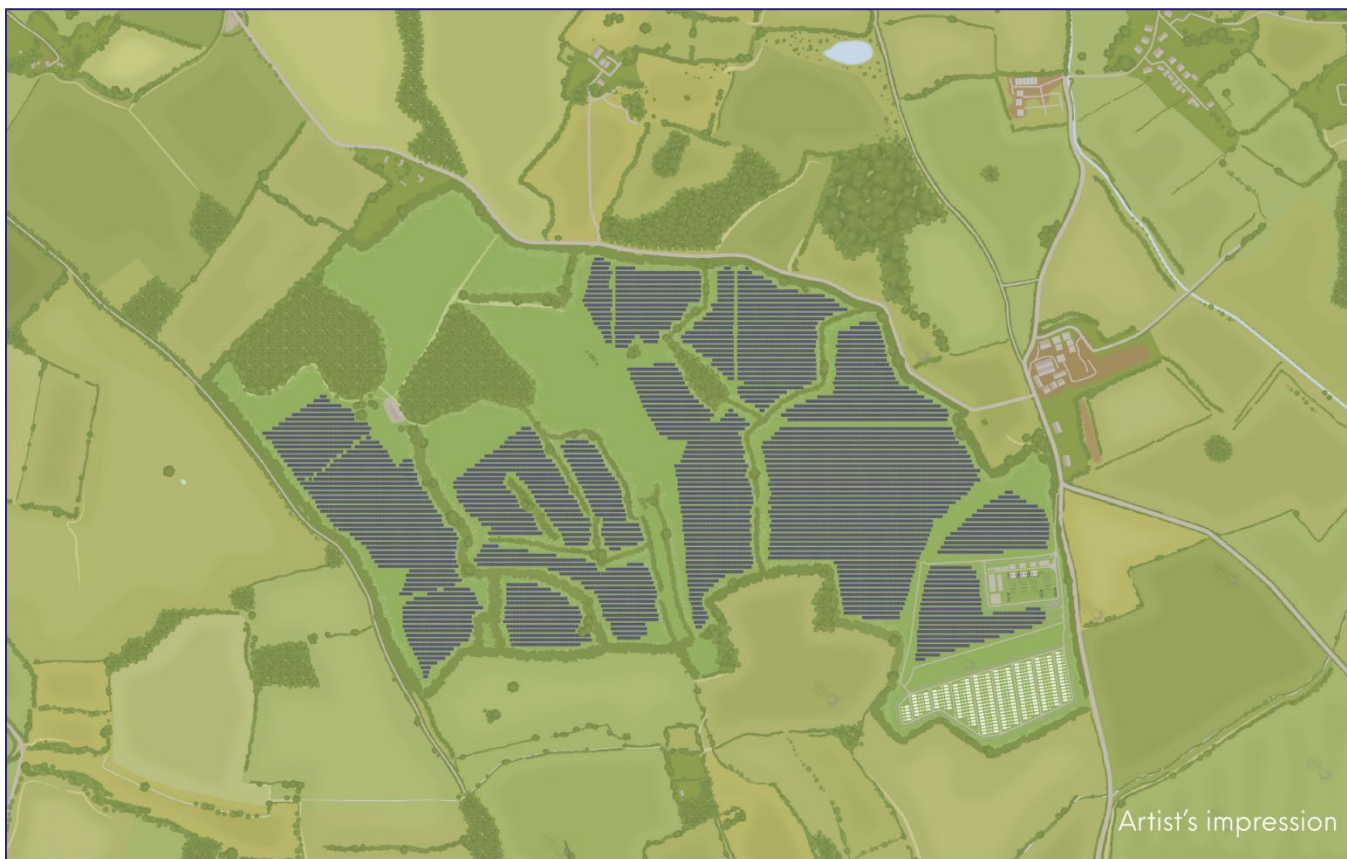




Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Statement of Community Involvement

July 2025



Contents

Westfield Energy Conservation Park	1
1. Introduction.....	4
Background	4
Community Engagement Plan	4
2. Pre-consultation Engagement.....	5
Closest Neighbours.....	5
Local Planning Authority	5
Elected Representatives	6
3. Consultation Launch	6
Local Community.....	6
Elected Representatives	7
Press.....	7
4. Consultation Period	8
Website.....	8
Public Exhibition	8
Webinar.....	10
Survey	10
Direct Contact	11
British Horse Society	12
Updates	12
5. Follow-up Communications.....	12
6. Lightrock Power's Response to Key Themes	12
Location.....	12
Effect on Local People	14
Farming and Food Production	15
Biodiversity.....	16
The Solar industry	17
Field Selection.....	18

7. Appendices	19
Appendix A: Introductory Letter	19
Appendix B: Location of Closest 12 Properties	19
Appendix C: Site Plan with Numbered Fields	20
Appendix D: Elected Representatives' Introductory Email (example)	20
Appendix E: Elected Representatives Consultation Launch Email (example)	21
Appendix F: Postcard	22
Appendix G: Postcard distribution area	22
Appendix H: Press Release	23
Appendix I: Press Advertisement	23
Appendix J: Project Website	24
Appendix K: Public Exhibition Boards	29
Appendix L: Anonymous Survey	31
Appendix M: New Sign-up Link Email	33
Appendix N Elected Representatives' Consultation Closing Email	34
Appendix O: Webinar Recording and Q&A Update Email	34
Appendix P: Post Consultation Update Postcard	35

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1. This Statement of Community Involvement ('SCI') has been prepared by Lightrock Power Limited ('Lightrock Power'), in respect of an Application or Full Planning Permission for Westfield Energy Conservation Park which incorporates a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), co-located ground mounted solar farm, associated infrastructure, access, biodiversity enhancements and landscaping (the 'Proposed Development') on land south of A507 at Westfield Common, Hertfordshire ('the Site'). The Site is entirely within the jurisdiction of North Hertfordshire District Council ('the Council').
- 1.2. The Site comprises 187.3ha, and the operational life of the Proposed Development is anticipated to be 40 years. Construction would likely be completed within 12–18 months.
- 1.3. Lightrock Power are a boutique developer that focus on a small number of high-quality projects at any one time. Projects focus on decarbonising the UK energy sector, providing biodiversity enhancement, and raising the overall standard of development in the sector.
- 1.4. Lightrock Power resolved to adopt a comprehensive approach to pre-application consultation ("consultation") at Westfield Energy Conservation Park, with the aim to fully reflect the will of the community. Early engagement with the closest neighbours, and enlisting the support of a specialist communications company, Counter Context, supported this mission.

Community Engagement Plan

- 1.5. The team at Lightrock Power believe that good community and stakeholder engagement should be a priority and that this part of the development process is invaluable in shaping and informing the design.
- 1.6. A staggered approach was taken to informing the community of the Proposed Development, with initial communications being sent to the twelve closest properties on 29th January 2025, and the consultation period closing on 28th March 2025.
- 1.7. Lightrock Power found the exercise informative and can demonstrate how feedback has shaped the layout. The detail of the process can be found below, with appendices from page 19.

2. Pre-consultation Engagement

Closest Neighbours

- 2.1. The Site has relatively few close neighbours, so Lightrock Power sought early and meaningful engagement with these households in advance of any wider consultation activity.
- 2.2. Chris Sowerbutts, founder of Lightrock Power sent an introductory letter (appendix A) to the twelve properties in the immediate vicinity of the Site (appendix B) on 29th January 2025. The letter comprised:
 - A site plan with numbered fields (appendix C)
 - The opportunity to provide input into location of solar panels, BESS units, and wildlife enhancement areas
 - A request for local knowledge of flora and fauna in the area
 - An Invitation to meet with Chris on 5th February 2025
 - Chris's personal contact details
- 2.3. Three neighbours responded to the letter, with two being able to meet on the 5th February 2025, and one remaining in contact via email.
- 2.4. Chris Sowerbutts and Andy Fewings (Head of Development) visited the two neighbours at their houses. Discussion topics included:
 - Particular fields to be used
 - Noise pollution
 - Light pollution
 - Local roads, particularly in reference to weight limit, tight bends, and localised congestion
 - Water contamination
 - Access to bridleways
 - Muntjac and Roe Deer, Red Kite, Stoat, Water Vole, Swift, Sparrowhawk, Buzzard, Wren, Badger, Fox, Bats.
- 2.5. One neighbour requested a visual representation of how the Proposed Development may look from their window. This was commissioned by Lightrock Power and provided.

Local Planning Authority

- 2.6. A request for pre-application advice was submitted to the Council on the 11th February 2025, and their reply was received on the 24th June 2025. A delay had been incurred due to annual leave within the Council.
- 2.7. A pre-application phone call was held on 25th June 2025. Although at this stage the consultation had already passed, Lightrock Power had followed the Consultation Objectives laid out in the Council's Community Consultation Strategy.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

Elected Representatives

- 2.8. Elected representatives were sent an introductory email (appendix D) on 18th February 2025. This outlined the project and the consultation process, and offered a briefing so that they could prepare themselves for any questions that they might be asked during the consultation.

MP for North East Hertfordshire

- 2.9. Chris Hinchliff, MP for North East Hertfordshire replied with some concerns about the consultation process. Lightrock Power were able to respond in good time with further details of how they would consult with the local community ahead of any submission, and confirmed that they were already in contact with the closest neighbours.
- 2.10. Lightrock Power's consultation had been designed to go above and beyond the expectations laid out on the Council's website.

The Council

- 2.11. Lightrock Power did not receive a reply from Ward Member for Weston and Sandon, Cllr Steve Jarvis.

Hertfordshire County Council

- 2.12. Lightrock Power did not receive a reply from County Councillor for Royston West and Rural, Cllr Steve Jarvis.

Parish Council

- 2.13. Lightrock Power did not receive a reply from Clothall with Luffenhall Parish Council at this stage.

3. Consultation Launch

- 3.1. The consultation was launched on 25th February 2025 and ran until 28th March 2025. The elected representatives were contacted again (appendix E), and a postcard (appendix F, G), press release (appendix H), and press advertisement (appendix I) were issued to inform the wider community.

Local Community

A launch postcard was issued to all properties within 1km of the Site (appendix G) in the week commencing 17th February 2025, to be delivered in line with the consultation launching. The postcard included:

- Brief project overview
- Site map
- URL and QR code for the project website

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

- Dedicated contact details (email address, phone number, postal address, survey web address)
- Date, time and location of consultation events

Elected Representatives

- 3.2. Elected representatives were sent an email on 25th February 2025 to confirm that the consultation was now live, as well as another project overview, times, dates, and locations for the exhibition event and webinar, and another invitation to a briefing with Lightrock Power.

MP for North East Hertfordshire

- 3.3. Chris Hinchliff, MP for North East Hertfordshire replied to this email, and Lightrock Power's response to his previous concerns with thanks. He raised a further question regarding the response if the community feel that the Site is inappropriate for the Proposed Development.
- 3.4. Lightrock Power stated that they would respond to specific points of concern after they had been raised, rather than speculating in advance. Mr Hinchliff was signposted to the section of the project website which detailed why this specific Site had been chosen.

The Council

- 3.5. Lightrock Power did not receive a reply from Ward Member for Weston and Sandon, Cllr Steve Jarvis.

Hertfordshire County Council

- 3.6. Lightrock Power did not receive a reply from County Councillor for Royston West and Rural, Cllr Steve Jarvis.

Parish Council

- 3.7. Lightrock Power did not receive a reply from Clothall with Luffenhall Parish Council at this stage.

Press

- 3.8. A press release was issued to Axis Magazine, BBC News Online, The Herts Advertiser, The Comet, Herts Live, Royston News and Life Magazines on February 25th 2025. To Lightrock Power's knowledge, the press release was not published. The press release covered:
- Project overview
 - Link to consultation materials
 - Background on Lightrock Power
 - Contact details
- 3.9. To combat the risk of local press not publishing the press release, Lightrock Power took out three paid advertisements in the printed edition of the Hertfordshire Mercury. These were placed on 27th February, 6th March, and 13 March 2025. The advertisement covered:

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

- Brief project overview
- URL and QR code for the project website
- Dedicated contact details (email address, phone number, postal address, survey web address)
- Date, time and location of consultation events

4. Consultation Period

Website

- 4.1. A project website, (Appendix J) was launched as an information hub, to provide context to the Proposed Development, an introduction to Lightrock Power, details of consultation events, and ways to contact the team. The website comprised the following:
- Home Page: an interactive map, an outline of Lightrock Power's approach to biodiversity, solar and BESS, times and locations for consultation events, a link to a survey, contact details, and a sign-up box for those who want project updates via a mailing list.
 - Why Here?: Rationale for choosing the site, list of surveys and reports, quotes from The Council's Local Plan, Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document, and Climate Change Strategy.
 - Lightrock Solar: Facts about Solar Farms and Lightrock Power's approach to development.
 - Lightrock BESS: Facts about BESS and Lightrock Power's approach to development.
 - Who Are We?: An introduction to Lightrock Power, the team and their ethos.
 - Q&As: A selection of questions that had been asked at previous projects. This section was updated following the consultation events to reflect questions specific to the Proposed Development
- 4.2. The website was updated as such:

Date	Update
24 th February 2025	Times and locations of the consultation events
18 th March 2025	Exhibition boards from the public events
26 th March 2025	A recording of the Webinar and an updated Q&A section

Public Exhibition

- 4.3. A public exhibition (Appendix K) was held at Rushden Village Hall on Tuesday 18th March 2025 from 3pm–7pm. Ten representatives of Lightrock Power were in attendance, including Co-Founder, Chris Sowerbutts, Head of Development, Andy Fewings, and experts in Landscape, Ecology, Transport, and Heritage, among others.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

4.4. 14 information boards were displayed:

- Westfield Energy Conservation Park
- Lightrock Power
- Why Here?
- Lightrock Solar
- Lightrock Bess
- Biodiversity
- Transport
- Community Benefit
- FAQs
- Planning
- Photomontage
- Photomontage
- Photomontage
- Photomontage

4.5. The event was well attended, with a steady flow of guests throughout the day. In total, Lightrock Power and its representatives spoke to 68 attendees. This included a mixture of neighbours, politicians (including Cllr Steve Jarvis), and others with a local interest. Topics discussed included:

- Local scheme being proposed by another developer
- Visual impact
- Local deer population
- Who are Lightrock Power?
- Long term project ownership
- Botany
- Cumulative impact
- Noise
- Scepticism about BNG
- Agricultural Land Classification
- Footpath accessibility
- Transport routes
- Archaeology

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

- 4.6. Lightrock Power felt it was a positive event and are confident that all attendees were given an opportunity to have their questions answered.



Webinar

- 4.7. A webinar was held on 25th March 2025 and ran from 6pm–7pm. The Webinar had been publicised via the project website, postcard, and press advert, as well as in the consultation launch email, received by the Key Stakeholders.
- 4.8. Five attendees had registered to attend, but only two attendees joined on the day. Two project representatives were in attendance.
- 4.9. The exhibition boards were presented, followed by Q&A session. Topics discussed included:
- Location of the infrastructure within the Site
 - Capacity of the Site
- 4.10. The Proposed Development was to be informed by the results of the pre-application consultation, as well as the surveys that were being undertaken at the time of the webinar. As the design process was still live at this point, Lightrock Power were unable to provide definitive answers to the questions, however they believe it was a positive event, where the attendees voices were heard.

Survey

- 4.11. An anonymous survey was available throughout the consultation period and received 16 responses (appendix L). 13 responses were received via the Survey Monkey website, two paper copies were handed over at the exhibition event, and one sent via email.
- 4.12. 12 (80% of) respondents felt that it's important for grid operators to keep the electricity network safe and reliable, and 11 (73%) were in favour of modernising the electricity network, while only 3 (20%) felt that solar was a good option for *this* area.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

- 4.13. Only one respondent offered a suggestion for the community benefit fund – Beane Valley Chalk Streams.
- 4.14. Respondents appreciated:
- Well screened
 - Biodiversity gains
 - Sustainability is at the front of Lightrock Power's Mind
- 4.15. Respondents had concerns about:
- Reduction of agricultural land use
 - Visual impact
 - Procurement
 - Brownfield sites or roofs might be more appropriate
 - Biodiversity
 - Impact on the local community
- 4.16. The largest proportion of respondents – 11 (69%) – had heard of the project through a local community website/social media. 12 (80% of) respondents had local postcodes. All but one respondent claimed to be a local resident, local business, or local councillor.
- 4.17. 3 (19% of) respondents were in favour of the Proposed Development.

Direct Contact

- 4.18. Dedicated contact details were publicised throughout the consultation. An email address, phone number and freepost address were available for all community stakeholders.
- 4.19. Lightrock Power did not receive any phone calls or letters through the dedicated channels, but did receive four emails, covering the following subjects:
- Will there be a community benefit?
 - Request to be included in mailings
 - Invitation to view the Site from their home
 - A completed survey from the Parish Council

All emails received a reply.

- 4.20. Chris Sowerbutts remains in personal contact, via phone and/or email, with several members of the community.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

British Horse Society

- 4.21. The British Horse Society contacted Lightrock Power on 7th March 2025. A meeting was arranged for the following week, on 12th March 2025.
- 4.22. Topics discussed included their desire to have more joined up system of bridleways and byways. Lightrock Power asked for a 'wishlist', which they provided on the 27th March 2025. Lightrock Power are considering their suggestions at the time of writing.
- 4.23. They were grateful for the engagement and opportunity to inform the design.

Updates

- 4.24. Everyone who registered to attend the webinar was sent an email on 24th March 2025 with a new sign-up link (Appendix M).
- 4.25. Elected representatives were sent an email on the 26th March to remind them that the consultation would soon be closing (Appendix N).
- 4.26. Webinar attendees and those who registered were sent an email on the 28th March to inform them that the recording was now online, and that the Q&As had also been updated (Appendix O).

5. Follow-up Communications

- 5.1. An update postcard (appendix P) was issued to all properties within 1km of the Site (the same as received the previous postcard) in the week commencing 16th June 2025.
- 5.2. An update email (appendix Q) was issued to the elected representatives and those that signed up to the mailing list on 30th June 2025.
- 5.3. Elected representatives, and those that signed up to the mailing list, will be sent a further update once the planning application has been validated by the Council.

6. Lightrock Power's Response to Key Themes

Location

- 6.1. **Other local scheme being proposed**
Lightrock Power are aware of another development that is being proposed close by, however they have no involvement in this project, and although each will be assessed by its relevant Council on its individual merit, the Westfield planning application has considered the cumulative effects of the two schemes in the technical reports where applicable and as

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

requested by the Council in their pre-application response. The other scheme falls within a different Local Planning Authority (East Herts Council) to Westfield Energy Conservation Park.

6.2. Visual Impact, cumulative impact, impact on local archaeology

The planning application has been submitted with an Environmental Statement which specifically considers the Landscape and Visual Impact of the Proposed Development including the in combination effects (cumulative) of the nearby Beane Valley Solar project. In addition, to assess the potential effect on Heritage and Archaeology, the application is accompanied by a Heritage Desk Based Assessment and accompanying geophysical survey which also considers the cumulative effects of the Proposed Development and the Beane Valley Solar project on nearby heritage assets. These documents will be assessed by experts at the Council, and the application will only be approved if they consider the impacts acceptable.

6.3. Location

The Site was chosen for the following reasons:

- No statutory or non-statutory ecological designations associated with the Site
- Outside of any National Park, National Landscape Area or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- Located predominantly within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk)
- More than half a kilometre from any listed buildings
- Good road access with existing field access

Lightrock Power appreciate that many members of the local community feel that this is the wrong location, however renewable energy projects are required up and down the country in order to reach the UK's net zero target. Westfield Energy Conservation Park will be well screened, and focusses not just on generation and storage, but also places a strong emphasis on protecting and enhancing the local biodiversity. A [2025 study from Copper Consultancy](#) showed that 77% of adults in Great Britain are supportive of the development of solar energy in their local area, with 55% becoming more supportive over the last year alone.

6.4. Industrialisation of the Countryside/character of the area

The Proposed Development will protect the land for an agricultural future. Projects such as Westfield Energy Conservation Park are temporary, and it is often a condition of planning that the land is returned to its prior use once the infrastructure has been removed at the end of its operational lifespan. It will have no moving parts and is not expected to be audible from any residential properties or public rights of way. The Proposed Development will be well screened using native trees and tall hedgerows. Details can be found in the Environmental Masterplan.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

6.5. Use of Brownfield Sites and roofs

Unfortunately, any brownfield sites that are big enough to accommodate a project of this size are already earmarked for other developments such as housing. Given that housing is permanent, creates increased traffic, requires extensive supportive infrastructure, and has a largely detrimental effect on biodiversity, it is considered more suitable to put housing on the brownfield sites and solar developments on greenfield sites.

Effect on Local People

6.6. Noise

There is some noise generated on site during the construction stage – from the construction traffic and from fixing the frame that supports the solar panels into the ground. Once built, there is no noise from the solar panels. Medium Voltage Stations may produce a low-level noise, but this should not be audible from the site boundaries.

Older battery technology was air cooled by fans, but modern technology uses liquid cooling, similar to a refrigerant, which is much quieter. Nevertheless, the Local Authority and Environmental Health have very strict requirements on noise levels, which would be controlled via planning condition. These conditions can be enforced by the Local Authority, should they ever be breached.

The Noise Assessment submitted with this planning application found that there will be no audible sound at the nearest sensitive receptors.

6.7. Construction traffic

Construction is expected to take 12–18 months. Lightrock Power recognise that even though the construction spans a very short period in the lifecycle of the project, it is a key concern for local residents. The Construction Traffic Management Plan, submitted with the application, takes all the concerns raised during consultation into consideration.

6.8. Light pollution

The Site will not be permanently lit. Inward-facing CCTV cameras will use infra-red technology.

6.9. Public Rights of Way

One of the Site's neighbours had concerns that their access to the public rights of way would be affected. Lightrock have designed the Proposed Development to ensure no impact to existing access, and are exploring ways to improve it. All public rights of way will remain open during construction, and will be buffered with 7.5 metres of mitigation planting.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

6.10. Better connectivity of byways and bridleways

The British Horse Society were keen to see new and upgraded bridleways and the addition of a “park and ride” car park on-site. While Lightrock Power appreciate how important these routes are, they are unable to introduce any new access. All available options are being considered.

6.11. Consultation Period

Lightrock Power’s consultation took a staggered approach, spanning over more than eight weeks. They gained lots of valuable insight, and as such, made the decision to extend the planning timeline. Instead of submitting in April 2025, as originally planned, submission has been pushed back to the Summer of 2025.

6.12. Effect on Tourism

Lightrock Power do not anticipate the Proposed Development to impact local tourism, however this is something that the Council will consider as part of their assessment of the application.

6.13. Nothing in it for the Local Community

Lightrock Power would provide a significant community benefit endowment, designed to last in perpetuity, as well as being able to provide ad-hoc local funding, and gifts of books to local primary schools. Only one suggestion for community benefit was suggested throughout the consultation period.

6.14. Water contamination

Solar Panels are made predominantly from aluminium, glass, and silicon, which will not contaminate water. The battery units will be housed within cabinets, which will stand on impermeable membrane. In the unlikely event of a fire, a penstock fitted to the BESS compound outflow would be closed, preventing fire water from entering local waterways. Further information can be found in the Battery Safety Management Plan, submitted as part of the application.

Farming and Food Production

6.15. Agricultural Land Classification

The ALC report submitted with the application shows that the largest proportion (62%) of the usable area of the Site is low-grade agricultural land.

6.16. Loss of Agricultural Land

Studies have debunked the myth that efficient modern solar farms pose a threat to UK food security. The UK Government’s [Food Security Report](#), published in 2024 states “It is plausible that with continued growth in output and conducive market conditions, that food production

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

levels could be maintained or moderately increased alongside the land use change required to meet our Net Zero and Environment Act targets and commitments."

President for the National Farmers' Union (NFU), Tom Bradshaw, agrees and condemns sensationalist claims about food security. He told Politico *"It's a small amount of land which is being taken out of production"*. In fact, more UK land is taken up by golf courses than solar farms.

6.17. Reduction in Soil Fertility Over Time

Lightrock mount solar panels on C shaped pile-driven frames, so there is very little land disturbance. It's estimated that less than 0.3% of the soil over-sailed by a solar farm is impacted. Combined with conservation grazing, it means that the soil quality is actually improved over the years, ready for when the land is returned to farming.

Biodiversity

6.18. Local flora and fauna

Lightrock Power are proud of their track record for bringing biodiversity enhancements to areas local to our projects. Solar panels are raised off the ground, which means that the space underneath can be utilised for biodiversity. Planting and biodiversity advice has been taken from RSPB and Buglife, who in this instance have recommended meadow grass, native wildflowers, and scrub. More details of this can be found in the Environmental Masterplan. Dedicated biodiversity enhancement areas would be likely to contain enhancements such as traditional fruit trees, ponds with wetland reed beds, enhanced native hedging, and a bee bank. Mitigation has been designed to allow deer movement across the landscape. The areas of solar will be seasonally grazed by a low density of sheep, which as well as providing shelter for the livestock, means that no mechanical machinery is needed to maintain the length of the flora.

The following table shows the widths of buffering proposed:

Ancient Woodland	15m
Woodland	10m
Badger Setts	30m
Barn Owl boxes	30m
Woodland Planting	7.5-10m
Native Shrub Planting	5m
Native Scrub Planting	5m

[Solar Habitat 2025](#), a collaborative longitudinal study from Solar Energy UK, Clarkson Woods, Lancaster University, and Wychwood Biodiversity, shows that *"From wildflowers and hedgerows to butterflies, birds, and mammals, [...] solar farms, when designed and maintained with biodiversity in mind, can make a meaningful contribution to nature*

recovery". The RSPB and Cambridge University came to a similar conclusion in their 2025 study, [Solar farm management influences breeding bird responses in an arable-dominated landscape](#), which showed that Solar farms managed for nature can boost bird numbers and biodiversity.

The Solar industry

6.19. Solar Should be on Roofs

Lightrock Power agree, and would like to see stronger planning legislation in this regard. While it currently looks as though all newbuild houses will have to have solar panels on their roofs by 2027, solar farms would still be required to meet the UK's net zero obligations.

6.20. Unethical Manufacture

Lightrock Power will be working with their developers, EPCs, and manufacturers to ensure that their supply chains are not associated with forced labour issues. Lightrock Power have signed Solar Energy UK's Industry Supply Chain Statement, and have a zero-tolerance approach to slavery and human trafficking.

6.21. Pollution Caused by Used Panels

Any consent would have a decommissioning condition attached to it by the Council which stipulates that before the end of the operational lifetime (typically with 6 months to go), a scheme for decommissioning would need to be submitted to and approved in writing. Like any other electrical waste, solar panels need to be disposed of responsibly. In Europe over 70% of PV manufacturers take part in a global [PV CYCLE Network](#) that helps producers meet the legal obligations of the [Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment \(WEEE\) Directive](#) legislation. As members of this initiative, producers are actively engaged in the sustainability of their product during manufacturing and throughout its lifespan. Components of the panels are broken down and recycled, not just disposed of.

Lithium-Ion batteries are subject to the Waste Batteries and Accumulators Regulations. The general disposal route is back to the manufacturer, where the batteries would be stripped of all usable components, the cells sent for crushing, sorting and smelting, and the usable raw material fed back into the supply chain.

What is Lightrock Power's position, and will the project be sold?

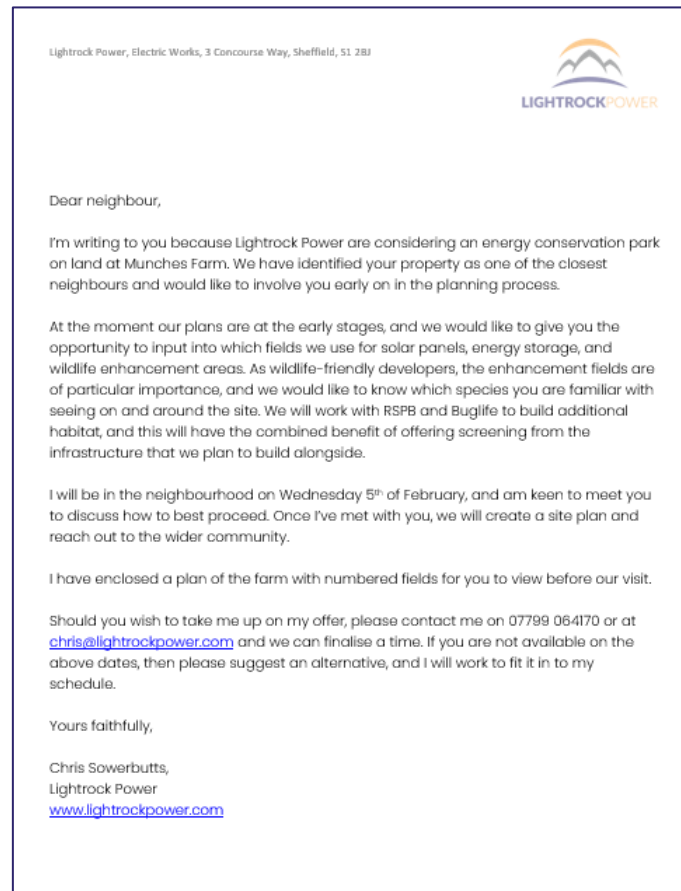
Lightrock Power work with various operators to develop solar farms in the UK. While the initial planning and design work is carried out by Lightrock Power, the installation and maintenance is typically taken on by the operator. Any planning permission and conditions apply to the Site itself, which means Lightrock Power and the operator are both committed to their implementation. Negotiations with operators are ongoing at the time of writing.

Field Selection

- 6.22. The closest neighbours were keen to be involved with solar field selection, and gave their preference for fields to avoid. As a result, panels have been completely removed from four of the five fields suggested for removal, and the panelled area has been significantly reduced in the fifth.

7. Appendices

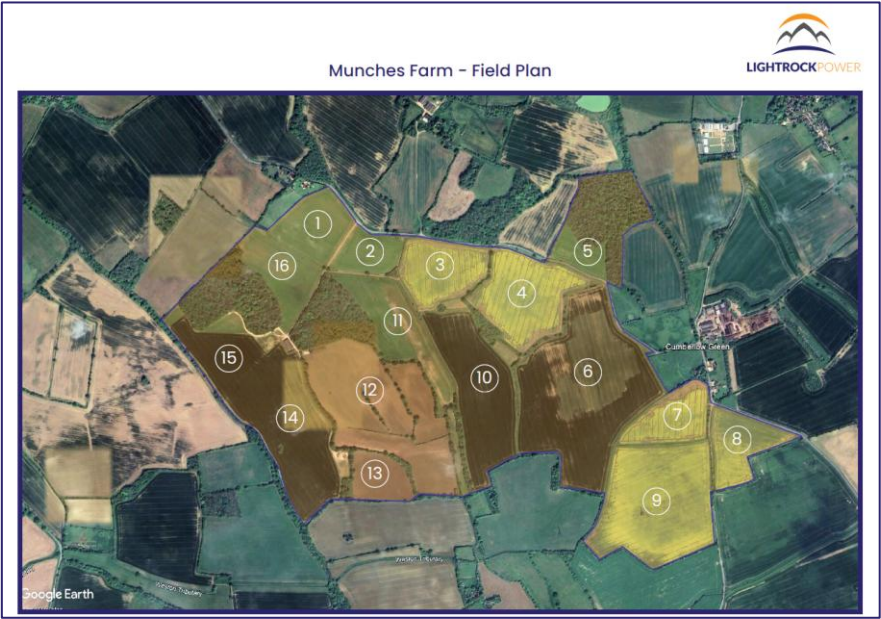
Appendix A: Introductory Letter



Appendix B: Location of Closest 12 Properties



Appendix C: Site Plan with Numbered Fields



Appendix D: Elected Representatives' Introductory Email (example)



18 February 2025

Dear Mrs Hopkins,

Introduction to Lightrock Power's proposals for Westfield Energy Conservation Park at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green

I am writing to you as the Clerk of Clothall with Luffenham Parish Council to let you know that Lightrock Power has submitted a screening request in relation to proposals for a new Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green, and provide details about the forthcoming community consultation we intend to hold.

Project overview

Lightrock Power is bringing forward proposals for Westfield Energy Conservation Park, which would be located on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green. The project would feature a wildlife-friendly Solar Farm, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), and biodiversity enhancement areas.

Unlike a traditional solar farm, our proposal includes co-located BESS and has been designed to produce renewable energy while actively enhancing the site's ecology.

The BESS would be able to import electricity when generators, such as the co-located solar panels, are producing more electricity than is being used. The stored power would then be sent back to the grid when it is needed most. This helps avoid issues caused when transporting the excess energy across country or having to rely on fossil fuels. BESS is critical to help us keep the lights on across Great Britain. Without it, any excess power generated by clean renewables at times of low demand could be wasted.

We proactively plan our projects in collaboration with RSPB and Buglife. It means our plans incorporate a range of ecological features that will support and restore wildlife habitats, ensuring the best possible outcome for local biodiversity. These will typically include enhancements such as native wildflower and hay meadows, new hedgerows with native flowering shrubs and trees, and specially designed corridors to allow deer movement across the landscape. As well as promoting biodiversity connectivity, these measures will help soften the view from nearby roads and residences.

By delivering significant carbon savings, storing the electricity generated by solar for times when it is needed most and enhancing local biodiversity, Westfield Energy Conservation Park will play a vital role in decarbonising the UK electricity grid while also supporting nature recovery in line with both local and national environmental targets.

Purpose of the Screening Opinion

We submitted a formal request for a screening opinion to North Hertfordshire District Council on 14 February 2025 to determine whether any future planning application would need to be accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), reported in an Environmental Statement. This is an additional requirement for some planning applications that evaluates the potential environmental effects of a proposed development under the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

The request is very separate to the main planning application which will follow at a later date. Despite our opinion that an EIA is not required, we would like to reassure you that a very comprehensive planning application will be submitted and will be accompanied by a full set of environmental studies,

the scope of which will be agreed with North Hertfordshire District Council. The findings of these studies will inform our final design ensuring that environmental effects are comprehensively considered.

Next Steps

We expect to submit a planning application to North Hertfordshire District Council in late spring.

In advance of this we will carry out a programme of public consultation intended to give local communities and interested parties the opportunity to find out more about our proposals and tell us what they think. **This consultation will run for 31 days, from 25 February to 28 March 2025.**

We will consider all the comments we receive over the course of this consultation to help us refine the plans we set out in our final planning application. The ambition being to shape a strong set of proposals that are sensitive to and respect the concerns of local communities. We would also welcome suggestions for projects or initiatives which we could support or deliver that would benefit those communities closest to the project.

Raising awareness and telling people about Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Ahead of consultation launching, we are writing to elected officials, parish councils, near neighbours, and relevant organisations representing local communities which may be interested in the project to introduce our proposals.

A project website: www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com is now live and will be updated to provide information about the proposals we are consulting on and how you can take part from 25 February 2025 when the consultation opens. It will also include an online feedback form which people can use to submit their views and comments to us.

Interested parties can register their details with us via the website if they would like to be updated directly as new information about **Westfield Energy Conservation Park** becomes available.

In advance of the consultation launch, we will issue a postcard by direct mail to residents and businesses in the vicinity of the project to let them know about the consultation taking place, and where information can be found. We will also be engaging with regional print and broadcast media to secure editorial and place advertisements.

As part of the consultation, we will be holding an in-person event and an online webinar. More details about these events will be shared closer to the time.

Members of the public are invited to attend either of these events to meet the project team, find out more about our proposals and provide feedback.

Invitation to briefing meeting

To help provide the Parish Council with more information about the project and to address any queries, we would like to offer you a briefing meeting. This meeting would provide the Council with the chance to chat with us directly about the project to find out more and ask questions.

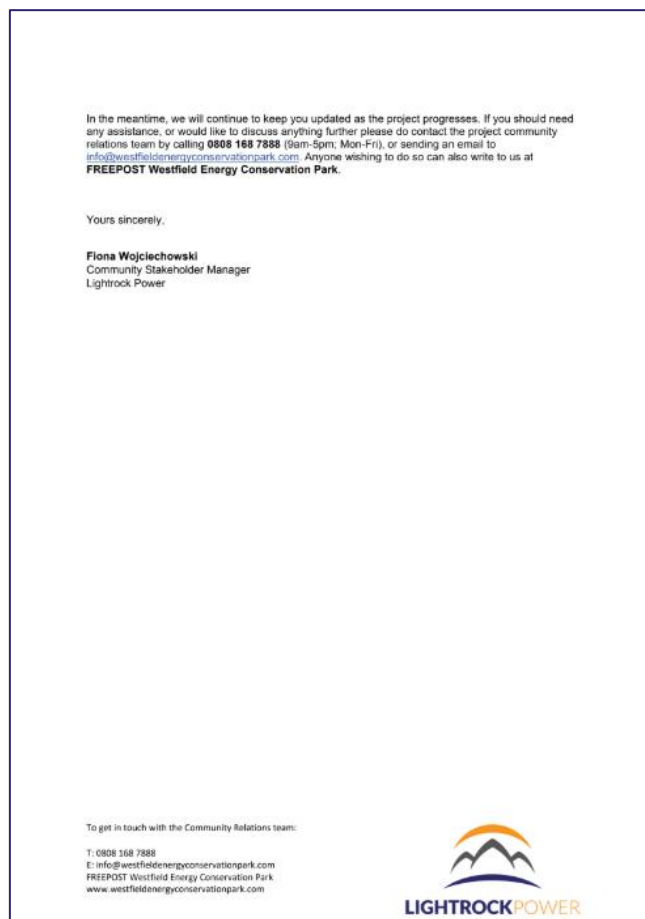
We plan to begin holding briefing meetings from the week commencing 24 February onwards. Please let us know if you would like to book in a session with our team to discuss the project.

To get in touch with the Community Relations team:

T: 0808 168 7888
E: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park
www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com



Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement



Appendix E: Elected Representatives Consultation Launch Email (example)



Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix F: Postcard



Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Lightrock Power are proposing a wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green. The project would include a Solar Farm, a Battery Energy Storage System, and areas of dedicated biodiversity enhancement.

At Lightrock, we are committed to achieving the best possible outcomes for biodiversity. We work in partnership with RSPB and Buglife, drawing on their expertise to tailor our strategies to each of our sites and their unique environments. We also love to hear ideas from the community, as local wildlife knowledge at an early stage can help us deliver even better outcomes, so please get involved in the community consultation if you can.

Recent changes to planning regulations mean all new developments must achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG). At Lightrock, we aim for much more than that and have we've been able achieve over 100% on some of our previous projects.

Solar Farms are still, quiet, efficient, and reliable. Renewables are the cheapest way to generate electricity, and ground mounted solar power is one of the cheapest forms of renewables.

The Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) would store surplus electricity generated during periods of low demand, ensuring it can be fed back into the grid when energy is needed most. Without a BESS, this excess renewable power would be wasted.

This project will deliver significant carbon savings, supporting the decarbonisation of the UK electricity grid in line with both local and national government targets. By reducing reliance on fossil fuels, we can move toward a cleaner, more affordable energy future.

Our pre-application community consultation will run from 25th February to 28th March 2025

Public 3pm-7pm, Tuesday 18th March 2025
Exhibition: Rushden Village Hall, Church End, Rushden, SG9 0SQ

Online 6pm-7pm, Tuesday 25th March 2025
Webinar: Sign up at www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

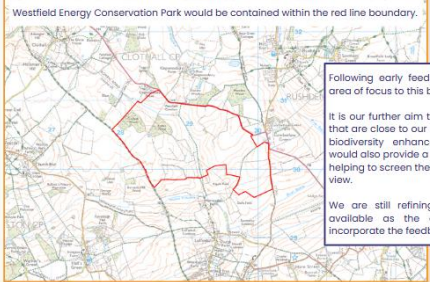
info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
0808 168 7888 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park
www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com



Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Westfield Energy Conservation Park would be contained within the red line boundary.



Following early feedback, we have already reduced our area of focus to this boundary.

It is our further aim to ensure the areas within the red line that are close to our neighbours' homes, would be used for biodiversity enhancement measures. These measures would also provide a natural and sensitive buffer, as well as helping to screen the necessary infrastructure beyond from view.

We are still refining the design, and updates will be available as the consultation progresses, whilst we incorporate the feedback and site survey data we receive.



Scan the QR code to visit the project website



Appendix G: Postcard distribution area



22

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix H: Press Release



LIGHTROCK POWER CONFIRMS PLANS FOR WESTFIELD ENERGY CONSERVATION PARK

Lightrock Power, an independent renewable energy company, has today launched a community consultation on plans for a wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green.

Lightrock's plans for Westfield Energy Conservation Park will feature a wildlife-friendly solar farm, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), and dedicated biodiversity enhancement areas. The proposals illustrate Lightrock's commitment to developing critical infrastructure that is essential for addressing the climate emergency, ensuring energy security, reducing household bills, and supporting biodiversity.

A key feature of the proposal is the co-located BESS, which will store excess electricity generated by the solar farm when supply exceeds demand and release it back into the grid during periods of peak demand. By siting the BESS on site, the proposals would also help mitigate the need to transport energy across the country, which can cause issues for the national grid.

Designed in partnership with The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) and Buglife, the proposals have prioritised delivering meaningful benefits for local biodiversity by incorporating a range of ecological features that will support and restore wildlife habitats. These will typically include enhancements such as native wildflower and hay meadows, new hedgerows with flowering shrubs and trees, and specially designed corridors to allow deer movement across the landscape.

If approved, the project will make a significant contribution towards the UK's net-zero carbon emissions target by 2050, while improving energy security by reducing dependence on overseas energy providers.

Before submitting planning application on the proposals, Lightrock is actively seeking feedback from the local community through a public consultation. As part of this process, an in-person information event and an online webinar will be held to provide people with an opportunity to talk to the project team about the plans. Details of these events, along with further information about the proposals, can be found on the consultation website: www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com.

Fiona Wojciechowski, Community Stakeholder Manager at Lightrock Power said:

"We are excited to share our plans for Westfield Energy Conservation Park and continue supporting the UK's transition to clean energy.

Engaging with the local community is a key part of our process, and we are committed to listening to residents' views to help shape the future of this project. We encourage local residents to share their feedback through our accessible consultation channels and to come along and speak to us at our event, or join our online webinar. It is important to us that our proposals reflect the priorities and concerns of the community."

The consultation will remain open until Friday 28 March 2025.

ENDS

Notes to editors

More information on Lightrock Power:

Lightrock Power, founded in 2017, is an independent renewable energy company that develops ground mounted solar farms and storage solutions to provide cheap, renewable electricity to power a healthier society. Our goal is to become known for developing projects that are an asset to wildlife and their local community by focusing particularly on environment, economy and ecology.

Renewable energy, combined with storage, can help our society transition electricity generation away from fossil fuels but it must be done sensitively. We pride ourselves on being transparent and acting with integrity, not only with our landowners and funders but also, crucially, with the communities that are home to our projects.

We want to engage with local communities as early on in the process as possible. We do this so that communities can help shape the design of the project, and the final proposals actively build on and benefit the communities they will supply.

For more information, please visit: www.lightrockpower.com

For all media enquiries please contact our Community Relations Team:
Email: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
Freephone information line: 0808 168 7888 (open 9am – 5pm, Monday – Friday)

To get in touch with the Community Relations team:

T: 0808 168 7888
E: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
RSPB: Westfield Energy Conservation Park
www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com



Appendix I: Press Advertisement



Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Community consultation – 25 February to 28 March 2025

Lightrock Power is bringing forward proposals for a wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green. The project would include a Solar Farm, a Battery Energy Storage System, and areas of dedicated biodiversity enhancement.

Information Events

We will be holding events for interested parties to meet the project team, find out more about the proposals and share their feedback. The event dates are as follows:

- Public exhibition: 3pm–7pm, Tuesday 18 March 2025, Rushden Village Hall, Church End, Rushden, SG9 0SQ
- Online webinar: 6pm–7pm, Tuesday 25 March 2025, Sign up at www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Have Your Say

We want to hear your feedback on our proposals. You can complete a feedback form online via our website www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com or at our in-person event.

You can also submit feedback via email at info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com or by writing to us at FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park.

Contact us

- Visit: www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
- Email: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
- Call: Freephone 0808 168 7888
- Write: FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park





Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Community consultation – 25 February to 28 March 2025

Lightrock Power is bringing forward proposals for a wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green. The project would include a Solar Farm, a Battery Energy Storage System, and areas of dedicated biodiversity enhancement.

Information Events

We will be holding events for interested parties to meet the project team, find out more about the proposals and share their feedback. The event dates are as follows:

- Public exhibition: 3pm–7pm, Tuesday 18 March 2025, Rushden Village Hall, Church End, Rushden, SG9 0SQ
- Online webinar: 6pm–7pm, Tuesday 25 March 2025, Sign up at www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Have Your Say

We want to hear your feedback on our proposals. You can complete a feedback form online via our website www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com or at our in-person event.

You can also submit feedback via email at info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com or by writing to us at FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park.

Contact us

- Visit: www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
- Email: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
- Call: Freephone 0808 168 7888
- Write: FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park





Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Community consultation – 25 February to 28 March 2025

Lightrock Power is bringing forward proposals for a wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green. The project would include a Solar Farm, a Battery Energy Storage System, and areas of dedicated biodiversity enhancement.

Information Events

We will be holding events for interested parties to meet the project team, find out more about the proposals and share their feedback. The event dates are as follows:

- Public exhibition: 3pm–7pm, Tuesday 18 March 2025, Rushden Village Hall, Church End, Rushden, SG9 0SQ
- Online webinar: 6pm–7pm, Tuesday 25 March 2025, Sign up at www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Have Your Say

We want to hear your feedback on our proposals. You can complete a feedback form online via our website www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com or at our in-person event.

You can also submit feedback via email at info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com or by writing to us at FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park.

Contact us

- Visit: www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
- Email: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
- Call: Freephone 0808 168 7888
- Write: FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park



Appendix J: Project Website



Who We Are: Lightrock Solar | Lightrock BESS | Who We Are: Q&As

[Contact us](#)

[Click here to view our public exhibition boards](#)

[Click here to view a recording of our community webinar](#)

[Click here to view our updated Q&As](#)

Our pre-application consultation has now closed, but we are still here.

If you'd like to get in touch you can email us, phone us on 0808 9687888 (9am-5pm, Monday-Friday), or write to us at FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Safeguarding the UK's electricity network, sustainably.

Lightrock Power are proposing a wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green. The project would include a Solar Farm, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), and areas of dedicated biodiversity enhancement area.

Biodiversity

Lightrock Power strive for the best possible outcome for biodiversity. This includes working in partnership with RSPB and Buglife with their expertise used to tailor their biodiversity advice to each site and locality. We also love to hear from the community on their views, local wildlife knowledge at an early stage can mean even better outcomes, so please get involved in the community consultation if you can (details below). Recent rules mean all new developments must achieve a 1% biodiversity net gain (BNG). At Lightrock, we aim for much more than that and have we've been able to achieve over 100% on some of our previous projects. More detail on the biodiversity areas will be made available as the consultation progresses.

Solar

Solar Farms are still quiet, efficient, and reliable. Renewables are the cheapest way to generate electricity and ground mounted solar power is one of the cheapest forms of renewables.

[Click here](#) to learn more about Solar and our approach.

BESS

The BESS will be able to import electrical power when the electricity being generated, such as our proposed co-located solar farm, is more than is being used. The stored power can then be sent back to the grid when it is needed most, which means we can help keep the lights on! Also, without BESS, any excess power generated cheaply at times of low demand would be wasted.

[Click here](#) to learn more about BESS and our approach.

The landscape-led design would utilise land within the blue area of the map.

The project would deliver significant carbon savings, helping to decarbonise the GB electricity grid in line with local and national Government targets and to move us closer to more affordable household bills that are possible from renewables with a fossil fuel free electricity market.



The infrastructure and biodiversity areas would be contained within the blue area on the map above. Biodiversity enhancement would be placed sensitively to allow a buffering area from our closest neighbours.

The map can be scrolled for detail, and enlarged by clicking the button in the top right hand corner.

Pre-application community consultation

Our pre-application community consultation will run from 25th February to 28th March. You can get involved in the following ways:

Webinar: Date: Tuesday 29 March 2025 Time: 3pm-7pm Click the below button to register	Public event: Date: Tuesday 8th March 2025 Time: 3pm-7pm Location: Rushden Village Hall, Church End, Rushden, NN9 0SQ	Online Survey: You can participate in our anonymous survey by clicking the below button. Well answer as many questions received via the survey as we can at on our Q&As page once all the consultation events have taken place.	Contact methods: Email: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com Phone: 0808 9687888 Letter: FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park.	Further project information can be found by clicking on the tabs at the top of this page.
---	--	---	--	---

[Click here to view the recordings](#)

[Click here to open the exhibition](#)

[Click here to take part](#)

[Email us](#)

We plan to submit a Town and Country planning application to North Herts in late Spring 2025, once all feedback has been considered.

Register with your email address to receive updates.

We respect your privacy, and will not pass your details on to any third parties.


RSPB

info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park
Tel: 0808 968 7888 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)


buglife

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement



[Why here?](#) [Lightrock Solar](#) [Lightrock BESS](#) [Who We Are](#) [Q&As](#) [Contact Us](#)

Why here?

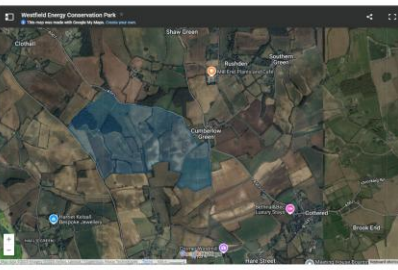
As the nation transitions to a greener, cleaner system, modern energy parks like this one will be required up and down the country. This location has been chosen above others in the area because:

- There are no known ecological designations (special protection measures) associated with the site
- Outside of any National Park or National Scenic Area
- Located predominantly within Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk)
- More than half a kilometre from any listed buildings
- Good road access, to minimise disruption to traffic during the construction period. A number of access routes are being considered, including from the A1 via the A507 to enter the site from the north, and from the A50 to the A507 to enter the site from the east. The route will be designed to avoid residential areas whenever possible.
- Favourable topography means that we can make efficient use of the natural light at each point of the day
- Existing field access means minimal hedgerow disruption
- While two public rights of way cross the site, we are confident that they can remain open during construction, and will be buffered with natural planting so that their long term use will not be affected

The infrastructure and biodiversity areas would be contained within the blue area on the map to the right. Biodiversity enhancement would be placed sensitively to allow a buffering screen from our closest neighbours.

While we are confident that this is an appropriate location, our planning application will be accompanied with a robust suite of surveys and reports, which may include:

- Planning Design and Access Statement
- Planning Application Drawings
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal
- Heritage Desk Based Assessment
- Flood Risk Assessment / Drainage Strategy
- Ecological Impact Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and associated DNAG metrics
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Transport Statement and Construction Traffic Management Plan
- Archaeological Impact Assessment
- Tree Survey Strategy Report
- ACC Report
- Statement of Community Involvement
- Geophysical Report
- Photomontages



What North Herts Council say...

Council Plan
Reducing our contribution to climate change and the ecological costs we face, minimise damage to our assets and make where we live more resilient

Local Plan
The Plan supports the principles of sustainable development within North Herts

Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document
Renewable and low carbon energy is essential in the effort towards net zero. Reducing carbon footprints, such technologies also reduce household energy costs

Climate Change Strategy
The Council has adopted a long-term focus on climate action and Sustainability is one of our three key priorities outlined in our Council Plan (2022-2027)



info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
RSPB Westfield Energy Conservation Park
Tel: 0800 168 7888 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)





[Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)



[Why here?](#) [Lightrock Solar](#) [Lightrock BESS](#) [Who We Are](#) [Q&As](#) [Contact Us](#)

Why Lightrock Solar?

Solar is the most abundant and readily available energy source in the world, which helps make it one of the cheapest to harvest. The fact that we can do that without emitting Carbon Dioxide means that solar farms are directly helping to improve the UK's impact in the fight against climate change.

Carbon Efficient

Research has shown that the average carbon payback period for the production and installation of solar panels is one to four years. Over their lifetime, typically 40 years, each panel will generate zero-carbon and zero-pollution electricity for decades after any carbon emitted in its production has been paid back. Manufacturing processes will continue to advance, so the carbon payback period for solar will decrease further. Made primarily of aluminium, glass and silicon, the components are easy to recycle at the end of their life.

Home-Grown.

Using locally sourced energy reduces the cost to the consumer. It doesn't need to travel as far to reach your home, and less is lost along the way. Locally sourced energy also plays a crucial role in reducing our reliance on Russia and the EU.

Food Security - a myth!

Studies have debunked the myth that efficient modern solar farms pose a threat to UK food security. The UK Government's Food Security Report, published in 2024 states "It is plausible that with continued growth in output and conducive market conditions, that food production levels could be maintained or moderately increased alongside the land use change required to meet our Net Zero and Environment Act targets and commitments."

President for the National Farmer's Union (NFU), Tom Bradshaw, agrees and condemns sensationalist claims about food security. "It's a small amount of land which is being taken out of production", in fact, more UK land is taken up by golf courses than solar farms.

Back to Farming

Lightrock typically seek planning permission for 40 years. There is a legal requirement that the land is returned to its original use at the end of the lease, and money is set aside to ensure that the infrastructure can be quickly and easily removed. The land returns to farming as greenfield land, not brownfield, as is sometimes believed.

Thriving Wildlife

Recent English planning law requires each new development to achieve a biodiversity net gain (BNG) of at least 10%. Lightrock have always aimed to far exceed that, often reaching scores of over 100% BNG. One reason for such high BNG on solar farms is that they're often starting from a very low base score. Well-worked, farmland that needs a rest, often doesn't have any biodiversity left. Often the poor biodiversity was unknowingly increased by some outdated farming practices in the past.

Solar funded enhancements such as wildflower strips, tussocky grassland, mammal gates, and reptile habitat creation can bring wildlife back to its shores. It is even possible for arable farmland near well-managed solar farms to enhance its yield of crops due to the large increase in pollinators created by the habitat provided.

No moving parts.

Because solar farms have no moving parts, they are quiet and require little maintenance. Typically maintenance visits happen twice a month, but it is rare that any repairs are required. The grass surrounding the infrastructure on Lightrock solar farms is typically grazed by sheep, so no mowing is required. There is evidence to show that sheep living within the shelter of solar farms are more relaxed, and therefore produce a better quality of wool than those living without the shelter that the panels provide.

Soil improved due to minimal land disturbance

Lightrock mount solar panels on C shaped pile-driven frames, so there is very little land disturbance. It's estimated that less than 0.2% of the soil over-sailed by a solar farm is impacted. Combined with conservation grazing, it means that the soil quality is actually improved over the years, ready for when the land is returned to farming.





info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
RSPB Westfield Energy Conservation Park
Tel: 0800 168 7888 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)





[Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

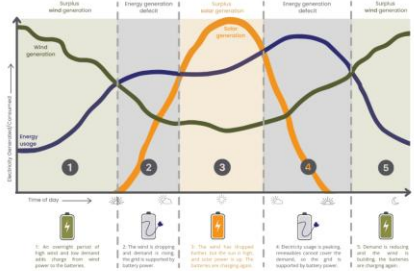


[Why here?](#)
[Lightrock Solar](#)
[Lightrock BESS](#)
[Who We Are](#)
[Q&As](#)
[Contact Us](#)

About BESS

A common criticism of renewable energy, such as solar or wind power, is that it's not always sunny or windy. Battery Energy Storage Systems, or BESS, will help to remove this problem. BESS allows us to store extra electricity to be distributed at a later point, when it's needed.

The below diagram helps to explain why, and when, BESS is needed.



Lightrock will only propose BESS projects that are quiet, safe, and capable of being blended into the landscape with screening. For standalone BESS, we aim to provide a 20%+ biodiversity net gain (BNG), which is double the legal requirement, prioritising on-site BNG. At Westfield Energy Conservation Park, our BNG is combined with the co-located solar so we would anticipate a much higher increase across the combined scheme. We commit to:

- Have regular and detailed dialogue with the local fire and rescue service, taking on board any safety advice
- Provide meaningful community consultation
- Use modern, liquid-cooled technology that cannot be heard from local properties
- Significantly exceed legal minimum requirements with for biodiversity net gain
- Following early consultation and where we feel the scheme will bring overall benefit to society, submit a full application to the local planning authority and continue to listen to your comments

Electricity storage will enable us to use energy more flexibly and de-carbonise our energy system cost-effectively. By Maximising the usable output from intermittent low carbon generation, including the cheapest generation from onshore wind and solar, we will not only make cheaper household bills possible, but it avoids or postpones the need for costly network upgrades which cost the taxpayer.



info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
 FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park
 Tel 0800 188 7888 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)





[Source materials](#)
[Privacy Statement](#)
[Terms and Conditions](#)

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement



Why here? Lightrock Solar Lightrock BESS Who We Are FAQs [Contact us](#)

Lightrock colleagues

Chris and Ben founded Lightrock Power in 2017 having worked in renewables development since 2010.

Subsidy-free sites in the UK were not yet feasible in 2017, so the pair originally embarked on developing projects in the US. From early 2019 they returned their attention to the home turf of the UK, and soon added storage solutions to their repertoire.

Whether at home or internationally, Lightrock was created with the determination to develop energy infrastructure in the right way – implementing all the gains to environment, economy and ecology that they can bring.

Lightrock is purposefully structured as a small development team with a flat structure – if you call us you will still be able to speak with Chris or Ben directly. We listen to feedback and implement it whenever we possibly can.

Renewable energy, combined with storage, can help our society transition electricity generation away from fossil fuels but it must be done sensitively. We pride ourselves on being transparent and acting with integrity, not only with our landowners and funders but also, crucially, with the communities that are home to our projects.

Meet the team



Chris Sowerbutts
FOUNDER

Chris is our resident eco-geek, focused on making efficient grid connections and designing exemplary solar farms. He has a particular interest in collaborating with our wildlife partners to optimise the biodiversity benefits of solar and storage developments. After years of being on Lightrock's front line, he's now been able to hand over some of the day-to-day tasks to Jo, Michelle, Rick, and Andy, in order to focus on company strategy.

Chris lives in Yorkshire, and enjoys gardening with his young family, cycling in the Peak District National Park, and designing his very own eco-home.



Ben Davies
FOUNDER

Ben comes from a farming background and applies his knowledge of rural land management to solar farms, ensuring they can bring a positive contribution to the UK farming and agriculture industry. He spends his time collaborating with land owners and their agents to ensure a positive outcome for everyone.

Ben lives in Gloucestershire and enjoys swimming and exploring the South-West with his young family.



Jo Mott
HEAD OF PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

Jo has a background in Environmental Consultancy, specialising in Environmental Impact Assessment, Planning and Project Management, and has over 17 years experience in this area. She oversees the day-to-day planning and environmental assessments of our projects and works with our external environmental consultants to prepare high quality applications.

Jo holds a BSc(Hons) and MSc in Environmental Impact Assessment, Auditing and Management Systems, in her spare time she enjoys hiking in the North Yorkshire countryside with her family and the dog.



Andy Feewings
HEAD OF DEVELOPMENT

Andy lives on a family farm in Wales and has a keen interest in sustainable land use. Andy passionately believes that the advantages of renewables should be shared by all – benefiting the neighbouring communities, the environment, energy security and the climate. This focus has seen Andy's combined legal, land and development career sit within the renewable energy sector for over 17 years.

Outside of work and the farm, Andy enjoys walking the coastline and hills of Wales with his dogs, family and friends.



Michelle Howson
PLANNING PROJECT MANAGER

Michelle holds BPP accredited Masters degree with a background in environmental policy and sustainability.

Michelle lives in Yorkshire and, when she's not ensuring the smooth running of the planning process, spends much of her time travelling around the country with friends and creating healthy (and delicious) recipes.



Richard von Pöten
HEAD OF GRID

Richard has worked at the heart of the UK renewable energy sector since the rise of the early solar subsidies era, with almost 22 years of experience under his belt.

Since joining Lightrock he has assisted in the growth of our ever-expanding UK portfolio, whilst aiding the transition into the transmission sector. As a passionate environmentalist and a proud parent, he has proven to be an ideal fit and feels very fortunate to have joined this inspiring and dedicated team of developers.



Fiona Wojciechowski
COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER MANAGER

Fiona handles day-to-day management of Lightrock Power's PR and communications, writing public documents and dealing with contractors, key stakeholders and local communities.

Fiona lives in Yorkshire, and enjoys walks in the Peak District with her husband and daughter, and can otherwise be found tending to her wildlife garden.



Matt Vahdani
OFFICE MANAGER

Matt is the administrative oil that greases the wheels of our little vehicle.

Matt lives in Yorkshire and can frequently be found on walks with Chris's family (they're brothers-in-law) or arranging and producing new material for his wedding/function band (www.weddingbandsonline.co.uk).

Corporate Social Responsibility

Environment

We're all aware that we need to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels in order to combat climate change. While renewable energy sources are plentiful, they are not necessarily available at the time we need them. BESS allows us to harness extra clean electricity when it's generated excess. It's when it's needed. One GB electricity grid has enough BESS there will be no need to use electricity generated by fossil fuels at times of high need.

Lightrock work hard to provide renewable energy, as well as BESS, having ten solar farms in development. Solar is the most abundant energy source readily available on earth, and also one of the cheapest to harness. The fact that we can do that without emitting carbon dioxide means that solar farms are directly helping to improve the UK's impact on the fight against climate change.

Economy

Taking back control of our electricity supply is the only way to ensure long term energy security. As prices soar amid an energy security crisis, well managed, home-grown electricity can offer huge benefits. Electricity generated in the UK from renewables will always be cheaper to produce than that imported from other countries. Stabilising our supply through BESS is the best way to ensure that we no longer need to rely on expensive imports. Lightrock developments are subsidy free, which means they come at no cost to the taxpayer.

At Sweetwater Energy Park, we will provide a generous community benefit endowment fund. This is likely to be administered by Uncolnshire Community Foundation, and is designed to last in perpetuity. Please get in touch if you would like to nominate a cause for some of this funding.

Ecology

Lightrock go above and beyond, with an ambition to double the statutory 10% biodiversity net gain on our sites. This is achieved by working in partnership with the RSPB and Buglife, as well as seeking advice from other specialist organisations such as the Bumblebee Conservation Society and the Wild About Trust.

As a result of this, we are delighted that the average biodiversity net gain on our solar farms is well in excess of 50%, meaning that natural habitats will be more than doubled once our projects have been built.

At Sweetwater Energy Park we're working with the RSPB and Buglife on our BMS. We're also keen to work with local wildlife organisations, so please get in touch if you would like to get involved.

Employment

Lightrock is an equal opportunities employer. Employees are entitled to:

- A salary above the National Living Wage
- Generous holiday entitlement
- Generous performance bonuses
- Donations to nominated charities
- Healthcare
- Flexible hours
- Mental health support
- Remote working

Praise for Lightrock:

The team at Lightrock are a real example of how businesses can be allies for nature, tackling the biodiversity and climate crises head-on. Together, we will work to design nature-friendly solar farms that not only generate clean energy but also create vital habitats for wildlife, offering key conservation opportunities for priority species. We are very excited to be partnering with them and finding ways we can work together to revive our world. – Charlotte Martin-Taylor, RSPB

I like the company, if someone is going to install this, I think they would be best placed – they are young, green and have links to wildlife projects. – Member of the community at a recent BESS project

[Lightrock] are ticking all the right boxes, and what [they] are doing is wonderful. – Parish Councilor at a previous BESS project



info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park
Tel: 01828 768 768 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)



[Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement



Why here? | Lightrock Solar | Lightrock BESS | Who We Are | [Contact Us](#)

Questions and answers:

Lightrock is a transparent developer. These are based on real questions that have been asked during consultation at previous sites.

This section will be added to throughout this consultation to add your questions.



A selection of questions that we have received during the consultation

What will you do to support wildlife when the land is covered in panels? +

Why industrialise the countryside when there are brown (field) sites available? Why take farmland when we need to reduce imports of food to become more self sufficient and reduce transport which itself massively contributes to global warming? +

What are you really doing to help the local community? What are you really doing to help the local community? +

Do solar panels on farmland reduce soil fertility over time, making it harder to return the land to agricultural use in the future? +

Could the large-scale development of solar farms in rural locations lead to the industrialization of the countryside, changing its character and purpose? +

Solar panels should be mandatory on all new build houses and warehouses and retrofitted to existing warehouses. In France supermarket car parks have solar panels - why not here? +

How big/what MW are both the solar and BESS elements? Are there any plans showing the layout? Where will the BESS be situated? +



Westfield Energy Conservation Park

What happens after the Westfield Energy Conservation Park is removed? +

What happens to footpaths or bridleways that cross Westfield Energy Conservation Park? +

Who is responsible for the hedges and general maintenance of the site once it's been built? Is there a legal obligation to keep the hedges high? +

How can I access the full surveys and reports? +

How many sites have Lightrock Power developed to date? +

Do you remove trees or hedgerows? +

Do your developments receive any governmental grants or subsidies? +

Will it create a flood risk? +

Would there also be a community benefit fund? +

How will you mitigate the impact and damage to local roads during construction? +

Solar Panels

What makes a good site for a solar farm? +

What happens to the panels at the end of their life? +

Is there glint and glare? +

Are solar farms noisy? +

Do solar panels work when the sun's not shining? +

Can solar farms affect health? +

Between manufacture and disposal are panels as green as they claim to be? +

Where do you source your solar Panels? I read that they have links to forced labour? +

Why can't you put your solar panels on brownfield sites or warehouse roofs? +

How are panels mounted and does this involve drilling or piling foundations? +

How will the Solar panels survive storms? +

Battery Technology

Are BESS developments safe? +

What is the specific battery technology? +

How green is BESS? +

Wildlife

How do you ensure a safe and productive wildlife population? Does the deer fencing keep larger wildlife out? +

How will you protect local wildlife? +



info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEDOM Westfield Energy Conservation Park
Tel: 0800 988 7888 (Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)





Privacy | [Accessibility](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)

28

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement



Why here? | Lightrock Solar | Lightrock BESS | Who We Are | Q&As | [Contact us](#)

Welcome to our online exhibition. If you have been unable to attend our public events, the same exhibition boards can be found below:

You can click the button to open the full sets of boards, or click individual images to open them one at a time.

Click to open the information boards

Photomontages

Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Lightrock Power

Why Here?

Lightrock Solar

Lightrock BESS

Biodiversity

Transport

Community Benefits

FAQs

Planning

Photomontage

Photomontage

Photomontage

Photomontage

Photomontage



info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
RSPB Westfield Energy Conservation Park
Tel: 0800 868 768 (Monday-Friday, 9am-5pm)
[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)



[Contact us](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#)

Appendix K: Public Exhibition Boards



Westfield Energy Conservation Park

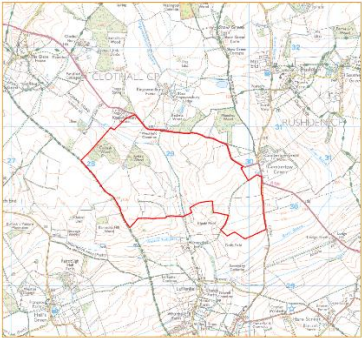
Lightrock Power are proposing a wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park on land at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green. The project would include a Solar Farm, a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), with integrated biodiversity enhancement measures throughout.

Lightrock Power strive for the best possible outcome for biodiversity, this includes working in partnership with RSPB and Buglife with their expertise used to tailor their biodiversity advice to each site and locality. We also love to hear from the community on their views, local wildlife knowledge at an early stage can mean even better outcomes, so please get involved in the community consultation if you can. Recent changes in planning regulations mean all new developments must achieve a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG). At Lightrock, we aim for much more than that and have we've been able to achieve over 100% on some of our previous projects.

Solar Farms are still, quiet, efficient, and reliable. Renewables are the cheapest way to generate electricity, and ground mounted solar power is one of the cheapest forms of renewables.

The BESS would be able to import electrical power when the electricity being generated, such as our proposed co-located solar farm, is more than is being used. The stored power can then be sent back to the grid when it is needed most, which means we can help keep the lights on! Also, without BESS, any excess power generated cheaply at times of low demand would be wasted.

The project would deliver significant carbon savings, helping to decarbonise the GB electricity grid in line with local and national Government targets and move us closer to more affordable household bills that are possible with a fossil fuel free electricity market.





Lightrock Power

Chris and Ben founded Lightrock Power in 2017, having worked in renewables development since 2010.

Subsidy-free sites in the UK were not yet feasible in 2017, so the pair originally embarked on developing projects in the US. In early 2019 they returned to home turf in the UK, and soon added energy storage solutions to their repertoire.

Whether at home or internationally, Lightrock was created with the determination to develop energy infrastructure in the right way – implementing all the gains to environment, economy and ecology that they can bring.

Over recent years Lightrock have worked to develop positive working relationships with wildlife organisations, seeking advice to achieve the best possible biodiversity net gains on their sites. They have an established business partnership with RSPB, and have also, more recently, joined forces with Buglife.

Lightrock is purposefully structured as a small development team with a flat structure – if you want, you can call and speak with Chris and Ben directly. Lightrock listen to feedback and implement it whenever they possibly can.

Renewable energy, combined with storage, can help our society transition electricity generation away from fossil fuels but it must be done sensitively. Lightrock pride themselves on being transparent and acting with integrity, not only with their landowners and funders but also, crucially, with the communities that are home to their projects.





Lightrock Solar

Carbon Efficient: Research has shown that the average carbon payback period for the production and installation of solar panels is one to four years. Over their lifetime, typically 40 years, each panel will generate zero-carbon and zero-pollution electricity for decades after any carbon emitted in its production has been paid back. Manufacturing processes will continue to advance, so the carbon payback period for solar will decrease further. Made primarily of aluminium, glass and silicon, the components are easy to recycle at the end of their life.

Home-Grown: Using locally sourced energy reduces the cost to the consumer. It doesn't need to travel as far to reach your home, and less is lost along the way. Locally sourced energy also plays a crucial role in reducing our reliance on Russia and the EU.

Food Security – a myth! Studies have debunked the myth that efficient modern solar farms pose a threat to UK food security. The UK Government's Food Security Report, published in 2024 states "It is plausible that with continued growth in output and conducive market conditions, that food production levels could be maintained or moderately increased alongside the land use change required to meet our Net Zero and Environment Act targets and commitments." President for the National Farmers Union (NFU), Iain Ardshaw, agrees and condemns sensationalist claims about food security. "It's a small amount of land which is being taken out of production". In fact, more UK land is taken up by golf courses than solar farms.

Back to Farming: Lightrock typically seek planning permission for 40 years. There is a legal requirement that the land is returned to its original use at the end of the lease, and money is set aside to ensure that the infrastructure can be easily and easily removed. The land returns to farming as greenfield land, not brownfield, as is sometimes believed.





Why Here?

As the National Grid transitions to a greener, cleaner system, modern energy parks like this one will be required up and down the country. This location has been chosen above others in the area because:

- There are no known ecological designations (special protection measures) associated with the site.
- Not within a National Park or National Landscape Area.
- Site is mostly Flood Zone 1 (lowest risk).
- More than half a kilometre from any listed buildings.
- There is good road access to the site from the A507, allowing us to minimise disruption to traffic throughout the relatively short construction period.
- Favourable topography, allowing efficient use of the natural light at each point of the day.
- Site accessibility means minimal hedgerow disruption.
- We are confident that both public rights of way (PROW) can remain open for the short construction period. Native planting would naturally buffer and benefit the PROW for the long term.
- Biodiversity enhancement can be placed sensitively to allow a buffering area from the site's closest neighbours.
- With so few neighbours, biodiversity measures can be placed to provide a sensitive buffer tailored to them.
- The design will seek to evolve, incorporating feedback from community and the Local Planning Authority, therefore the exact quantum and layout is to be confirmed when the application is submitted.

While we are confident that this is the appropriate location, our planning application will be accompanied with a robust suite of surveys and reports.



29

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

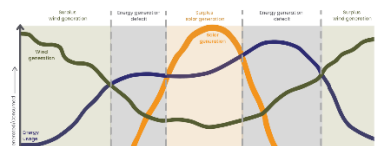
Lightrock BESS



BESS stands for Battery Energy Storage System. Its role is to provide an energy storage facility as part of the UK's strategy to decarbonise and to help transition to a low carbon grid. It would improve the reliability and stability of our energy network, through safeguarding our energy supply and helping balance the local network to prevent any unforeseen future outages.

The type of BESS system proposed would import electrical power during periods of oversupply from renewable generators and at low demand times, which could otherwise be wasted. This power is subsequently exported back into the grid during periods of high demand, or low generation, offsetting the need to transport energy across country or having to rely on fossil fuels.

This proposed BESS would deliver significant carbon savings, helping to decarbonise the UK electricity grid in line with UK Government targets. The importance of energy storage is further emphasised by the UK Government passing the Energy Bill (2022) which now acknowledges energy storage as a generation asset which will ultimately contribute to the safety and resilience of the UK's energy system.



"Electricity storage can enable us to use energy more flexibly and decarbonise our energy system cost-effectively – for example, by helping to balance the system at lower cost, maximising the usable output from intermittent low carbon generation (e.g. solar and wind), and deferring or avoiding the need for costly network upgrades and new generation capacity".

– Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023)



Biodiversity

Lightrock Power take their impact on biodiversity seriously. Having designed projects in conjunction with RSPB since 2020, they have seen predicted biodiversity net gains of up to 208% on their solar farms, and 91% on their BESS sites.

RSPB have recommended measures including:

- Meadow grasses
- Native wildflower meadow
- Oak, lime, and traditional fruit trees
- Wood-pasture & parkland
- Re-wilded scrub and hedgerow buffers
- Pond and wetland roost beds
- Tall hedgerows with diverse native species
- Winter seeds and cover to farmland

Buglife have recommended measures including:

- A water source
- A bee bank
- B-line wildflower mix
- Hedging, to include blackthorn, hawthorn, dogwood, and rowan
- Scrub planting
- Log piles

The above recommendations are designed to support habitat and foraging for invertebrates, specifically bees, butterflies and grasshoppers; birds, specifically skylark, yellow wagtail, song thrush, yellowhammer, spotted flycatcher, woodlark, road bunting, bitron (wintering), linnet, corn bunting, tree sparrow, grey partridge, ammelons, specifically local and great-crested newt; reptiles, specifically grass snake and slow worm; and mammals, specifically harvest mouse, dormouse, hedgehog, brown long eared bat and soprano pipitrelle bat.

Any newly planted areas would be in keeping with local species diversity, and would be designed to avoid the creation of hard, straight edges. This would reduce and 'soften' the potential visual effects of the site, as viewed from the surrounding area.

Are you part of a local wildlife organisation? Lightrock Power have a community benefit fund that could support your work.



Community Benefit



Local energy security

Westfield Energy Conservation Park would reinforce electricity grid infrastructure by offering renewable energy, back up power, and energy stability services. This directly benefits local people by offering more reliable electricity.

A generous community benefit fund to generate income in perpetuity

We want to pay our benefit funds into a community endowment, which means they would continue to pay out in perpetuity – well past the lifetime of the project.

Additional funding for local projects that align with our core values

We've recently provided additional funds for a new perimeter fence for a SEND facility, tents and fluorescent vests for a Scout Group, football kits for a local league, and have been in discussions to provide a solar array to a village primary school. Please let us know if you have a local project that could benefit from additional funding.

Up to £6 million to the local area in business rates

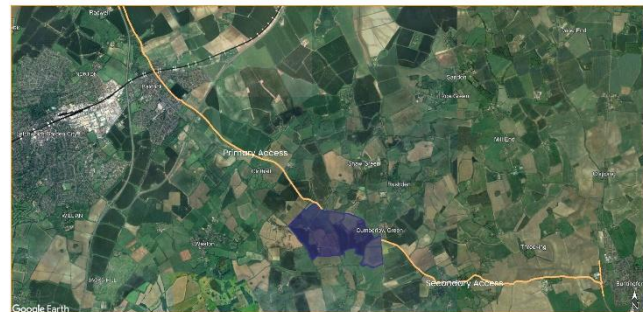
Business Rates are paid to Local Authorities, which then fund services such as education, local road repairs, and caring for vulnerable people.



Transport



The current primary site access is proposed via the A507 from the North-West, as shown below. Secondary access, also via the A507, would be from the East. Following construction, vehicle movements to and from the Site are expected to be limited to occasional maintenance visits in a standard 4x4. The project's contractors would be required to operate responsibly, but if they accidentally caused damage to roads, they would have to repair it.



Our application will be submitted with a Transport Statement and Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Planning



How Lightrock's planning timeline could look:

- 2024
Early plans and initial site surveys.
- FEBRUARY – MARCH 2025
Share plans with the local community through a postcard and project website. Encourage feedback via survey, email, letter, and phone.
- MARCH – APRIL 2025
Alter plans based on community response to consultation.
- LATE 2025
North Herts Planning Control Committee make their decision.
- WITHIN FIVE YEARS OF PLANNING CONSENT
Build the Site. This should take 12-18 months.
- FEBRUARY 2025
Write to key stakeholders, elected representatives, and the Local Planning Authority with high level plans. Offer pre-consultation briefings.
- MARCH 2025
Run an in-person community consultation event and an online webinar. Upload exhibition boards and updated Q&As to project website.
- LATE SPRING 2025
Submit planning application. Opportunity for public to comment on final plans.
- EARLY 2026
Plans get finalised once planning permission is granted.

FAQs



What happens after the Westfield Energy Conservation Park is removed?

Planning would be classed as temporary and would last for a defined period only. This is usually 40 years. After that time, there is a legal requirement that the land is returned to its original condition, and money would be set aside to ensure this can happen. Our panels are mounted on pile driven frames that cause minimum disturbance to the land and can be easily removed, recycled, or repurposed where possible.

What happens to footpaths or bridleways that cross Westfield Energy Conservation Park?

We protect and enhance public rights of way with extended and improved hedges so they can continue to be enjoyed. Behind these hedges is a typically 5m gap before we have our fence, and our infrastructure is then a further 4m inside this fence. So any infrastructure would be at least 9m from the paths themselves.

Who is responsible for the hedges and general maintenance of the site once it's been built? Is there a legal obligation to keep the hedges high?

The Site owner is legally obliged to maintain the Site as per the planning obligations. Work is generally undertaken by local agricultural contractors.

How can I access the full surveys and reports?

All surveys and reports are accessible to the public for scrutiny once the planning application has been submitted, but please get in touch if there is a particular aspect of our plan that you would like further information on.

Do your developments receive any governmental grants or subsidies?

No, this project comes subsidy free. Although it is funded privately, the benefits are for the British public.

Would it create a flood risk?

No. A full flood and drainage strategy will be submitted with the planning application, but we do not expect the development to create a local flood risk.

How would the Solar panels survive storms?

As our climate warms, we are beginning to experience more extreme weather. Solar power is vital in the fight to stop the world warming, but Solar Farms also have to adapt to more extreme weather. In the most extreme storms, some damage is unavoidable, in the same way as other infrastructure (think power cuts and train cancellations). But, because solar panels are so quick to install, when repairs are needed, replacements are fast and would cause minimal disruption.

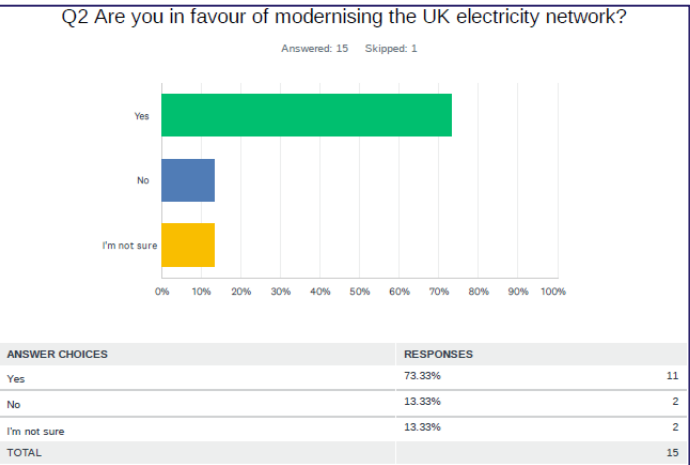
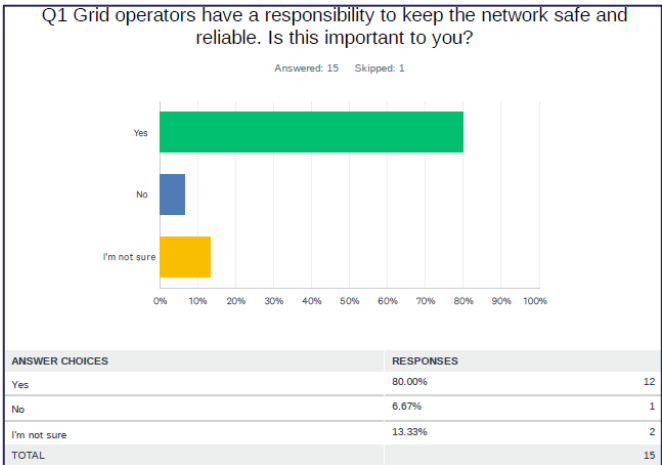
Are BESS developments safe?

Yes, the BESS technologies that we use are modern, and extremely safe. We build to the latest guidelines, and consult with fire services throughout the planning process. Each unit is fully containerised with an individual fire suppression system.

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement



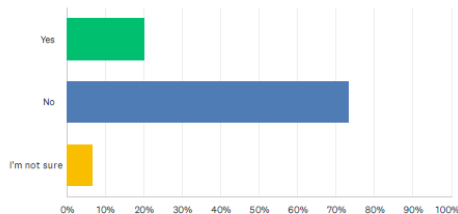
Appendix L: Anonymous Survey



Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

Q3 Solar energy generation is quiet, low maintenance and provides a safe habitat for local wildlife. Do you think Solar is a good option for renewable energy generation in this area?

Answered: 15 Skipped: 1



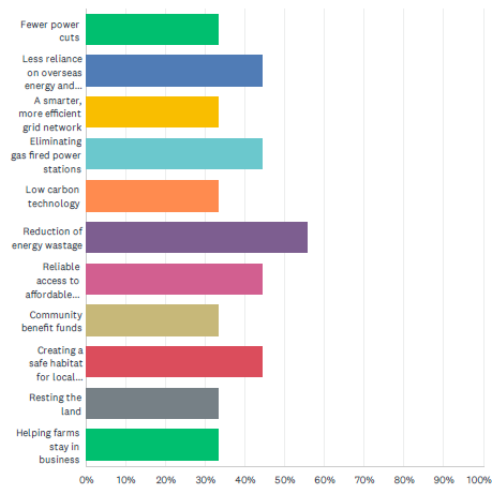
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	20.00%
No	73.33%
I'm not sure	6.67%
TOTAL	15

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Fewer power cuts	33.33%
Less reliance on overseas energy and infrastructure	44.44%
A smarter, more efficient grid network	33.33%
Eliminating gas fired power stations	44.44%
Low carbon technology	33.33%
Reduction of energy wastage	55.56%
Reliable access to affordable renewable energy	44.44%
Community benefit funds	33.33%
Creating a safe habitat for local Wildlife	44.44%
Resting the land	33.33%
Helping farms stay in business	33.33%
Total Respondents: 9	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Better biodiversity	4/22/2025 11:30 AM
2	Just entirely the wrong location	4/22/2025 11:29 AM
3	Building solar on roofs not industrialising farm land forever	3/18/2025 11:47 AM
4	Solar farms blight our open countryside. Commercial and domestic rooftops should be used before any open countryside and farmland is touched	3/18/2025 8:18 AM
5	None of the above. They want to industrialise the precious farmland	3/17/2025 6:22 PM
6	Zero reliance on battery technology and rare elemental reliance. There is not enough Lithium to create truly sustainable infrastructure	3/15/2025 9:17 PM

Q4 Renewable energy Schemes such as Westfield Energy Conservation Park can provide lots of benefits to grid users. Which of the below are important to you?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 7



Q5 If you think there is a local organisation, project or cause which could benefit from the community benefit fund, please leave details here.

Answered: 3 Skipped: 13

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	None will benefit	4/22/2025 11:29 AM
2	This is a smokescreen. We need a proper circular economy, prioritised to local issues, not tick box, headline, do-gooding	3/15/2025 9:17 PM
3	Beane Valley Chalk Streams	2/27/2025 9:51 PM

Q6 From what you've read about Westfield Energy Conservation Park, can you tell us what you like about the project?

Answered: 12 Skipped: 4

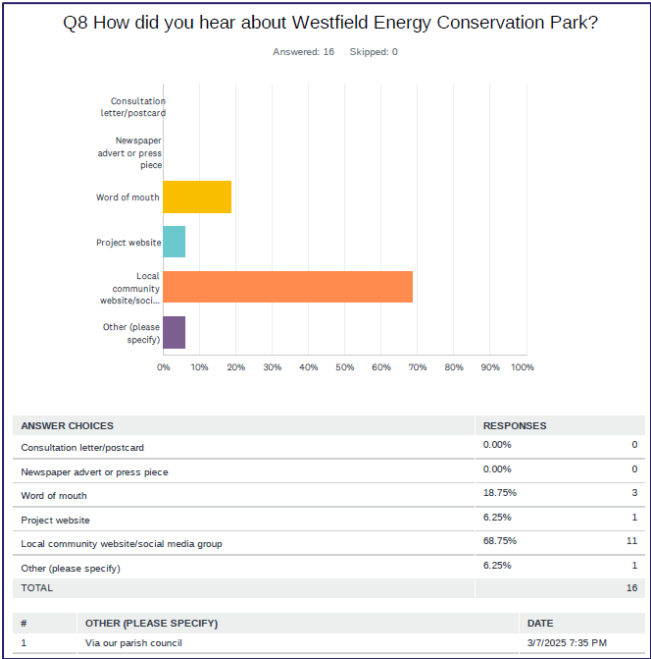
#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	I'd rather this wasn't called a conservation park. This is an energy generation system however it is dressed up.	4/22/2025 11:34 AM
2	Good screening and biodiversity gains	4/22/2025 11:30 AM
3	Appalling	4/22/2025 11:29 AM
4	Nothing. We need our agricultural land now more than ever	3/20/2025 12:27 PM
5	Nothing	3/18/2025 11:47 AM
6	I don't like it	3/18/2025 8:18 AM
7	It is a scheme to industrialise precious farmland and line the pockets of the company executives	3/17/2025 6:22 PM
8	Absolutely nothing - solar does not belong on productive arable land	3/17/2025 10:48 AM
9	It is clear that the sustainability message is front of mind. The method of achieving this however is fundamentally flawed	3/15/2025 9:17 PM
10	Honestly, nothing.	3/13/2025 11:11 PM
11	Nothing	3/7/2025 7:35 PM
12	I think the project is in the wrong location.	2/27/2025 9:51 PM

Q7 From what you've read about Westfield Energy Conservation Park, can you tell us if you have any concerns or questions about the project? We'll answer as many questions as we can at www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com once all the consultation events have taken place.

Answered: 12 Skipped: 4

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The site is very undulating which means that the site will be seen from a long way around. Solar should be concentrated on flat parcels of land, where they can be landscaped more easily. The site will totally change the character of the open, unspoilt area which does include some (possibly ancient) woodland. As a representative of a local council, we feel that this has happened very quickly and we would prefer a longer consultation period so we can collect the wider views of our parishioners.	4/22/2025 11:34 AM
2	None	4/22/2025 11:30 AM
3	Don't build it	4/22/2025 11:29 AM
4	We are losing too much agricultural land to both solar and rewilding. New build roofs, industrial and agricultural building roof solar panels should be made mandatory. I have concerns about the ungreen manufacture, limited lifespan and pollution caused by used panels. We need regenerative farming and windmills	3/20/2025 12:27 PM
5	You are ruining good farmland & supporting slave labour overseas	3/18/2025 11:47 AM
6	The proposed site is one of the most beautiful parts of North Hertfordshire. The solar farm will ruin this area for current residents, visitors and generations to come	3/18/2025 8:18 AM
7	What will you do to support wildlife when the land is covered in panels?	3/17/2025 6:22 PM
8	Why industrialise the countryside when there are brown girls sites available? Why take farmland when we need to reduce imports of food to become more self sufficient and reduce transport which itself massively contributes to global warming?	3/17/2025 8:35 AM
9	What are you really doing to help the local community. It seems that you're deliberately exploiting the natural balance of the region in order to obtain money from tax payers, whilst veiled in ticking the boxes of national sustainability objectives	3/15/2025 9:17 PM
10	Do solar panels on farmland reduce soil fertility over time, making it harder to return the land to agricultural use in the future? 12. Are there better alternatives, such as installing solar panels on rooftops and brownfield sites, rather than using productive farmland? 8. Could the large-scale development of solar farms in rural locations lead to the industrialization of the countryside, changing its character and purpose?	3/13/2025 11:11 PM
11	Solar panels should be mandatory on all new build houses and warehouses and retrofitted to existing warehouses. In France supermarket car parks have solar panels - why not here?	3/7/2025 7:35 PM
12	Visual impact, loss of good quality agricultural land, solar farms can be better located on the built environment and in industrial settings.	2/27/2025 9:51 PM

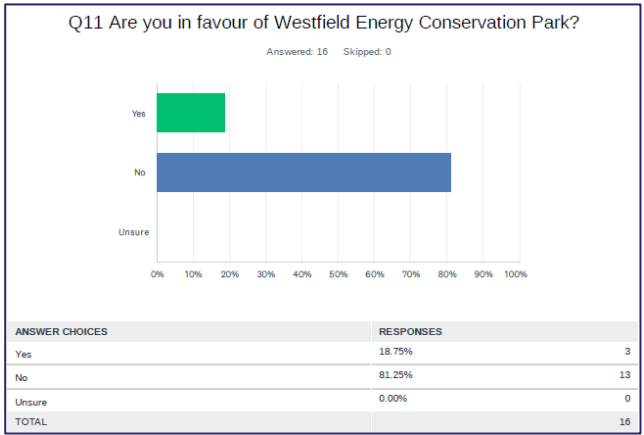
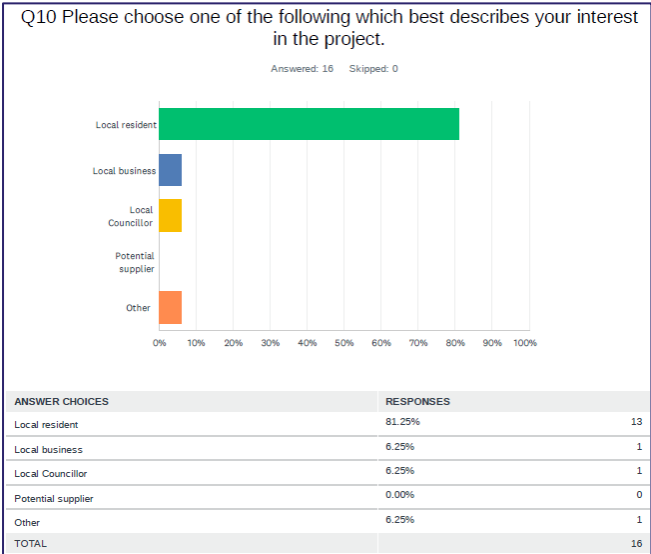
Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement



Q9 So we understand where feedback is coming from, please give us the first section of your postcode e.g. GU10.

Answered: 15 Skipped: 1

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	SG4	4/22/2025 11:34 AM
2	SG4	4/22/2025 11:30 AM
3	SG9 9QE	4/22/2025 11:29 AM
4	SG9 OTB	3/20/2025 12:27 PM
5	Sg2	3/18/2025 11:47 AM
6	SG90SG	3/18/2025 8:18 AM
7	SG9	3/17/2025 1:18 PM
8	SG9	3/17/2025 10:48 AM
9	SG9	3/17/2025 8:35 AM
10	Sg9	3/15/2025 9:17 PM
11	Sg4	3/13/2025 11:11 PM
12	SG4	3/7/2025 7:35 PM
13	SG14	2/28/2025 7:08 PM
14	PO35	2/27/2025 9:51 PM
15	Sg8	2/27/2025 3:36 PM



Appendix M: New Sign-up Link Email

Westfield Energy Conservation Park webinar

F

info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Mon, Mar 24, 6:08 PM

Good afternoon [redacted]

We hope this email finds you well.

We are writing to inform you that we have had to update the [registration link](#) to the Westfield Energy Conservation Park webinar, to be held tomorrow (Tuesday 25th March 2025). As you had already registered to attend the webinar, we have re-registered you using the name and email address provided. You should have received an email with your updated joining link.

Please do not hesitate to let us know if you have any questions or trouble accessing the webinar tomorrow.

Kind regards,
Lucy

Westfield Energy Conservation Park Community Relations Team
T: 0808 168 7888
E: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEPOST Sweetbriar Energy Park
www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Lucy

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix N Elected Representatives' Consultation Closing Email



Wednesday 26 March 2025

Dear Mr Chris Hinchliff MP,

Westfield Energy Conservation Park Consultation draws to a close

The community consultation on Lightrock Power's proposed wildlife friendly Energy Conservation Park will close on **Friday 28 March 2025**. This consultation has provided an opportunity to introduce the proposals to the community and gather valuable feedback.

Next Steps

Lightrock Power is committed to developing a strong set of proposals that are sensitive to and respect the concerns of the local community. As such, we will carefully review all feedback received during the consultation before finalising our plans and submitting a planning application.

Once the proposals have been finalised, we will get back in touch with a summary of changes made post-consultation.

Contact Us

In the meantime, you can find information about the current proposals on our project website: www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com. The site also includes the information boards displayed at our in-person exhibition, a recording of our online webinar, and answers to questions that we've been asked throughout the consultation period.

Should you have any further questions about Westfield Energy Conservation Park, please do not hesitate to contact our community relations team by calling **0808 168 7888** (9am-5pm; Mon-Fri), or sending an email to info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com. You can also write to us at **FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park**.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

Fiona Wojciechowski
Community Stakeholder Manager
Lightrock Power

To get in touch with the Community Relations team:

T: 0808 168 7888
E: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park
www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Appendix O: Webinar Recording and Q&A Update Email

Westfield Energy Conservation Park Community Webinar

 info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

to [redacted] Fri, Mar 28, 10:06 AM

Good morning,

We hope this email finds you well.

We are writing to inform you that the recording of our community webinar for Westfield Energy Conservation Park, and exhibition boards presented during this time, have been uploaded to our project dedicated website. Please click the following link to view the exhibition and/or webinar: <https://www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com/>

In addition to this, we have updated our Frequently Asked Questions to include questions that have been submitted to us during the webinar. Please click the following link to view the updated Q&A: <https://www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com/faq>

Thank you again for registering to attend our community webinar. Please do not hesitate to reach out should you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Lucy

Westfield Energy Conservation Park Community Relations Team
T: 0808 168 7888
E: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEPOST Westfield Energy Park
www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix P: Post Consultation Update Postcard



Westfield Energy Conservation Park

Thank you for your contribution to our pre-application community consultation

We're grateful for the wide response, with 68 attendees at our public exhibition and 16 surveys returned, as well as a successful webinar, and several calls, emails, and home visits.

Lightrock Power are committed to developing a strong set of proposals that are sensitive to, and respect the concerns of, local communities. Following the consultation, we took the decision to delay the submission of our planning application so that we could thoroughly investigate the suggestions that you have provided. We now hope to submit during the Summer.

Some of the key themes that are being investigated further are:

- Location of infrastructure within the Site
- Noise
- Connectivity of public rights of way
- Visual impact
- Further habitat enhancement, including for the local deer population
- Site access

While the consultation has now closed, we are still here and can be contacted on the details below

 info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

 FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park

 0808 168 7888 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm)

 www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com



Westfield Energy Conservation Park: Statement of Community Involvement

Appendix Q. Elected Representatives and Mailing List Post Consultation Update Email

Update on Westfield Energy Conservation Park at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green

F

info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com

Mon, Jun 30, 12:22 PM (3 days ago)

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for registering your interest in Westfield Energy Conservation Park.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to our pre-application community consultation for the proposed Westfield Energy Conservation Park at Munches Farm, Cumberlow Green.

We greatly appreciate the level of engagement from the local community. A total of 68 people attended our public exhibition, and we received 16 completed surveys. In addition to this, many residents participated through our webinar, shared their views via calls and emails, and home visits. This wide range of input has been valuable in helping us understand local priorities and concerns.

At Lightrock Power, we are committed to developing a strong set of proposals that are sensitive to, and respect the concerns of local communities. In line with this commitment, and in response to the feedback received, we made the decision to delay the submission of our planning application. This additional time means we could thoroughly investigate the feedback and suggestions that you have provided. We now hope to submit our application during the summer.

Some of the key themes currently being explored in greater detail include:

- Location of infrastructure within the Site;
- Noise;
- Connectivity of public rights of way;
- Visual impact;
- Further habitat enhancement, including for the local deer population; and
- Site access.

Although the formal consultation period has closed, we want to reassure you that our communication channels remain open. If you have any further questions or require additional information, our community relations team is still available and can be contacted via the details below.

- Email: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
- Call: **0808 168 7888** (9am-5pm; Mon-Fri)
- Write to: **FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park** (no stamp required)

Thank you again for your engagement.

Fiona Wojciechowski
Community Stakeholder Manager
Lightrock Power

Westfield Energy Conservation Park
T: 0808 168 7888
E: info@westfieldenergyconservationpark.com
FREEPOST Westfield Energy Conservation Park
www.westfieldenergyconservationpark.com