

Planning Application for Ground-Mounted Solar Panels - Landscaping details

1. Introduction

This planning application seeks approval for the installation of a ground-mounted solar panel system at 3 Nock Verges, Earl Shilton, LE9 7DY. The project aims to harness renewable energy while integrating seamlessly into the landscape and enhancing local biodiversity.

2. Site Description

The site is located at 3 Nock Verges, Earl Shilton, LE9 7DY. The land is currently unused with low agricultural value. It is situated in a rural setting characterised by open fields, minimal development, and existing natural features such as hedgerows and scattered trees.

3. Proposed Development

- **Solar Panel Array:** The development will consist of 42 solar panels arranged in rows to optimise solar exposure.
- **Mounting Structures:** Panels will be mounted on durable, non-reflective frames not exceeding 4 meters.
- **Inverters and Transformers:** Required electrical equipment will be housed in weatherproof, acoustically shielded enclosures to minimise noise impact.

4. Landscaping Details

To ensure the proposed development blends harmoniously with its surroundings and enhances the local environment, the following landscaping measures will be implemented:

- **Visual Screening:**
 - **Hedgerows:** Existing hedgerows around the site perimeter will be maintained and supplemented with native species such as hawthorn, blackthorn, and hazel to enhance screening.
- **Biodiversity Enhancement:**
 - **Wildflower Meadows:** Areas between and around the solar panel arrays will be seeded with native wildflower mixes to promote biodiversity and support pollinators.
 - **Habitat Creation:** Installation of bird boxes in existing trees and new structures to support local wildlife.
 - **Grassland Management:** Regular, environmentally sensitive mowing to maintain the meadows and prevent overgrowth while preserving habitat for ground-nesting birds and insects.

5. Access and Transport

- **Operational Phase:** Post-construction, access requirements will be minimal, limited to occasional maintenance visits. Existing pathways will be used to avoid further land disturbance.

6. Environmental Impact

The solar panel system will significantly reduce carbon emissions by providing clean, renewable energy. The project will contribute to local and national renewable energy targets and support climate change mitigation efforts.

8. Conclusion

The proposed ground-mounted solar panel system is a well-considered development that balances efficient energy production with environmental enhancement and community engagement. The landscaping measures outlined will ensure the project integrates seamlessly into the rural setting, providing ecological and visual benefits.

We respectfully request the planning authority to grant approval for this application, recognising the significant contributions to renewable energy generation and environmental stewardship.