



# Arrow Valley Solar

Salford Priors Parish Council Public Meeting

Understanding the Scheme and the Planning Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion

03rd June 2026

# What Is Arrow Valley Solar?



**Up to 500 MW**

Ground-mounted solar PV generating station with battery energy storage, enough to power around 115,000 homes



**South Warwickshire  
& East Worcestershire**

Approximately 2,600 acres across four main sites, ~4 km south-west of Alcester



**Nationally Significant  
Infrastructure Project**

Requires a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008

# The Scheme in Detail

## Solar Arrays

Ground-mounted photovoltaic panels across four main sites, with environmental buffers around hedgerows, trees and watercourses

## Battery Storage

New Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) to store and release energy when demand is highest

## Grid Connection

Underground cable route linking solar sites to the National Grid at Feckenham Substation — no pylons

## Key Figures

**500 MW**

Maximum generating capacity

**115,000**

Homes powered per year

**255,500 t**

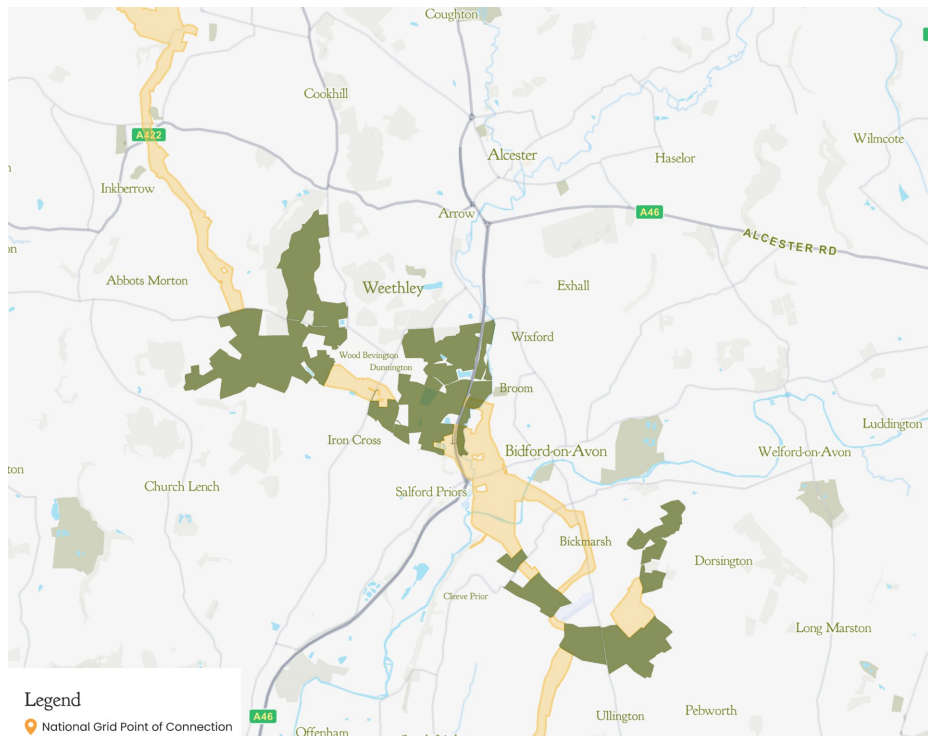
Carbon saved per year

**2,600**

Acres of project area

*Three local planning authorities: Stratford-on-Avon DC, Redditch BC, and Wychavon DC*

# Project Area



## Location

Approximately 4 km south-west of Alcester, spanning four main sites across South Warwickshire and East Worcestershire

## Nearby Villages

**Dunnington**, Salford Priors, **Wood Bevington**, **Broom**, Bidford-on-Avon, Arrow, **Weethley**, **Wixford**, Abbots Morton.

## Planning Authorities

- Stratford-on-Avon District Council
- Redditch Borough Council
- Wychavon District Council

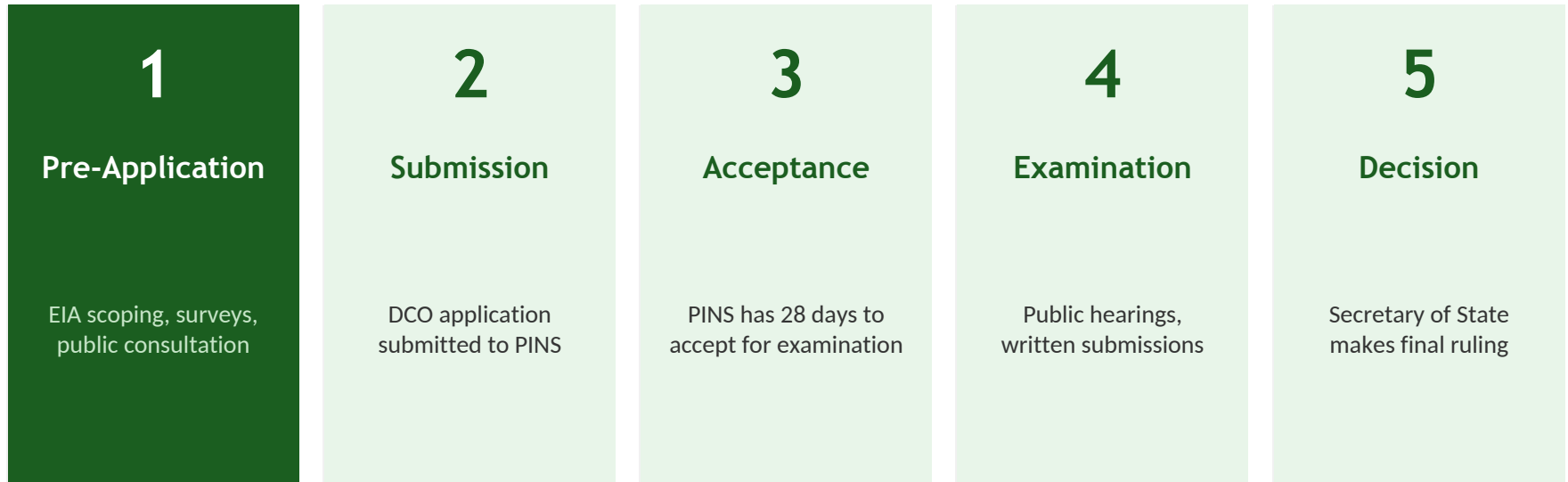
## ~2,600 acres

Total project area across four main sites, with underground cable route to Feckenham Substation

*Grid connection via underground cables only — no pylons. Landowners will still be able to graze livestock in panel fields.*

# How the Planning Process Works

As a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP), Arrow Valley Solar requires a Development Consent Order (DCO) under the Planning Act 2008. The final decision rests with the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero.



We are here

# NSIP vs Ordinary Planning Application

## Ordinary Planning Application

- Decided by the **Local Planning Authority** (district or borough council)
- Governed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1990
- For smaller-scale developments (typically solar farms under 50 MW)
- Decided against local plan policies and NPPF
- Councillors on the planning committee vote to approve or refuse
- Appeals heard by a Planning Inspector

## NSIP (Arrow Valley Solar)

- Decided by the **Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero**
- Governed by the Planning Act 2008 — requires a Development Consent Order (DCO)
- For major energy projects over 50 MW (Arrow Valley is up to 500 MW)
- Assessed against National Policy Statements, but local plans must also be considered
- PINS examines the application and recommends; Secretary of State takes the final decision
- Mandatory EIA, statutory consultation, and public examination

**Role of the Secretary of State:** The Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero has the sole power to grant or refuse a DCO for nationally significant energy projects. PINS conducts the examination and makes a recommendation, but the Secretary of State takes the final decision, weighing national energy policy against local environmental and community impacts. Local councils, parish councils and residents can all participate in the examination process.

# The EIA Scoping Report

Arrow Valley Solar submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report to PINS in March 2026, setting out the proposed scope of the Environmental Statement that will accompany the DCO application.

## Topics Proposed for Assessment





- Landscape and visual impact
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Cultural heritage and archaeology
- Transport and access
- Flood risk and drainage
- Noise and vibration
- Agricultural land quality
- Socio-economic effects

Parish councils and Statutory Consultees were invited to submit responses to PINS highlighting any topics or concerns they felt were missing from the scoping report.

# PINS Scoping Opinion

Published 7 May 2026

The Planning Inspectorate reviewed the EIA Scoping Report and issued its Scoping Opinion, setting out what must be covered in the Environmental Statement. Key requirements include:

-  **Expanded Environmental Scope** PINS may require the applicant to assess additional topics beyond those proposed in the scoping report, including cumulative impacts with other solar and grid schemes
-  **Landscape & Visual Assessment** Detailed assessment of visual harm to nearby villages including Salford Priors, Bidford, Wixford, Dunnington and Cleeve Priors
-  **Agricultural Land** Proper evaluation of impacts on Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, consistent with the NPPF
-  **Heritage & Ecology** Setting impacts on heritage assets (designated and non-designated) and ecological fragmentation must be fully assessed

*Reference: EN0110033 — full Scoping Opinion available on the PINS website*

# Key Positives for the Parish Council

The PINS Scoping Opinion validates SPPC's formal representations and strengthens the community's position at every future stage.

## Salford Seven NDP Recognised

PINS explicitly instructs the applicant to consider the Salford Seven Neighbourhood Development Plan. This is a major procedural success — local policy weight is now formally embedded in the EIA process.

## Full Baseline Surveys Required

PINS rejects desk-based assumptions and requires full ecological surveys (bats, GCN, birds, otter, water vole), detailed agricultural land classification, landscape photography, and hydrological assessments.

## Landscape Assessment Strengthened

Worst-case parameters for panel height and infrastructure, clear viewpoint and receptor analysis, and full cumulative assessment with other solar and grid schemes — directly aligned with SPPC's concerns about rural character.

## Water & Flood Risk Protected

PINS refuses to scope out surface water, groundwater, WFD compliance, flood defence impacts, and water demand during construction — matching SPPC's concerns on drainage, HDD drilling and watercourse disturbance.

## BMV Agricultural Land

PINS requires detailed mapping and justification for the loss of Best and Most Versatile farmland, supporting SPPC's emphasis on food production and the rural economy.

## Health, PRow & Recreation

Full assessment of community wellbeing, PRow impacts, tourism, recreation, noise, dust and construction disturbance — directly reflecting SPPC's concerns about community impact and rural amenity.

# Community Concerns Raised

The Parish council has raised significant concerns in it's formal responses to PINS:

## Landscape & Rural Character

Industrialisation of open countryside on an unprecedented scale, fundamentally changing the rural landscape

## Agricultural Land Loss

Loss of Best and Most Versatile farmland, contrary to NPPF and local core strategy policies

## Public Rights of Way

Impact on footpaths, leisure trails, tranquillity, dark skies and the enjoyment of the countryside

## Heritage Settings

Harm to the setting of both designated and non-designated heritage assets in the local area

## Wildlife & Ecology

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust flagged risk of significant adverse effects on wildlife and habitat fragmentation

## Community Wellbeing

Concerns about residential amenity, mental health impacts, glint and glare, traffic and construction disturbance

# The Developer's Visual Proposal vs Reality

Developers often present idealised CGI renders of solar farms with sheep grazing peacefully under panels. The reality of large-scale industrial solar installations can look very different.

## What They Show You



## What It Could Actually Look Like



*The developer claims “landowners will still be able to graze livestock in panel fields” — but large-scale solar installations typically feature security fencing, CCTV, industrial infrastructure and bare ground beneath panels.*

# The Visual Landscape vs Reality

Developers often present renders of solar farms with sheep grazing peacefully under panels. The reality of large-scale industrial solar installations can look very different on the landscape.

## What it looks like in 2026



## What It Could Actually Look Like in 2032



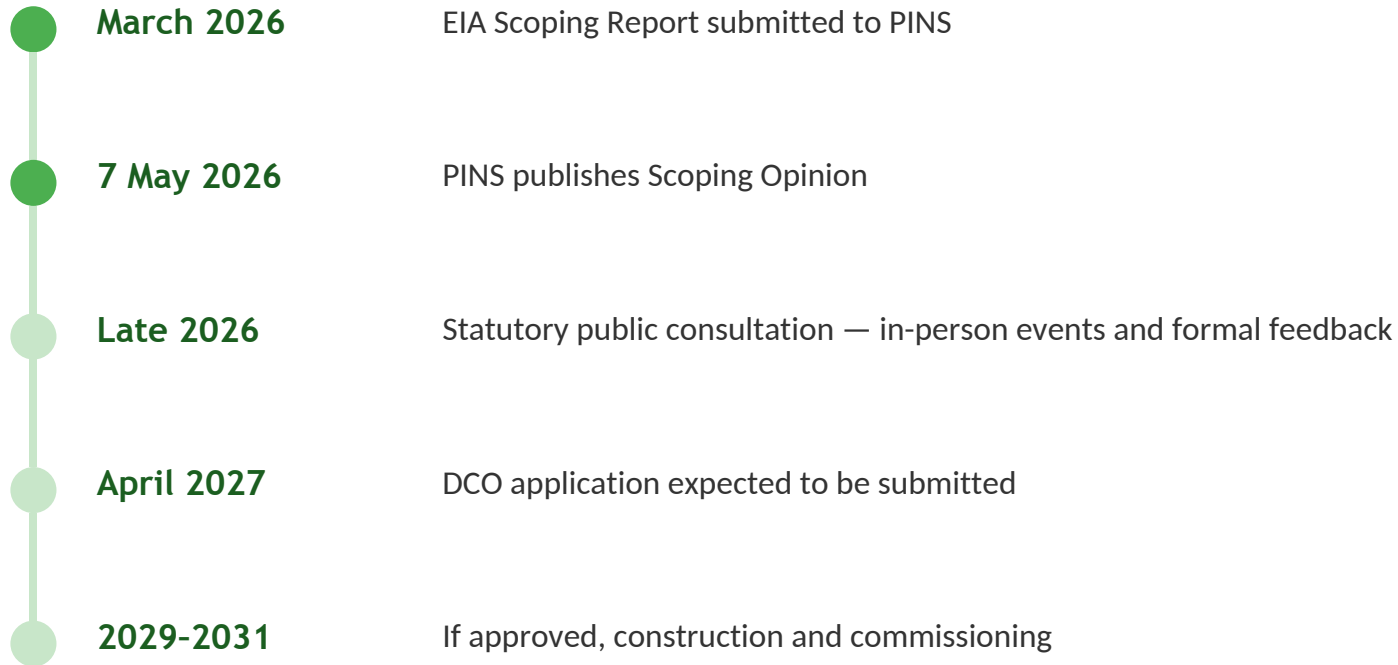
*The developer claims “landowners will still be able to graze livestock in panel fields” — but large-scale solar installations typically feature security fencing, CCTV, industrial infrastructure and bare ground beneath panels.*

# Parish Council Concerns vs PINS Requirements

PINS has addressed almost all of SPPC's concerns and required the applicant to undertake the detailed assessments the Parish Council argued were missing.

Topic	SPPC Concern	PINS Response	Alignment
Landscape & Visual	Underestimation of harm, cumulative effects not assessed	Full LVIA + cumulative assessment required	Strong
Ecology	Lack of ecological surveys	Full surveys required (bats, GCN, birds, otter, water vole)	Strong
Water & Flooding	Hydrology, HDD drilling, drainage concerns	Full assessment required inc. WFD compliance	Strong
Agriculture	Loss of Best and Most Versatile land	Detailed mapping and justification required	Strong
PRoW & Wellbeing	Loss of amenity, tranquillity, dark skies	Full assessment of PRoW, recreation, health required	Strong
Traffic & Construction	AIL routes, dust, noise disturbance	Full assessment of transport and construction impacts	Strong
Glint & Glare	Impacts on residents and roads	Full glint and glare assessment required	Strong
Policy Compliance	Salford Seven NDP ignored	NDP must be included in assessment	Very Strong

# Timeline and Next Steps



The statutory consultation later this year is the key opportunity for residents to formally shape the final proposals.

# Specialist Consultant Appointments

The Arrow Valley Solar Working Group recommends appointing specialist consultants to ensure robust, evidence-led submissions throughout the Examination process. A collaborative funding model across neighbouring parish councils is proposed.

Specialist	Purpose	Day Rate
Environmental / EIA Consultant	Coordinate technical review of Environmental Statement and PINS compliance; hydrology and flood risk	£600-£750
Agri-Economy / Agricultural Land	Review BMV impacts, rural economy effects, soil resource assessment	£500-£700
Landscape & Visual (LVIA)	LVIA review and cumulative landscape assessment	£600-£750
Public Health Consultant	Human health and wellbeing impacts, recreation access, community amenity	£500-£700
BESS / Fire Safety Specialist	Battery storage risk review, thermal runaway, emergency planning	£600-£750

## Proposed Funding Approach

Shared commissioning across Salford Priors, Abbots Morton, Bidford-on-Avon, Arrow with Wheethly, and Wixford parish councils, supplemented by community crowdfunding. This reduces costs per council while strengthening the coordinated evidence base.

**Immediate priorities:** Establish inter-parish working group • Obtain consultant quotations • Prioritise EIA, landscape, agriculture and BESS review • Launch community fundraising

# We Want to Hear Your Views

This is your opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns and share your perspective on the Arrow Valley Solar proposal.

Salford Priors Parish Council has established the

## Arrow Valley Solar Working Group

to coordinate the community's response to this nationally significant infrastructure project

Contact the Working Group

[avsg@salfordpriors.gov.uk](mailto:avsg@salfordpriors.gov.uk)

What matters most to you? • What impacts are you concerned about?  
How can the Working Group best represent your interests?  
Would you support community crowdfunding for specialist consultants?



# Have Your Say

Your feedback matters. Here's how to get involved:

**Planning Inspectorate**

[ArrowValleySolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:ArrowValleySolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

**PINS telephone**

0303 444 5000 (Mon–Fri, 9am–4pm)

**Developer website**

[arrowvalleysolar.co.uk](http://arrowvalleysolar.co.uk)

**Register for updates**

Via the PINS project page (ref. EN0110033)

Attend the statutory public consultation events later in 2026 to speak directly with the project team.