

# Welcome

Thank you for visiting  
our public exhibition about  
Springwell Solar Farm.

Springwell Solar Farm is a proposed new solar farm with battery storage that has the potential to supply enough clean, secure electricity to power over 180,000 homes each year\*.

The feedback we received at our consultation in 2023, along with the outputs of early environmental assessments and technical work, has helped to shape the updated proposals we are now presenting for consultation.

Consultation is running between **Thursday 11 January and 11:59pm on Thursday 22 February 2024.**

This exhibition includes information about our updated plans and proposals for Springwell – including an illustrative layout of Springwell during operation, the planning process and the different ways you can get involved and share your views.

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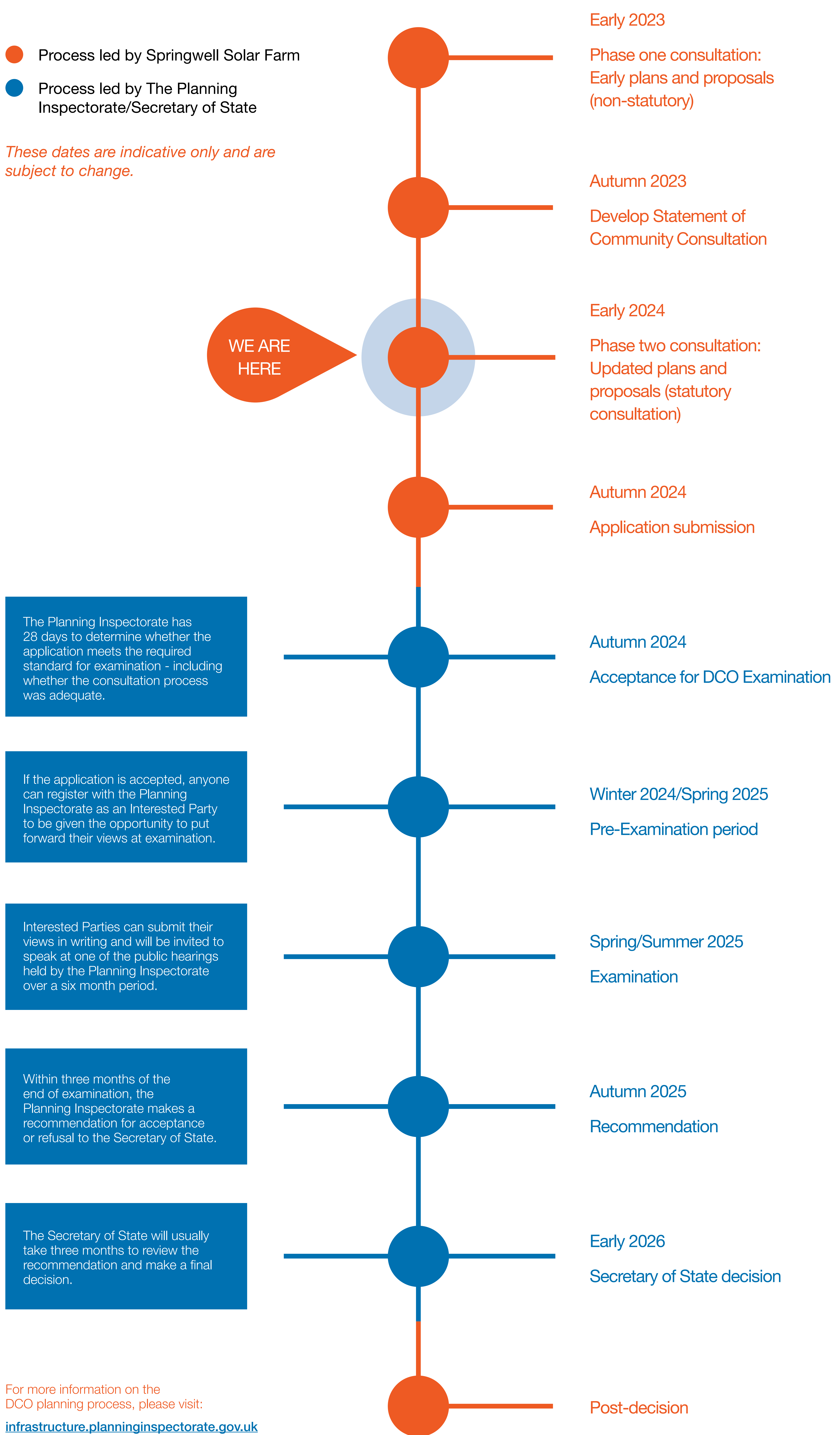
\*Based upon the average domestic electricity consumption per home (temperature corrected) per the Energy Consumption in the UK (published September 2021, Table C9 of ECUK: Consumption data tables)





# The consenting process

Springwell Solar Farm is classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) because it would have a generating capacity above 50 megawatts (MW).





## Springwell Solar Farm

We have refined our plans since the phase one consultation.

The proposed locations for the different parts of Springwell have been informed by feedback from the phase one consultation, ongoing technical work and the outputs of early environmental assessments. Springwell would be made up of the following proposed core elements:



### Areas for mitigation, enhancement or retained for agricultural use

- Areas not proposed for development would be managed for mitigation, ecological enhancement or retained for agricultural use.
- These areas now make up 58% of the total site.



### Permissive footpaths

- Up to 8.6km of footpaths are proposed to connect up different villages and existing Public Rights of Way in and around the Springwell site.



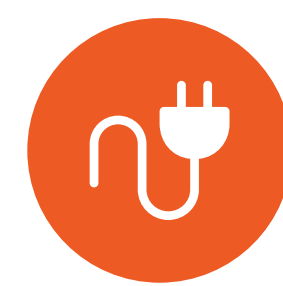
### New planting

- New trees and hedgerows are proposed to help screen views of Springwell and increase biodiversity.
- Opportunities to reinforce and extend existing hedgerows around the site.



### Safety and security

- Most of Springwell would have mesh fencing with wooden posts around fields with solar panels.
- This would be up to 3m high and include mammal gates for animals to travel between fields.
- There would be secure perimeter fencing around the battery storage and the Springwell substation.
- Fixed view (into the site) CCTV mounted on wooden posts is also proposed.



### Cables

- These would be laid underground to connect different parts of Springwell.
- Underground cabling would also connect Springwell to the National Grid.



### Solar panels

- These would be predominantly 3.5m high, and up to 4m in limited areas.
- The size of the area proposed for solar panels has reduced since we last consulted.



### Battery storage

- These would be up to 3m high with some associated electrical plant being up to 6m.
- The units would be painted dark green, grey or similar.
- The potential location of the battery storage has been refined to two 'siting zones' (reduced from the four considered in our early proposals).



### Collector compounds

- These would be up to 6m high, with one satellite compound east in Springwell West, Central and East and a main collector compound adjacent to the Springwell substation.



### Springwell substation

- Parts of the Springwell substation would be up to 12m high, with control buildings (including office, welfare and storage facilities) up to 6m high.
- This would be located in the northern part of Springwell West.





# Environmental considerations

Understanding how Springwell could affect the environment is an important part of the development process.

An Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) will assess the potential effects, both positive and negative, that Springwell could have on the environment over its lifetime. This process helps us to identify how to best reduce the potential environmental effects of Springwell Solar Farm. Where potentially significant adverse effects have been identified by our early assessments, we will develop measures to avoid, reduce, mitigate or offset these effects.

Early environmental assessments have already helped shape our proposals for building and operating Springwell. These are summarised in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) as part of this consultation.

Feedback from this consultation, along with ongoing environmental assessments and technical work will help to further refine our proposals. This includes identifying appropriate mitigation measures that could avoid, reduce, mitigate or offset any potentially significant negative effects that we have identified in the PEIR.

The final results of these assessments will be presented in an Environmental Statement which will accompany our DCO application.

## What is a significant effect?

When an effect is identified, we need to understand how much of an impact it would have on the surrounding environment. This is done by assessing its 'significance', which looks at both the scale of change caused by an effect and the sensitivity of the thing it would change.





# Springwell West

We are proposing solar panels for around half of Springwell West. The battery storage, Springwell substation and main collector compound are also proposed in this area.

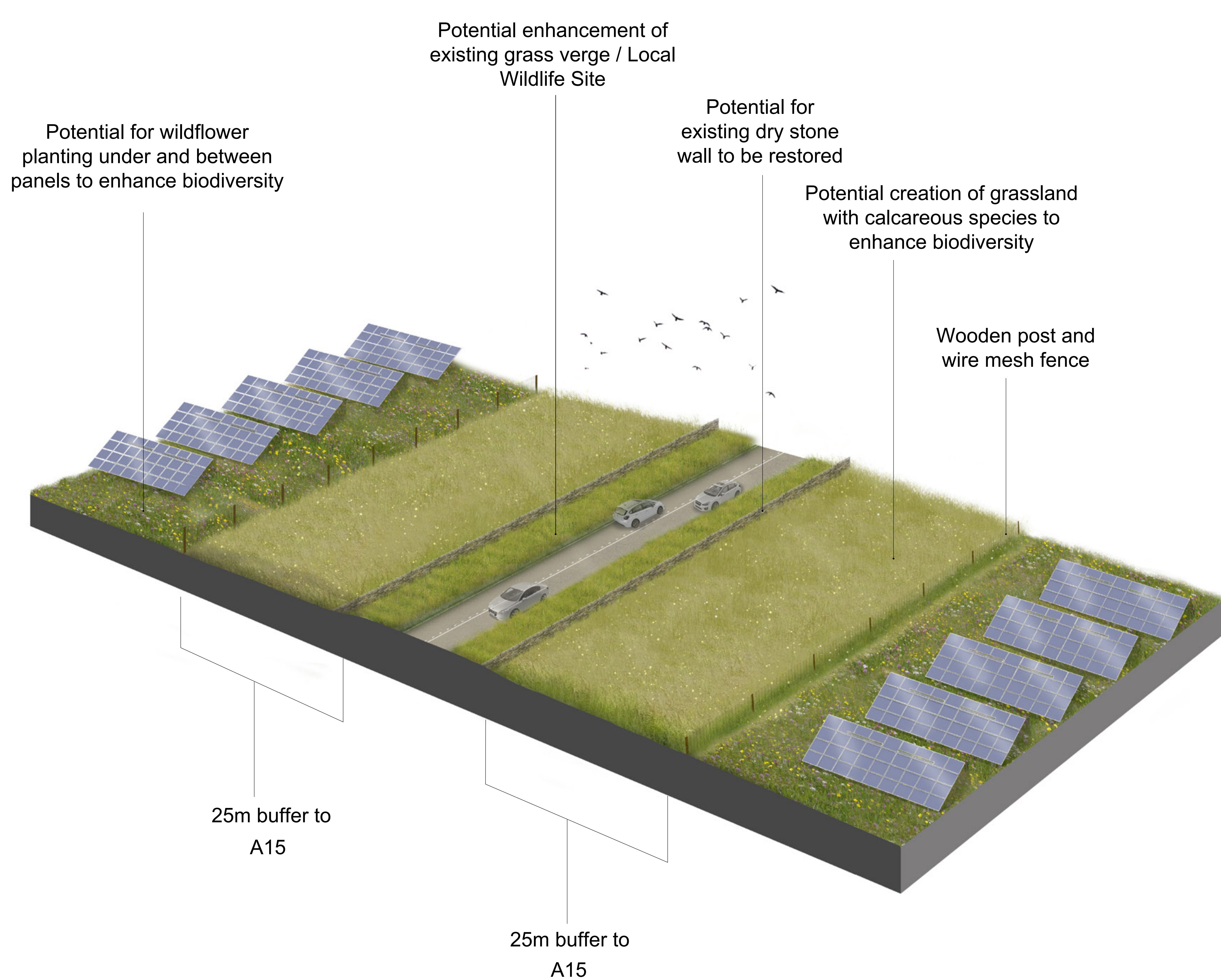
Some parts of Springwell West would be used for underground cabling to connect the different areas of Springwell together and into the National Grid. The areas above the cabling and other parts of Springwell West would be managed for mitigation, ecological enhancements or retained for agricultural use.

## Updates to our proposals for Springwell West:

- Fewer solar panels are proposed in this area than at the last stage of consultation.
- Solar panels have been set back from residential properties.
- Breaks in solar panels have been introduced along the A15.
- We have developed initial ideas for planting along the north of Heath Road and along the Public Right of Way to Bloxholm Wood.
- We have included a proposed new permissive footpath connecting New England Lane to Brauncewell, connecting to Bloxholm Wood via a new footpath across the A15.
- We have continued to work with National Grid to understand its preference for the location of this new substation (into which Springwell would connect). This substation will be developed separately by National Grid and is no longer part of the Springwell proposals.

## Ongoing work required:

- Refine the location of the battery storage, as well as the exact location of the Springwell substation within Springwell West.
- Develop mitigation to reduce potential noise from battery storage and solar panels.
- Refine the route of our underground cable to connect to the National Grid within the cable corridor we have identified.
- Develop proposals for planting to screen views where potentially significant visual effects have been identified.



Indicative visualisation of Springwell along part of the A15



# Springwell Central

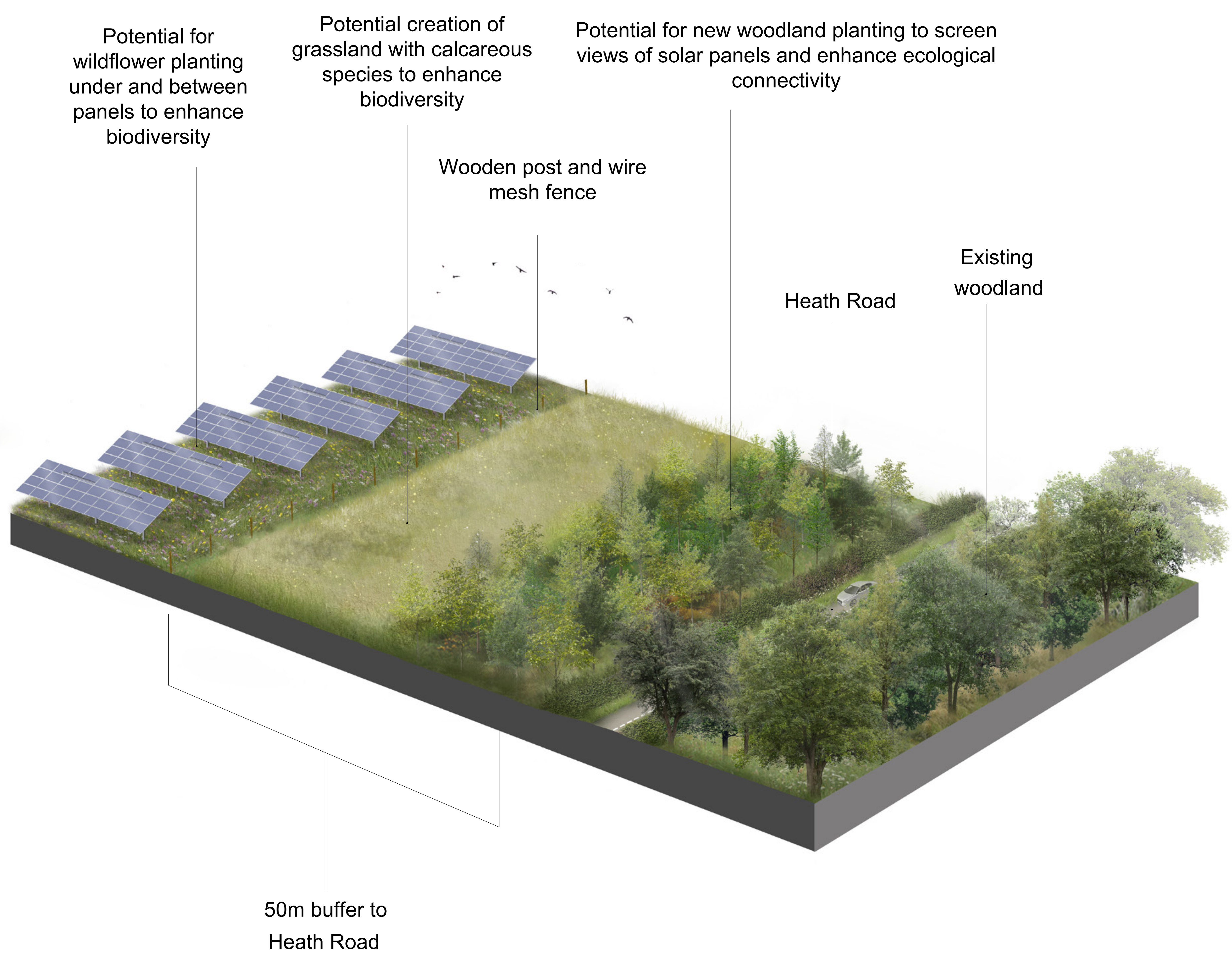
Around a third of Springwell Central is proposed for solar panels. There would also be some areas used for supporting infrastructure as well as cabling to connect different parts of the site together. The remainder of Springwell Central would be used for mitigation, ecological enhancements or retained for agricultural use.

## Updates to our proposals for Springwell Central:

- Fewer solar panels are proposed in this area than at the last stage of consultation.
- Solar panels have been set back from residential properties, RAF Digby, Ashby de la Launde and along Heath Road.
- We have developed initial ideas for planting to screen likely views of Springwell.
- We have included a new permissive footpath proposed from land near RAF Digby to Scopwick, connecting with the existing footpath to create a circular walking route.

## Ongoing work required:

- Continue to develop mitigation measures to avoid, reduce, mitigate or offset potentially significant visual effects in this area.



Indicative visualisation of Springwell along part of Heath Road



# Springwell East

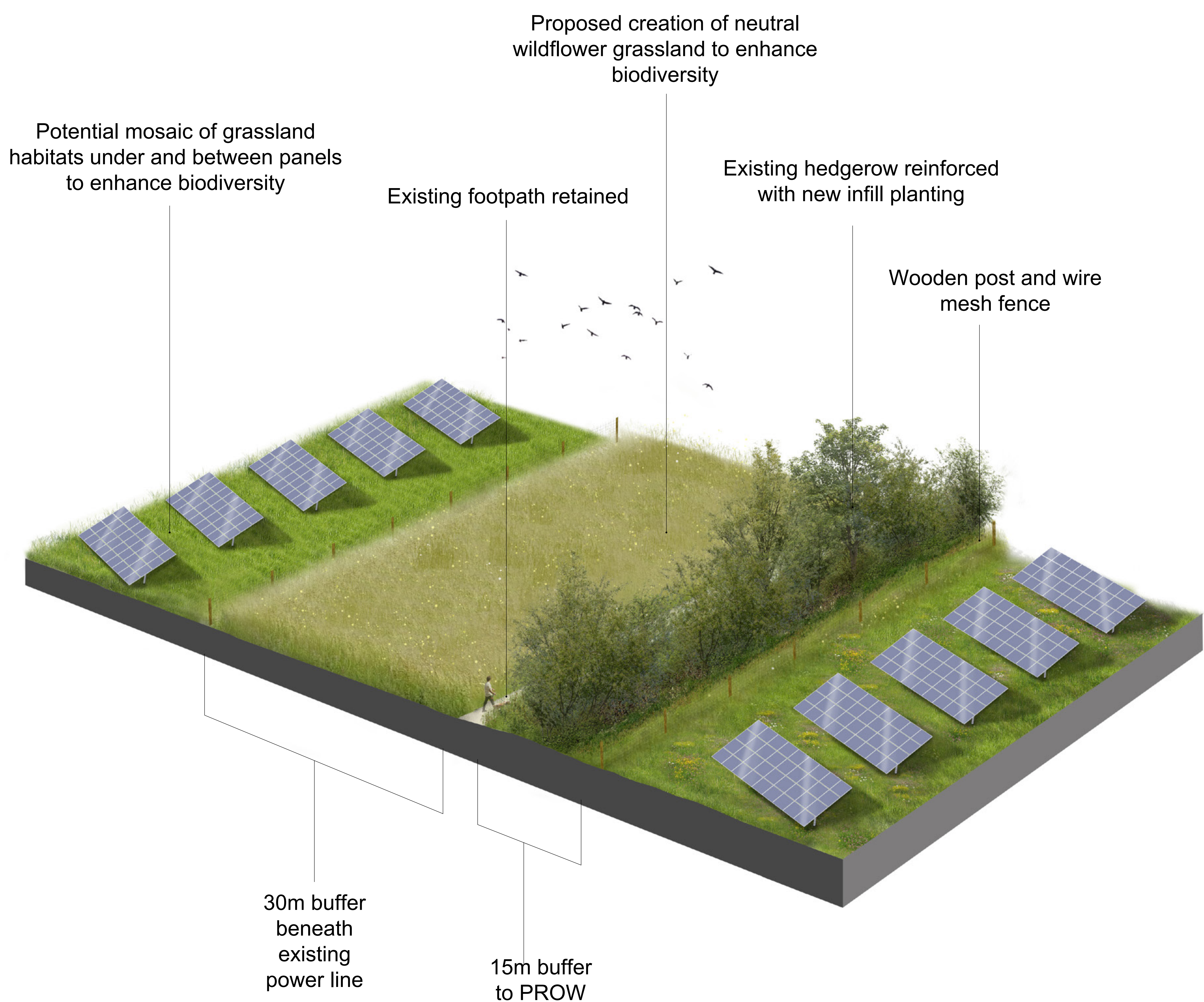
We are proposing to locate solar panels in Springwell East, along with supporting infrastructure and cabling to connect different parts of the site together. Most solar panels would be 3.5m high, with some areas along the railway line and to the northern part of Springwell East up to 4m high.

## Updates to our proposals for Springwell East:

- Fewer solar panels are proposed in this area than at the last stage of consultation, including areas with no panels along the footpath network to break up views.
- Solar panels have been set back from residential properties.
- Removal of solar panels in the field where the Lancaster plane crash memorial is located.
- We have developed initial ideas to screen views of solar panels, by extending existing hedgerows and introducing new planting.

## Ongoing work required:

- Continue to develop mitigation measures to avoid, reduce, mitigate or offset potentially significant visual effects in this area.



Indicative visualisation of Springwell along a public footpath



## Community benefit

Wherever we operate, we give something back to the local community.

All our onshore wind and solar sites in the UK have a dedicated community fund to spend on improvements in the local area.

A Springwell community fund would be put in place at the start of operation and last throughout Springwell's lifetime. It would be managed by an independent third party with the total amount of funding based on the final installed

capacity of Springwell. We are proposing to provide £400 per megawatt per year of operation.

More detail about our community fund will be available closer to the time of operation, should Springwell receive consent.

As part of our DCO application, we will identify how Springwell can contribute to local and regional jobs, community projects and the local economy over its lifetime.





# Building Springwell

Should Springwell be granted consent, construction on our main site is planned to start in 2026, with electricity expected to be exported to the National Grid from 2028. Some parts of the Springwell site would support its construction, with the following temporary works required:

- Temporary access tracks would link access points to the construction compounds and for travel within the site.
- Construction compounds would include areas for unloading materials and staff parking, storage areas, welfare facilities and offices. There would be up to three main construction compounds where materials and people would arrive, with up to six smaller satellite compounds located around the site.

We are also proposing some permanent road improvements to ensure safe access into the site. Early assessments have shown improvements to the Gorse Hill Lane/ A15 junction would be required for safe access to and from the Springwell substation.

The measures we will take to limit the potential effects of construction will be included in an Outline Construction Environmental Management Plan (oCEMP) which will be submitted as part of our DCO application.

## Moving materials

Construction vehicles would primarily travel to the site via the A15, utilising the B1191 to access Springwell Central and Springwell East. This route would avoid the use of local roads when moving the larger materials required for Springwell West.

A secondary one-way route (via the A15, onto the B1202 and then south along the B1188) is proposed for when the B1191 is unavailable (e.g. due to road works) and to avoid disrupting farm vehicles during harvest periods. Outbound traffic would travel via Bloxholm Lane, to the B1202 and back to the A15.

An Outline Construction Management Plan (oCTMP) will be submitted as part of the DCO application. It will include access routes, hours of delivery, measures to reduce disruption (e.g. wheel washing) and provisions for repairing any damage to roads and verges.

## Moving construction workers

At the very peak of construction, up to 600 staff would be on site each day. Staff would arrive and park at the main construction compounds, moving between different areas of the site using internal routes. Working hours would likely be between 7am-7pm Monday-Friday, and 7am-midday on Saturdays (no working on Sundays or bank holidays).

Sustainable transport will be encouraged, such as car sharing, to reduce vehicles travelling to site, or use of shuttle services. Proposed initiatives will be included in an outline Travel Plan that will be submitted as part of our DCO application.





## Connecting to the grid

**The National Grid transports large amounts of electricity around the country every day.**

Springwell has a grid connection agreement with National Grid which would allow us to export up to 800MW of electricity to this network, through a new substation that would be developed, owned and operated by National Grid. There would also be capacity to import power from the network.

At the previous stage of consultation, we showed this substation within the Springwell site. Since then, we have continued to work with National Grid to understand its preference for the location of this new substation (into which Springwell would connect). This substation will be developed separately by National Grid and is no longer part of the Springwell proposals.

We would connect into the new substation via an underground cable from the Springwell substation and have identified a corridor in the north

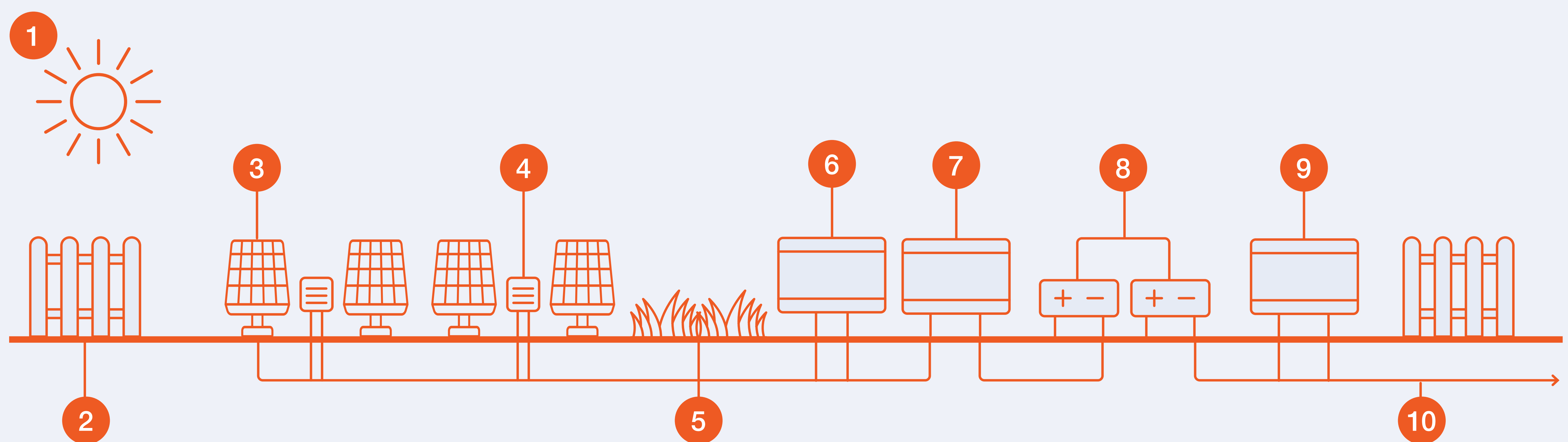
of Springwell West where this cable route could be located. Once the cable is laid, the land where the cable would be buried will be returned to agricultural use.

We are continuing to work with National Grid as it plans for the development of this substation progress.





## How does a solar farm work?



Not to scale and for indicative purposes only.

Solar farms use energy from **the sun ①** to generate electricity, supported by battery storage and a substation to feed the electricity into the National Grid. Solar farms are protected by **fencing ②** to keep the site secure.

The **solar panels ③** are set up in rows (known as 'strings'), connected to each other by cables to transfer the electricity generated by the panels to inverters.

**Inverters ④** are needed to convert the direct current (DC) electricity generated by the solar panels into alternating current (AC) electricity, which is suitable for use in homes and businesses.

Inverters can be located underneath the solar panels or in areas sometimes referred to as the 'Balance of Solar System'. The 'Balance of Solar System' also includes switchgears (which control the electrical equipment), and transformers (which 'step up' the voltage to the required level for sending to the solar farm substation).

**Collector compounds ⑥** can be used to reduce the amount of underground cabling needed by collecting electricity from a number of inverters.

**A project substation ⑦** receives all of the electricity, steps up the voltage and sends it to the **National Grid substation ⑨** to enter the electricity network.

**Battery storage ⑧** stores electricity at times when demand is lower and releases it to the National Grid when it is most needed.

**Cables ⑩** connect all the different parts of a solar farm together.



# Share your views

## Next steps

All responses must be received by the consultation deadline of 11:59pm on Thursday 22 February 2024.

We will consider all the feedback that we receive which will help us to refine our proposals ahead of submitting our DCO application. We anticipate this happening in Autumn 2024.

Our DCO application will include a Consultation Report setting out how we have had regard to the responses received during all stages of consultation.

## How to respond

- Complete an online questionnaire at: [www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk](http://www.springwellsolarfarm.co.uk)
- Submit your comments or completed questionnaire by email to: [info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk](mailto:info@springwellsolarfarm.co.uk)
- Post this questionnaire or submit your comments (no stamp required) to:

**Springwell Solar Farm**  
**FREEPOST SEC Newgate UK**  
**LOCAL**

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## Get in touch

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