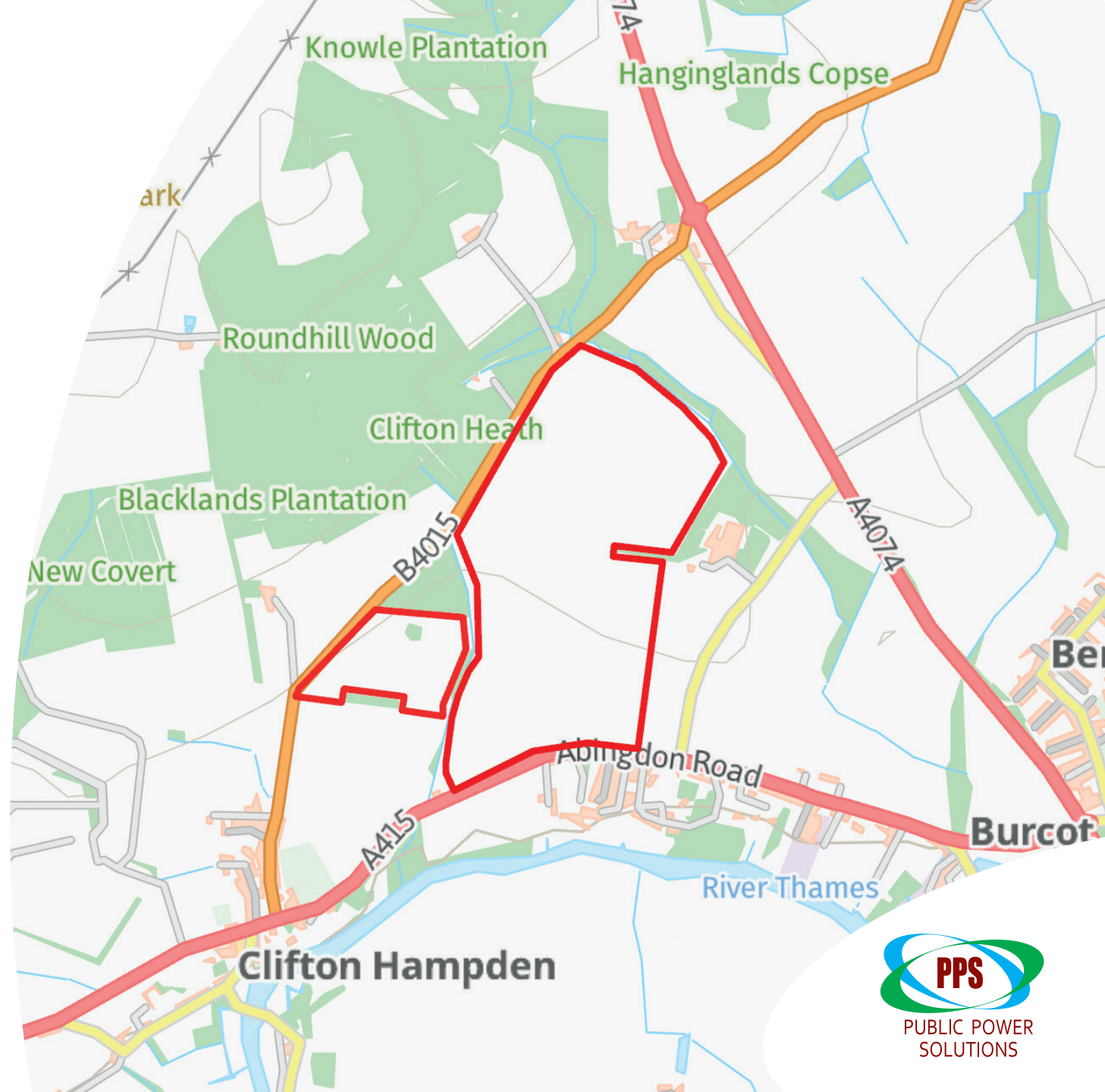


# Why Burcot Farm?

- Excellent access to a grid connection.
- Comprehensive site selection process.
- The site has good natural screening from existing trees and hedgerows.
- Results from the ecological surveys suggest that the site is suitable for development.

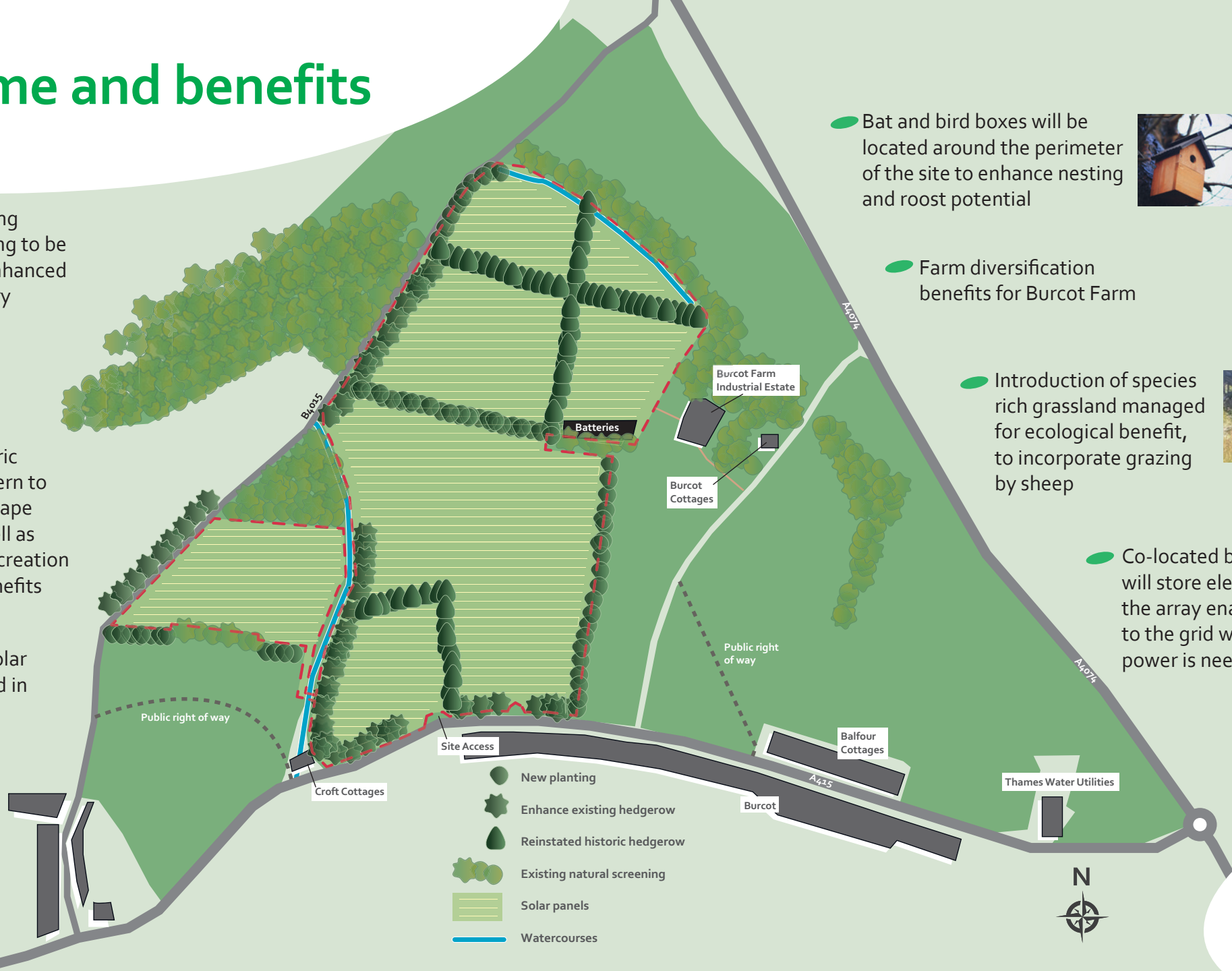
## Proposed project

- A 49.99 MW solar PV scheme and a 49.99 MW battery storage system.
- Community benefit fund of £250/MW per annum (49.99MW) over lifetime of the project(40 years).
- Biodiversity net gain of 80% (minimum). This will be achieved by improved grassland and hedgerow reinforcement with options for sheep grazing and bird boxes.
- Approximately 13,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub> saving per annum and the equivalent of over 19,000 homes powered.

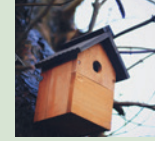


# Scheme and benefits

- Excellent existing natural screening to be retained and enhanced where necessary
- New hedgerow planting
- Reinstate historic hedgerow pattern to enhance landscape character as well as deliver habitat creation and linkage benefits
- Fixed bifacial solar panels mounted in east/west rows



Bat and bird boxes will be located around the perimeter of the site to enhance nesting and roost potential



Farm diversification benefits for Burcot Farm

Introduction of species rich grassland managed for ecological benefit, to incorporate grazing by sheep



Co-located battery storage will store electricity from the array enabling export to the grid when the power is needed most



- New planting
- Enhance existing hedgerow
- Reinstated historic hedgerow
- Existing natural screening
- Solar panels
- Watercourses

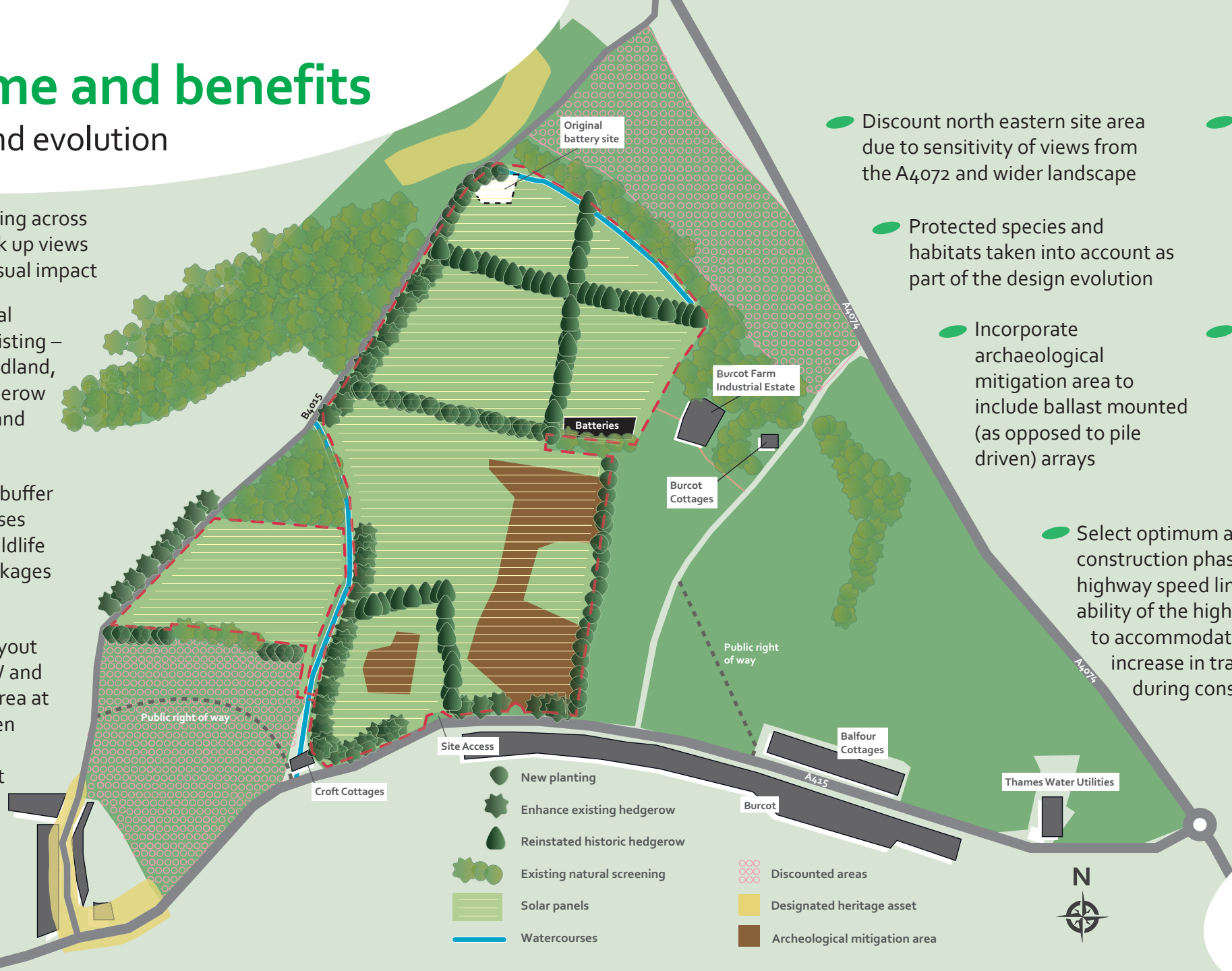




# Scheme and benefits

## Design and evolution

- Introduce planting across the site to break up views and mitigate visual impact
- Excellent natural screening as existing – all existing woodland, trees, and hedgerow to be retained and enhanced
- Retain suitable buffer with watercourses and enhance wildlife habitats and linkages across the site
- Pull back the layout from the PROW and Conservation Area at Clifton Hampden and introduce planting to limit views of the proposal from the PROW and the village



- Discount north eastern site area due to sensitivity of views from the A4072 and wider landscape
- Engage in pre-application consultation with the local community, SODC, and other relevant consultees to inform the design evolution
- Protected species and habitats taken into account as part of the design evolution
- Incorporate archaeological mitigation area to include ballast mounted (as opposed to pile driven) arrays
- Reposition battery infrastructure towards existing built environment at the farm complex and away from the Nuneham Courtenay Registered Park and Garden boundary
- Select optimum access for the construction phase based upon highway speed limit, visibility, and ability of the highways network to accommodate a temporary increase in traffic movements during construction

# Community benefits

- Benefit fund of £12,500 per annum which equates to £500,000 over the lifetime of the scheme (40 years).
- The fund can be used for community and environmental projects such as children's play equipment, local sports clubs and to improve local facilities.
- The local council will receive business rates of approximately £200,000 per annum.



# Previous beneficiaries of similar schemes developed by PPS

**£9,000**

to TWIGS community gardens  
to run sessions for people  
suffering with dementia

**£14,000**

to Wootton Bassett Rugby  
Club towards building a  
new gym

**£12,000**

to Wiltshire Wildlife Trust  
for conservation work at  
Hagbourne Copse

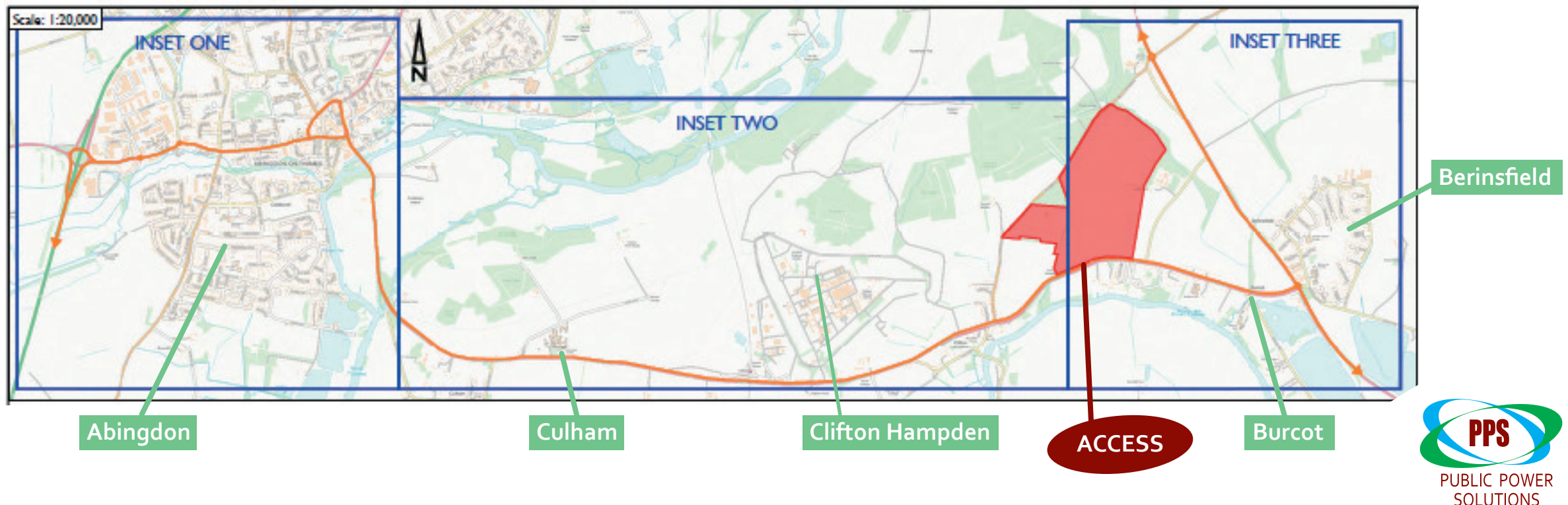
**£26,000**

to Chiseldon Primary School  
to build an eco playground



# Traffic Management and Construction

- The construction of a solar farm is a simple process involving minimal concrete foundations. The frames are secured by either piling or ballast, dependent on the condition of the ground.
- The construction phase is expected to take 6 months.
- The construction traffic route will avoid passing through the Conservation Area of Clifton Hampden.
- Typically, the built infrastructure associated with solar farms disturbs <5% of the ground at the site.
- All infrastructure will be removed and the land restored at the decommissioning phase, to be secured in the lease and a bond will be put in place to ensure the availability of funds to action this.



# Site selection and pre-planning process

- Site Selection and Alternative Site Search Assessment
- Initial survey work
- Planning benefits
- Pre-application consultation





# Content of planning application

- Ecological protected species surveys;  
Ecological Impact Assessment; Biodiversity Impact Assessment; Construction Environment Management Plan; Landscape and Ecological Management Plan
- Soil carbon and Management Report
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment including verified photomontage images and landscape strategy plan
- Agricultural Appraisal
- Site Selection and Alternative Site Assessment Report
- Heritage Impact Assessment and Archaeological Management Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Management Strategy
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment; Method Statement; Tree protection Plan
- Construction Traffic Management Plan; Transport Statement
- Glint and Glare and aviation assessment
- Noise Assessment
- Planning Statement, including Green Belt Appraisal
- Design and Access Statement

# South Oxfordshire's Climate Emergency

- In May 2019 the UK Government declared a climate emergency and committed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2025 and to achieve net zero by 2050 within the Climate Change Act.
- South Oxfordshire District Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and an Ecological Emergency in 2021.
- The SODC Climate Change Emergency Advisory Committee advises that SODC becomes a “**carbon neutral district by 2030**” and this target has been incorporated within the adopted Local Plan.
- **Oxfordshire Energy Strategy (2019)**
  - Reduce emissions and increase local generation with at least 56% of electricity demand being met by renewables across the county.
- The development at Burcot would amount to **7.3%** of the total electricity consumption of SODC as of 2019.
- The installation at Burcot and the already installed renewable energy within SODC would produce **16.7%** of the total energy consumption with SODC as of 2019 levels.





# Next steps

- Update planning application preparation and design based upon community feedback – **April 2021**
- Submit EIA Screening and Scoping Opinion Request – **April 2021**
- Submit planning application – **August 2021**

# FAQs

## What about security?

CCTV cameras will be installed to monitor the site. The cameras will be infrared so there will be no lighting at the site. The solar park will be enclosed with rural deer fencing positioned inside any hedgerows and trees around the boundary of the site.

## Are solar farms noisy?

Electricity is generated by the panels without using vibration. The only sound comes from the inverters and within a range of 100 feet. The inverters are always located away from the edge of the solar farm to ensure noise cannot be heard.

## Will there be a glare from the panels?

Solar panels absorb light and do not produce a glare. Many solar farms are constructed next to major roads and airports with no glare issues.

## What happens at the end of the solar farms life?

A condition will be applied for all panels and equipment to be removed and for the land to be restored to its former use.







*Powering the Future*

**Thank you for attending.**

A questionnaire will be available for you to provide feedback.

Please contact us if you have any questions or comments.

**Contact us**

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