

What are the benefits of the Solar Farm?

- The proposed solar farm will deliver significant benefits through the generation of renewable energy for the direct use of Essex & Suffolk Hanningfield Water Treatment Works which provides clean water to the whole of the Chelmsford area and which cleans 225 million litres of water everyday.
- 7.2MW of renewable energy will be produced by the solar farm. The balance of 2MW generated will be used by a local farm business.
- The treatment works use 15GWhs of electricity each year. The solar array will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the treatment works by 1700tCO₂e. For comparison an average UK household emits 2.7tonnes of CO₂ every year.
- Essex & Suffolk Water as an organisation are committed to the delivery of ecological benefits to provide a net gain to biodiversity, achieved through a robust biodiversity management plan to complement the companies position as an environmental steward.
- Ecology management principles i.e. particular woodlands, bird habitat, Dormouse, GCN etc, will be employed to build upon the known bio-diversity bird habitat.
- New hedgerow planting is proposed to contain and screen the proposed solar arrays from the surroundings.

Does planning policy support Solar Farms?

The UK Government strongly supports the deployment of renewable energy.

National Planning Policy (NPPF paragraph 154) states “When determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon development, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions.”