WHITESTONE
solar farm

WHITESTONE SOLAR FARM

Volume 5: Reports and Statements

5.1 Consultation Report Appendix H Engagement after Statutory Consultation

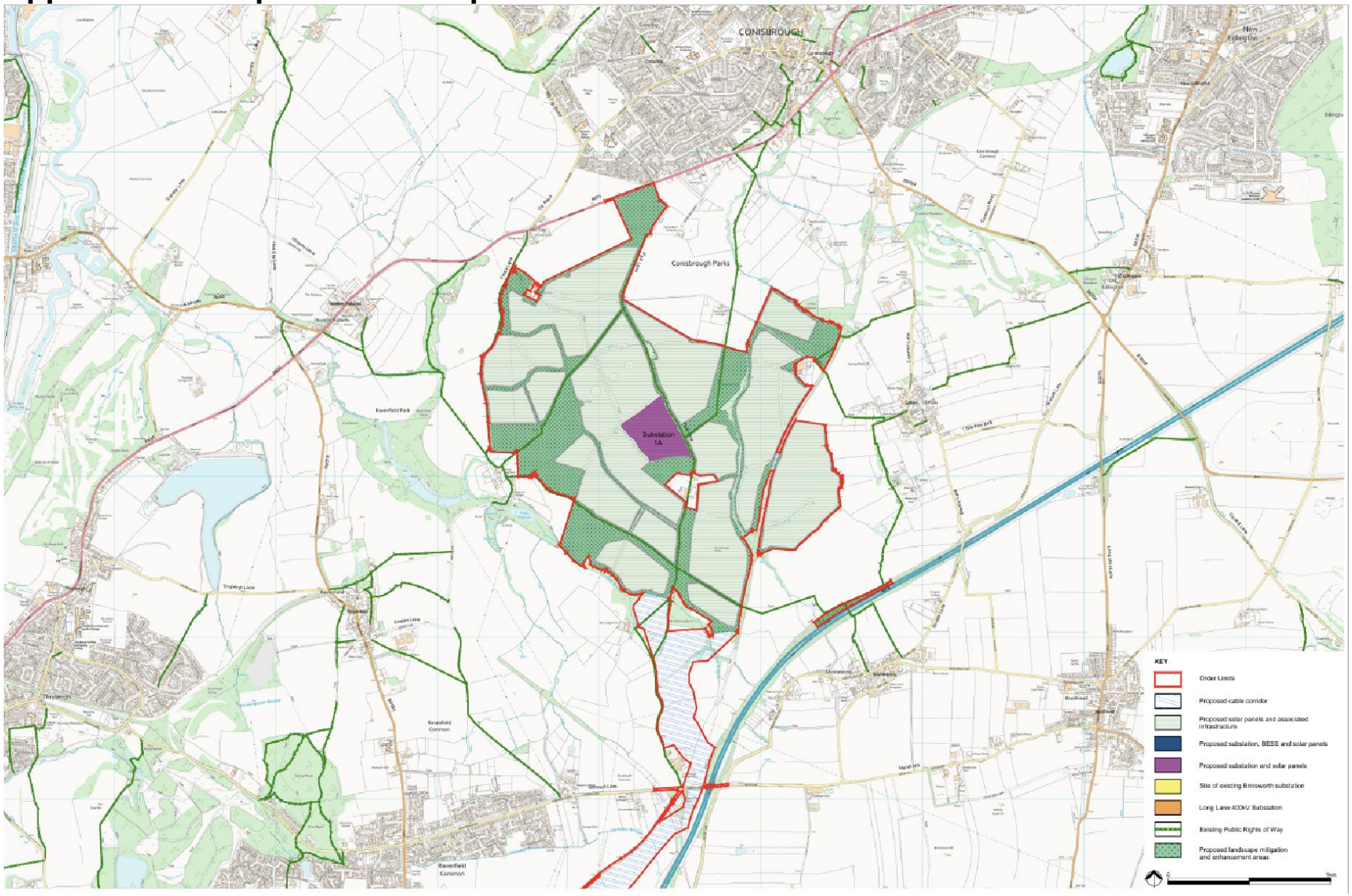
Application Document ref. EN0110020/APP/5.1
Revision 01
June 2026

Planning Act 2008
Infrastructure Planning
(Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009
Regulation 5(2)(q)

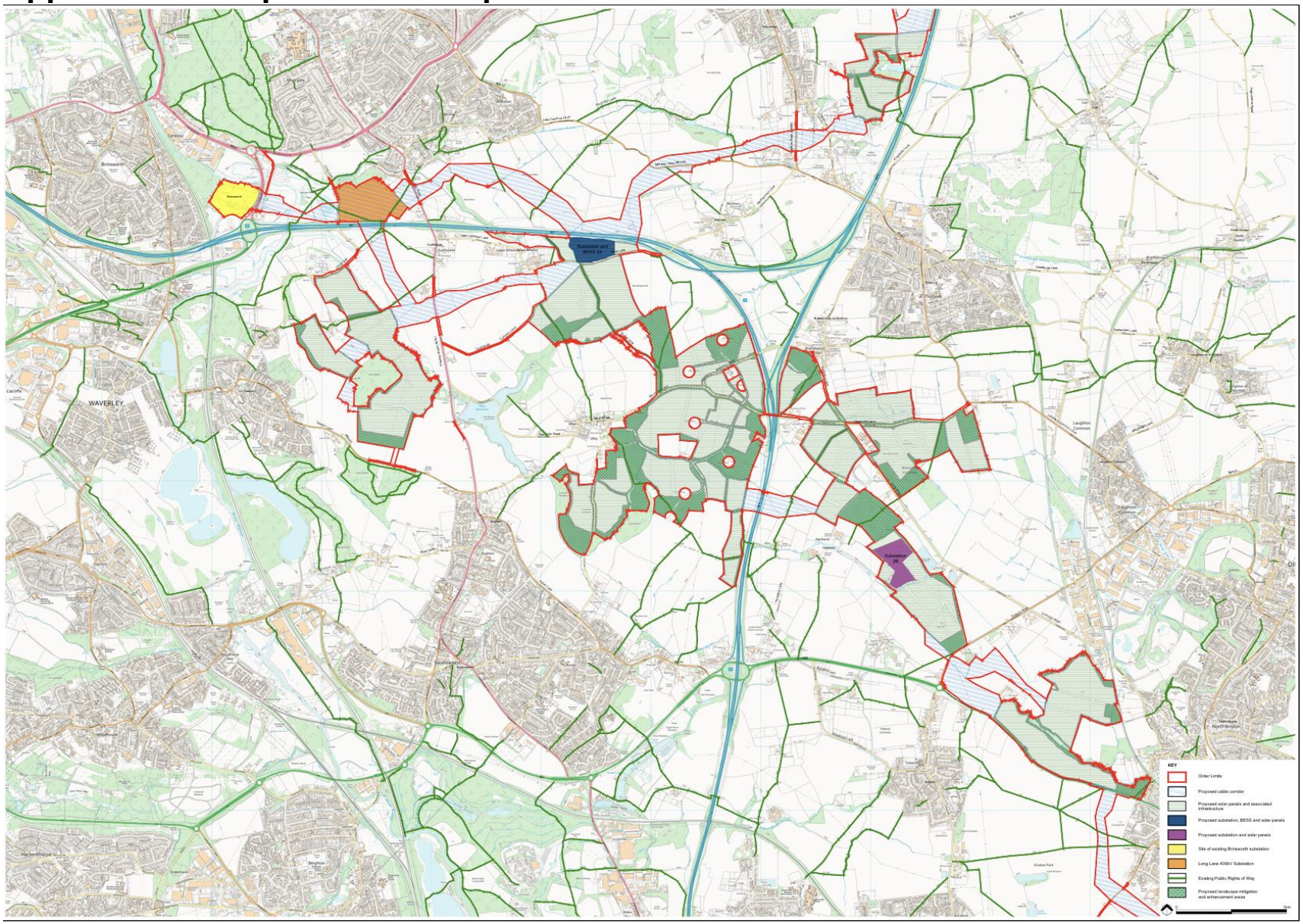
Contents

APPENDIX H1 UPDATED MASTERPLANS

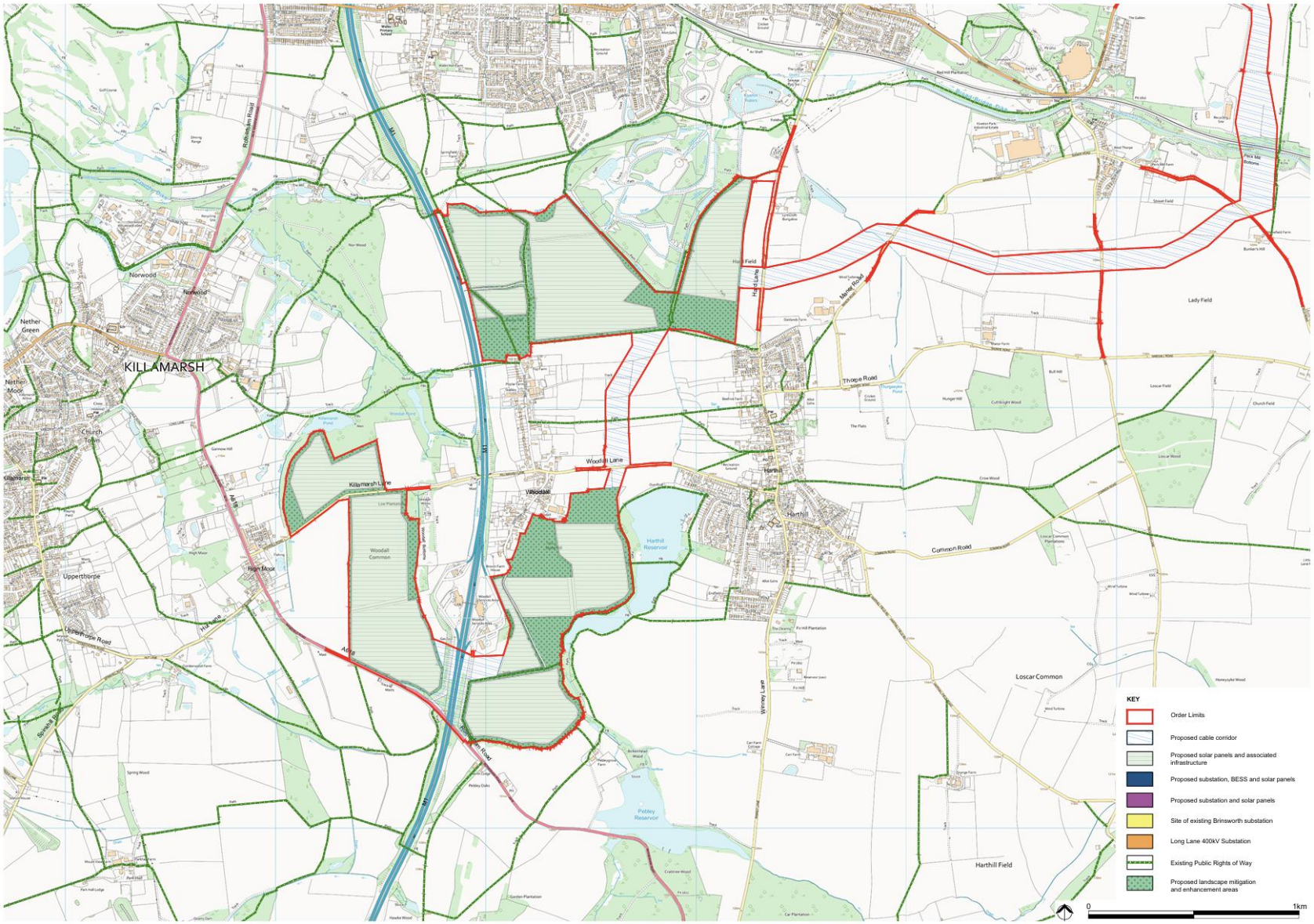
Appendix H1.1 Updated Masterplan WS1



Appendix H1.2 Updated Masterplan WS2



Appendix H1.3 Updated Masterplan WS3



APPENDIX H2 PROJECT WEBSITE

Appendix H2.1 Updated sections of project website

Project updates - April 2026

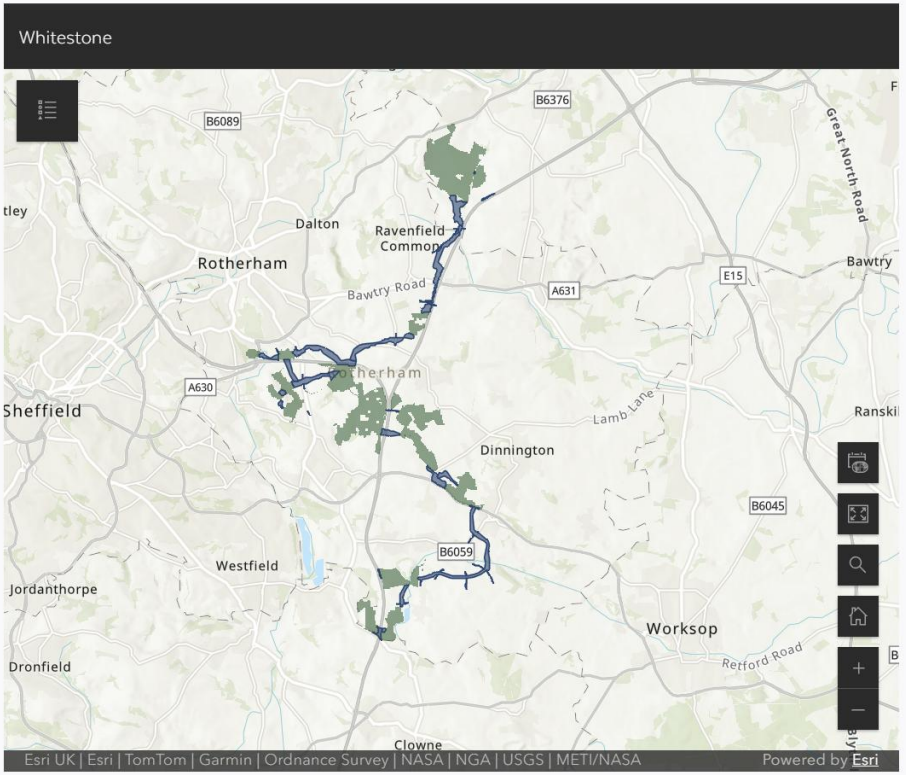
- We have produced a community newsletter to provide a project update. This newsletter includes updated masterplans and other maps to show how the project design has changed in response to feedback.
- You may see members of our team on site completing environmental surveys which are needed for our environmental impact assessment. There is no construction underway.
- We are currently working to complete the Environmental Impact Assessment and other application documents that we will submit in May 2026 to the Planning Inspectorate.

Project location

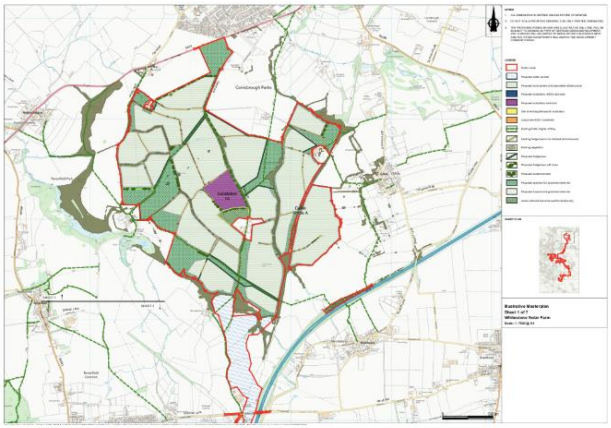
Whitestone is a proposed solar farm that would be located in South Yorkshire, between Rotherham and Doncaster. The project is located across three sections, Whitestone 1 in the north near Conisbrough, Whitestone 2 in the centre around Ulley, and Whitestone 3, in the south near Harthill and Woodall.

The project would connect into the new National Grid substation near Brinsworth on Long Lane. Underground cables would connect the three sections of the project together and into the grid connection.

The map to the right shows the 'solar site' in green. These areas would include solar panels and other infrastructure as well as the areas set aside for wildlife. The areas shown in blue are for the underground cables and access roads. After construction, these cables would be not be visible and normal activities could continue above them.



Detailed proposals



The detailed masterplans are shown to the right and in the links below. These maps show the indicative project design, including the areas for solar panels, substations, and battery storage.

The masterplans also show areas set aside for wildlife and environmental mitigation. These areas would be planted with a mix of native grasses and wildflowers to protect native wildlife and increase biodiversity.

The maps also show proposed landscaping to mitigate potential visual impacts. These trees and hedges would provide a natural screen to reduce views of the solar panels and other infrastructure.

Click here to view the updated masterplans for:

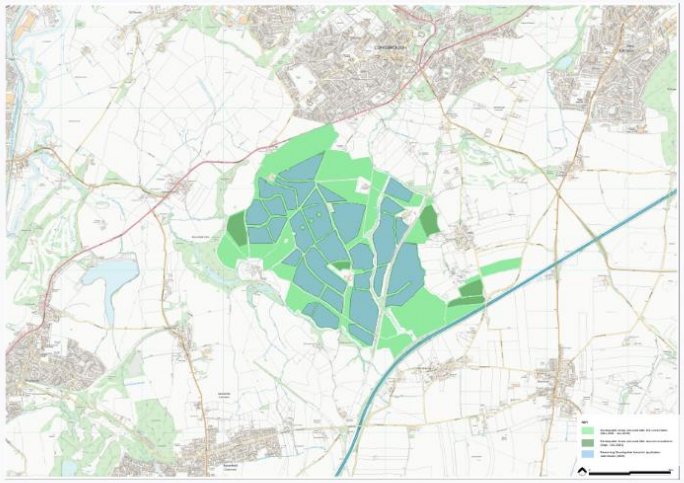
- Whitestone 1
- Whitestone 2
- Whitestone 3
- The whole project over 7 pages

Project Development

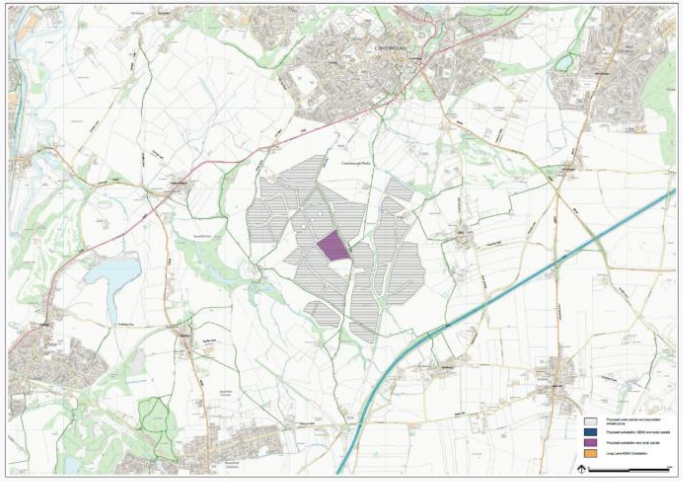
We have held two rounds on consultation on our proposals for Whitestone. Feedback from these consultations as well as the results of environmental and technical assessments have resulted in significant changes to the project design. Read on to learn more about how each component of the design has evolved in response to consultation feedback and environmental assessments.

Solar areas

We presented our initial proposals in Autumn 2024 during the first consultation. This original masterplan presented all of the land that we were considering to include in the project and those areas that could be used for solar panels and other infrastructure, known as the 'developable area' . In response to feedback from that consultation, we reduced these areas by a quarter to create offsets around homes, villages and public rights of way. After the second consultation in Autumn 2025, we responded to feedback and further reduced these areas around homes, villages, and environmentally sensitive locations. The remaining developable area is now 37% smaller than the original proposals.



This map shows how the developable area has reduced over time in response to feedback. The total developable area is now 37% smaller than the initial masterplan.



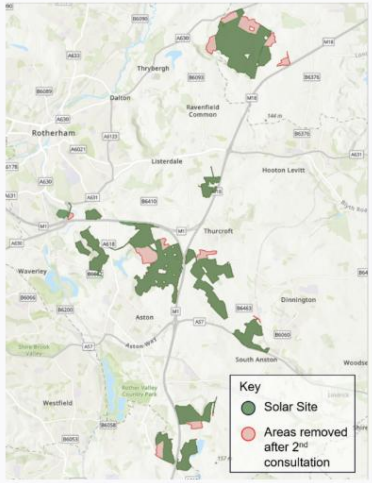
This map shows the remaining developable area.


Aerial view of a solar farm in the countryside

Green spaces

In addition to the technical components, a well-designed solar farm includes green spaces to support wildlife, protect views and enable recreation. In the areas with solar panels, fields would be planted with native grasses, supporting a diverse ecosystem that can thrive between and beneath the panels. There are also areas without any above-ground infrastructure that would be used for 'environmental mitigation and enhancement'. These areas would be planted with a mix of native species, including grasses and wildflowers to support local wildlife and increase biodiversity. These spaces would help reduce potential impacts by creating offsets away from key locations, including homes, villages, public rights of way and other environmentally sensitive locations.

After the first consultation, we removed one quarter of the solar areas but left these areas within the project's boundary for environmental mitigation and enhancement. During the second consultation, we heard from communities their concerns about potential impacts on agricultural production and agricultural jobs. Therefore, we reviewed all of these areas to determine if they were necessary. Wherever possible, any areas considered unnecessary have now been removed from the project and will continue under their current land use to maximise agricultural production. The remaining solar areas will be suitable for grazing sheep, which we will continue to explore as the project progresses.

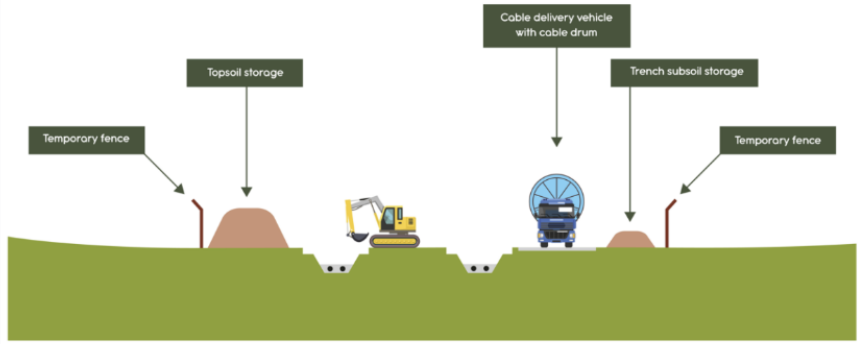


This map shows the areas that have been removed from the project after the second consultation.

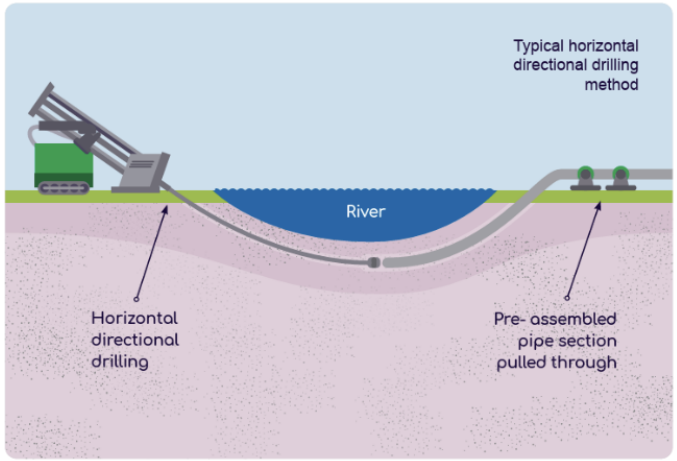
Cable routes

Underground cables are needed to connect the solar areas together and into the National Grid substation. Most cables could be laid through open trenches, where the cable is laid approximately 1m below the ground level, and then soil is replaced on top. Through more sensitive areas, such as woodlands, highways, or streams, we may need to use trenchless crossing methods, such as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), which drills under the sensitive area and pulls the cable through.

During the second consultation, we were able to present options for the cable corridors that would be needed to connect the solar areas together and into the National Grid substation. These potential locations had been identified through environmental and technical assessments, and have now been refined in response to feedback from the consultation. We are now able to present the final locations for these cable corridors. Please note that the cable will only need a small area within the cable corridor that is indicated.



Indicative diagram of cable installation



Substations and Batteries

In addition to the solar panels, the project would need three substations to collect the electricity, increase its voltage, and prepare it to connect into the National Grid. The project would also include a battery energy storage system that would store the energy after it is produced, and release it to the grid when it is needed most.

During the second consultation, we presented the potential locations where the substations and batteries could be located. These potential locations had been identified through environmental and technical assessments, and have now been refined in response to feedback from the consultation. We are now able to present the final locations for these components. There would be one substation in the centre of Whitestone 1, one substation in the southeastern portion of Whitestone 2, and then the main substation with batteries near Brinsworth. There is no substation needed for Whitestone 3. Please note that the substations will not need all of the space within the fields that are indicated.

Hover over the numbers in the graphic to the right to learn more about the technical components of the project.

Why here?

The National Grid connects power users to power sources across the UK, through a network of substations, pylons and cables. New energy projects can only connect into the National Grid at locations where there is available capacity. There was available capacity at Brinsworth, so we were able to secure an agreement for a new energy project to connect at this location. Once we had secured the grid connection agreement, we looked for land nearby that would be suitable for solar. We also wanted to avoid environmentally sensitive areas and the highest quality agricultural land, where possible.

As part of the Great Grid Upgrade, National Grid is proposing a new substation near Brinsworth on Long Lane and new overhead lines to help carry more renewable energy between the North to the Midlands. This project is not related to Whitestone, but they have moved our grid connection to the new location.

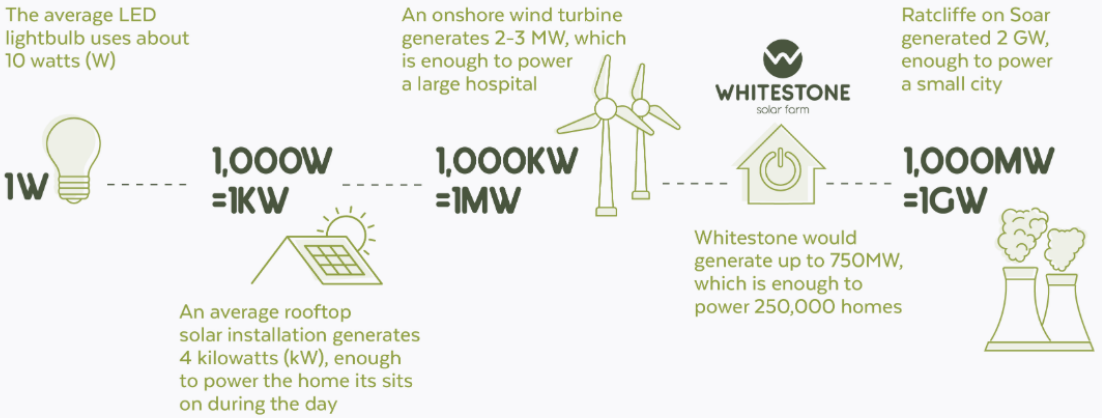
While the grid connection is to the Long Lane Substation, this substation is still in planning and has not yet been constructed. Therefore, we have included both substations in the project boundary in case, for any reason the new substation is not constructed.

Why solar?

The UK has committed to eliminating fossil fuels from the power supply, to provide energy security and reduce future energy costs while supporting the fight against climate change. Now that the last coal power station in the UK, Ratcliffe-on-Soar, has been closed down, new renewable energy sources are needed to come forward to keep the lights on. At the same time, our demand for electricity continues to increase and is projected to double by 2050. To meet these future energy needs, we must quickly ramp up production of renewable energy here in the UK.

The Clean Power 2030 mission sets a goal to triple solar capacity by 2030, while also ramping up onshore and offshore wind development. Solar and wind work well together, and a mix of both helps provide stability to the energy supply.

The Solar Roadmap explains how the UK will achieve the Clean Power mission and includes new mechanisms to increase rooftop solar installations. From 2027, most new homes will be required to include solar panels, known as the Future Homes Standard. We support the 'rooftop revolution' and continue to explore commercial rooftop installations as part of our broader business, but note that large scale solar developments are needed to produce enough energy to meet our national energy goals.



The figures above refer to 'peak energy use' the times of the day we use the most energy, which are in the morning (7-10am) and in the evening (5-9pm).

Document library

Here you can find copies of all of the documents for Whitestone as the project progresses.

Project update: March 2026

- This is the updated Programme Document.
- This is the community newsletter to provide a project update.
- This is a map showing how the solar areas have changed over time.
- These maps show the resulting 'developable area' which includes all of the above-ground infrastructure.
- These are the updated masterplans for Whitestone 1, Whitestone 2, Whitestone 3 and the whole project.
- This is the updated Programme Document.
- This is the leaflet for the targeted consultation from 4 March – 3 April 2026.

APPENDIX H3 NEWSLETTER AND MEETING INVITATIONS

Appendix H3.1 Newsletter

In Autumn 2025, we held our second consultation for Whitestone Solar Farm.

Since then, we have analysed and considered all of the feedback we received. Alongside the ongoing environmental and technical assessments, this feedback has informed our updated design. Please read on to learn more about the second consultation, key feedback received and the changes made to the design, FAQs and the next steps in the process.

Consultation

Over the last two years, we have been collecting feedback from the local community and stakeholders, through our two consultation periods as well as ongoing engagement. We want to thank everyone who has taken the time to submit feedback and engage with the project.

First consultation

During our first consultation from 18 November 2024 to 31 January 2025, we presented our initial proposals for Whitestone Solar Farm. We reviewed all of the feedback we received and made significant changes to the project design. In March 2025, we presented our updated design which removed one quarter of the solar areas to create offsets around homes, villages and public rights of way.

Second consultation

From 16 September until 28 October 2025, we held a second consultation on our updated proposals and the preliminary results of the environmental assessments. We consulted with the local community, elected officials and technical experts, which all helped to inform the updated project design.

During this period, we held eight in-person information events which were attended by 718 members of the local community. We also met with parish councils and other elected officials to understand the views of the community.

We received more than 10,000 pieces of written feedback through our paper and online questionnaire, as well as through email and post.

We have now reviewed all of the feedback we received. Where the feedback applied to the masterplan, we have made a number of changes to address concerns. Where the feedback applied to our environmental assessments, we are considering those topics as we finalise our Environmental Statement (ES) that we will submit in our application for development consent.

10,409
pieces of feedback received

718
attended public information events

Community Update Newsletter 1

Feedback summary

The following table provides a summary of the most frequent themes in the consultation feedback, and how that feedback has resulted in changes to the design.

You Said	We did
Concern about the Proposed Development being too large	In response to feedback from two rounds of consultation and ongoing stakeholder engagement, the size of Whitestone has been reduced significantly. The final size is now 1,171 hectares (2,893 acres), which includes 691 hectares (1,707 acres) for solar and associated infrastructure and 480 hectares (1,186 acres) for environmental mitigation and enhancement. Compared to the initial masterplan, this is a reduction of 37% of the developable area and a reduction of 17% of the total size of the project.
Concern about visual impact around villages including Firsby, Clifton, Ulley, Harthill and Woodall	After the first consultation, we removed one quarter of the solar areas around villages and homes near Whitestone. In response to the second consultation, we have further reduced the solar areas around Firsby, Clifton, Ulley and between Harthill and Woodall.
Concern about loss of agricultural land and potential impacts to food security	After the first consultation, we removed one quarter of the solar areas but left these areas within the project's boundary. After the second consultation, we reviewed all of the land that had been set aside for environmental mitigation to determine if they were necessary. Wherever possible, any areas considered unnecessary have now been removed from the project and will continue under their current land use to maximise agricultural production. The remaining solar areas will be suitable for grazing sheep, and we will work on enabling that as the project progresses.
Concern about visual impacts to PRoWs	We have committed that all existing PRoWs will remain open through the lifetime of the project, other than temporary closures which may be needed for safety reasons during the construction phase. During our second consultation, we also proposed new permissive paths to expand access and formalise existing informal routes which are being used across the site. We heard from the equestrian community about the importance of existing bridleways and the need for the new permissive paths to be open to horse riders. We want to clarify that they would be available for equestrians. While the British Horse Society recommends 5m offset along bridleways, we have included a much larger offset of 10m from either side of the path to the fences, and a further 5m to the panels, for a total of 15m from the path to the panels as a minimum. We have further expanded this offset to include one open field to either side of the paths wherever possible.
Concern about impacts to heritage assets, including the Roman Villa near Clifton and Conisbrough Castle	We have continued to engage with Historic England, South Yorkshire Archaeology Service and the host authorities on the approach to heritage assets. To provide more offset around the Roman Villa and the conservation village of Clifton, the updated masterplan removes solar from the field to the north of the Roman Villa and has removed the potential substation and solar fields to the south of Clifton. While we remain confident of the assessment that there is no significant impact to Conisbrough Castle, the updated masterplan removes the mitigation areas south of Conisbrough from the Proposed Development so the existing land use will continue in these locations. The updated masterplan also removes a small area of solar to further offset from Conisbrough, so that the nearest solar panel is now 1.8 km from the castle.

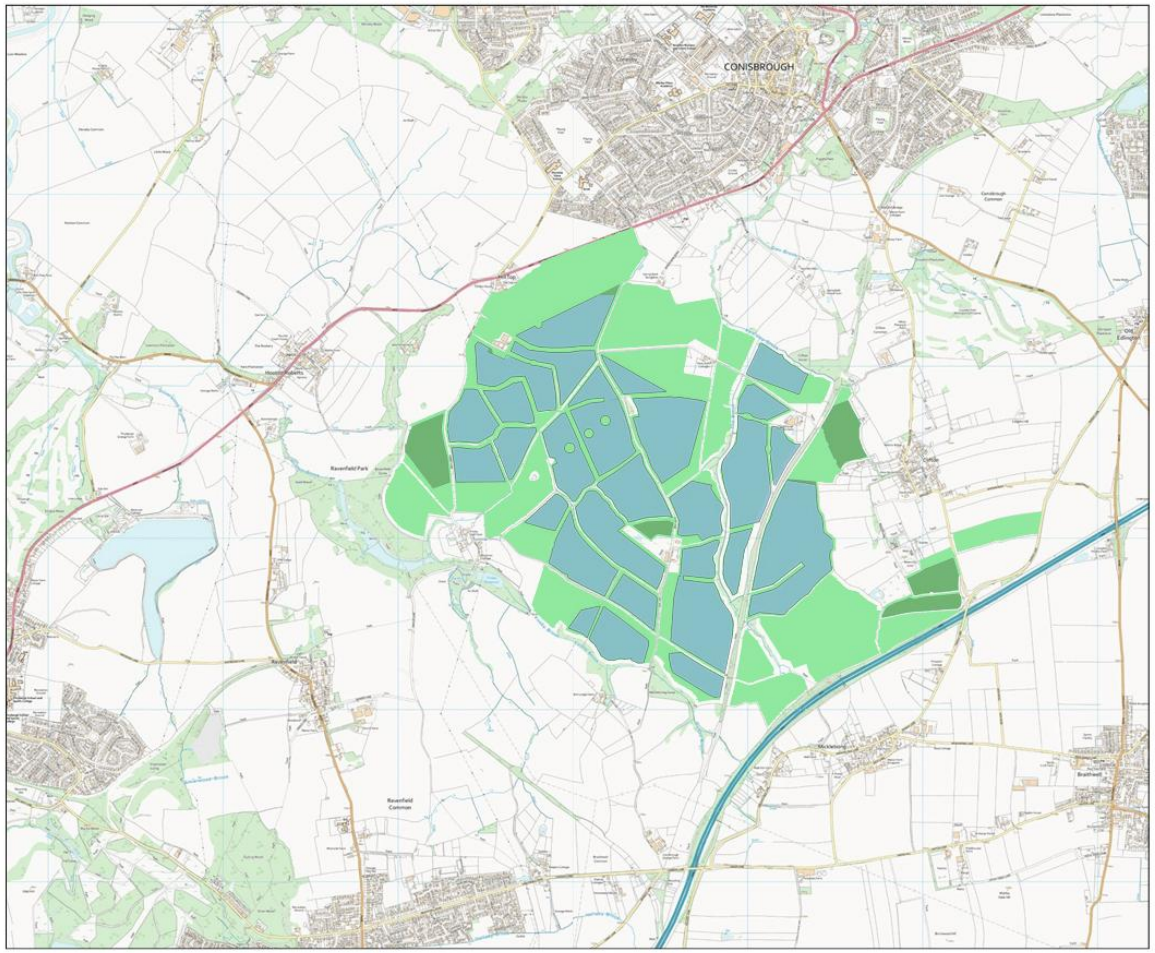
What has changed?

The updated masterplans include further reductions of solar areas around villages and homes, resulting in a 37% reduction in the developable area since the initial proposals.

We have also reviewed the land set aside for environmental mitigation and removed any excess areas that are not needed for wildlife. This land will no longer be part of the project and will stay with its current land use to maximise agricultural production.

The following maps show how the project has changed after each stage of consultation, and the resulting updated masterplans that we intend to submit as part of our application. Including the solar and other infrastructure areas as well as the environmental mitigation and enhancement areas, the total project area is now 17% smaller than the initial proposals.

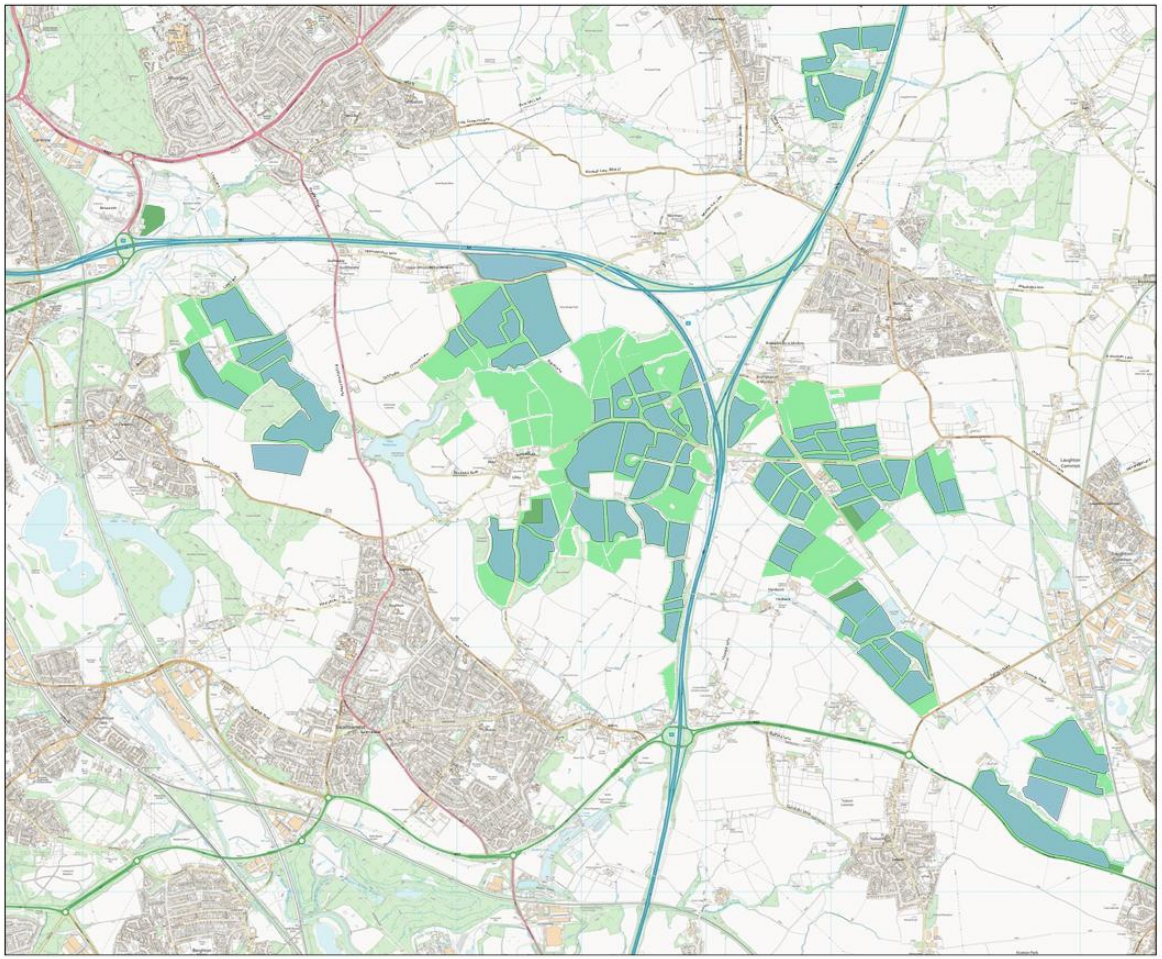
Whitestone 1



Key

- Developable Areas removed after first consultation (Nov 2024 – Jan 2025)
- Developable Areas removed after second consultation (Sept – Oct 2025)
- Remaining Developable Areas for application submission (2026)

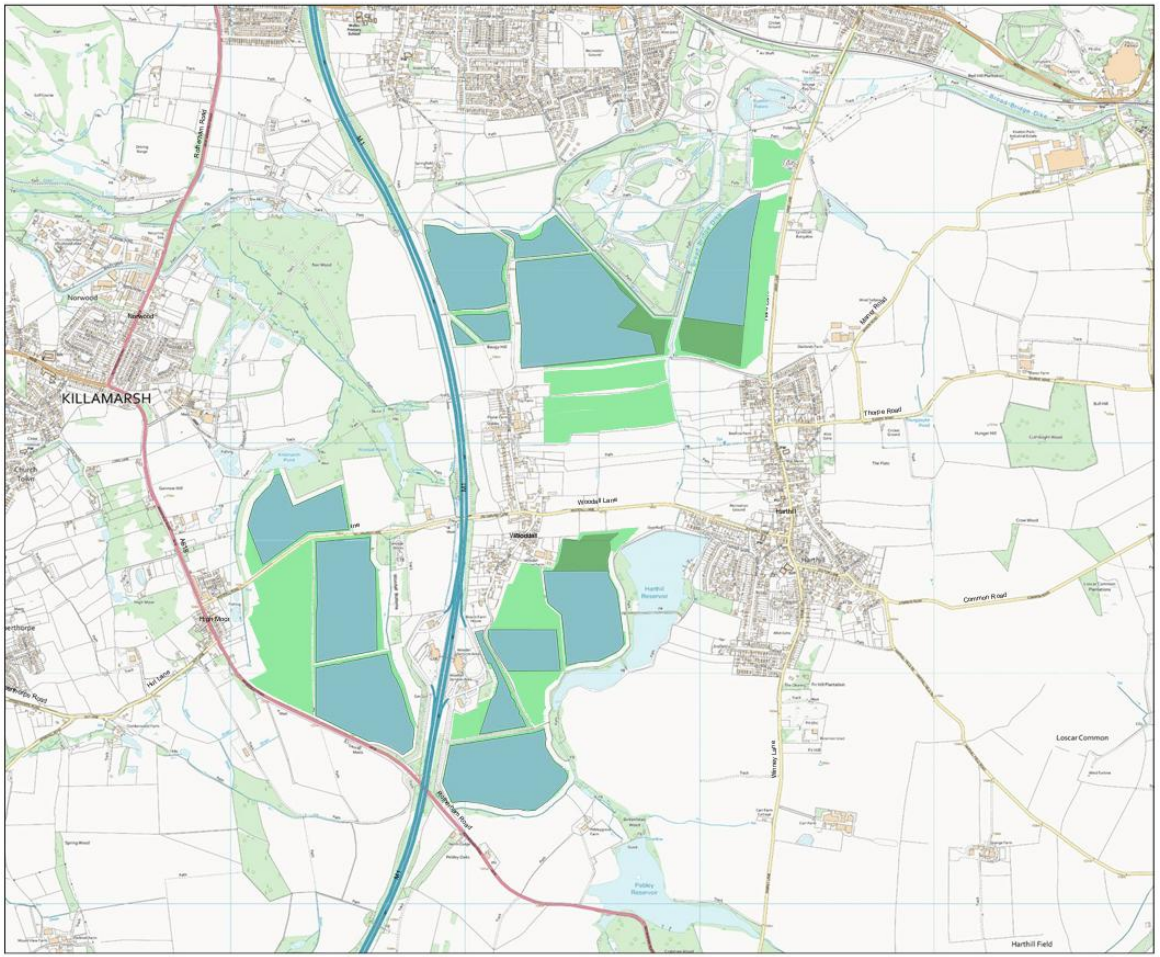
Whitestone 2



Key

- Developable Areas removed after first consultation (Nov 2024 – Jan 2025)
- Developable Areas removed after second consultation (Sept – Oct 2025)
- Remaining Developable Areas for application submission (2026)

Whitestone 3



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Why is the National Grid substation in your project when you said it was separate?

National Grid offered Whitestone a grid connection of 750 MW to connect into Brinsworth substation. As part of the Great Grid Upgrade, National Grid is proposing a new substation (Long Lane 400kV Substation) and new overhead lines to help carry more renewable energy between the North to the Midlands. This project is not related to Whitestone, but they have moved our grid connection to the new location. We have included both the proposed substation and the current substation in our project boundary so that we could connect into the grid at either location. While the grid connection is to the Long Lane 400kV Substation, this substation is still in planning and has not yet been constructed. Therefore, we have included both substations in the project boundary in case, for any reason the new Long Lane 400kV Substation is not constructed.

Why are there people on site doing works already – has construction for Whitestone already started?

Construction on Whitestone has not yet started. You may have seen that we are currently doing surveys on site. These surveys are part of our Environmental Impact Assessment to help identify potential heritage assets, so that we can best protect and preserve them. They include a JCB to dig trial trenches, which will then be backfilled and returned to their original state. The survey areas include temporary fences and cameras in order to keep the team and equipment left in position safe, they are not to record anything else. These surveys should be complete shortly, but you may see other members of our team on site doing other surveys as we work to complete the environmental assessments this spring.

Why build solar when it's so inefficient?

Solar technology has advanced significantly in recent years and can be productive, even on cloudy days in this location. To meet our future energy needs, we will require a mix of energy technologies, including solar and wind technologies which work well together. We are also proposing battery storage so that we can store the energy when it is produced, and release it to the grid at times of higher demand.

Is battery storage dangerous?

Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) use technology that is well established, widely deployed, and designed to high safety standards. The same core technology is used in everyday items like mobile phones and electric vehicles.

We are developing the Outline Battery Safety Management Plan (oBSMP) and a Statement of Common Ground with South Yorkshire Fire & Rescue that will be submitted with the Application.

Safety measures include:

- Self contained units for each battery
- Fire detection and suppression systems
- Layouts designed to ensure safe separation distances
- Emergency access designed with the fire service

These measures ensure the battery facility meets rigorous UK regulatory requirements and industry best practice.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) continued

Why are you not putting solar on rooftops or brownfield instead of agricultural land?

In order to produce enough energy to meet the grid connection agreement of 750 MW, ground-mounted solar is needed. Green Nation, the developer behind Whitestone, continues to develop rooftop installations as part of our broader business, but large-scale ground-mounted solar developments are needed to meet national energy targets. Solar farms occupy less than 0.1% of UK land today, projected to rise only to around 0.4% to meet national energy targets.

During our initial site selection process, we considered brownfield sites in the area. However, these were discounted due to either existing environmental designations, topography, proximity to settlements, size constraints or landowner interest.

Will the solar proposal damage local biodiversity and wildlife?

In general, solar farms are still and silent, allowing a diverse ecosystem to thrive between and beneath the panels. Within the areas for solar development, the land would be planted with a mix of native grasses or wildflowers to help increase biodiversity. The updated masterplans also include 480 hectares (1,186 acres) that would be set aside for wildlife, with no above-ground infrastructure and minimal if any maintenance. We have completed preliminary ecology surveys as shown in the draft ES and continue to engage with Natural England and the local authorities to ensure that potential impacts to wildlife have been assessed and mitigated if significant. While we have reduced excess mitigation areas to maximise agricultural production, we have ensured that sufficient environmental mitigation areas remain available to support local ecology and enhance biodiversity.

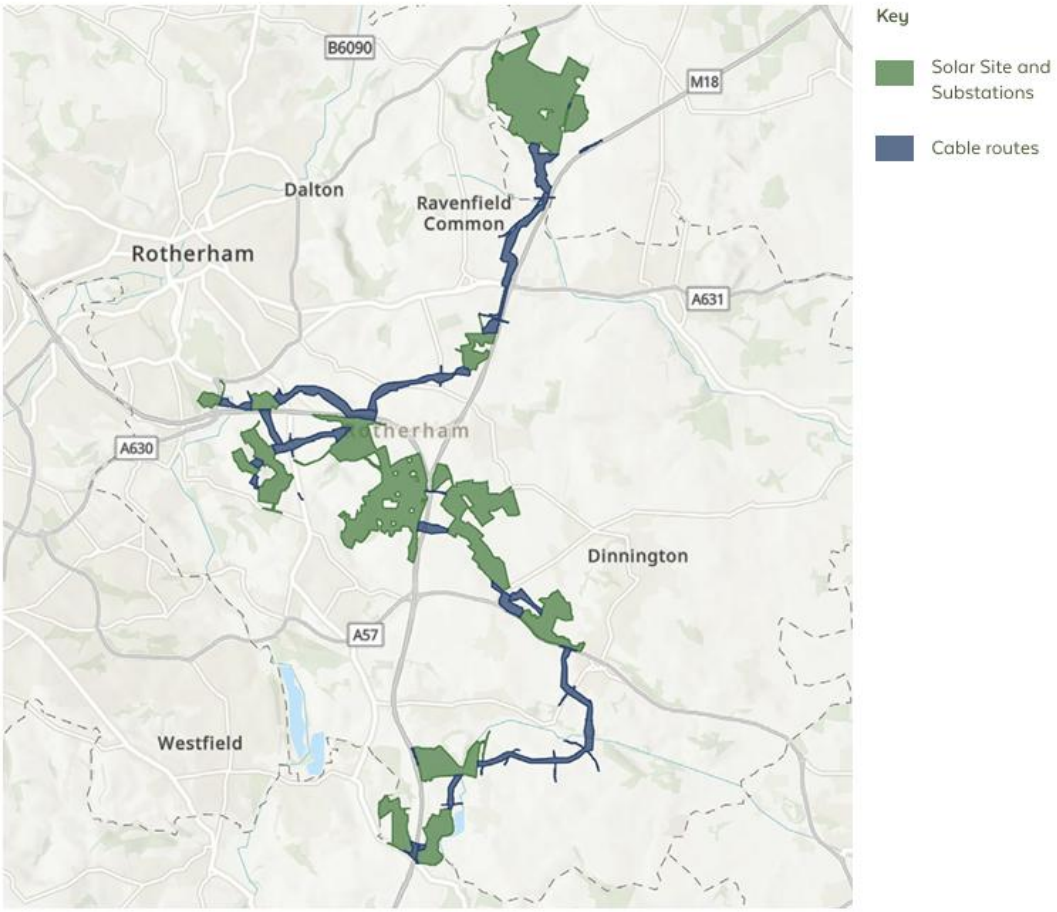
Cable route

Underground cables are needed to connect the solar sections of the project together and into the National Grid. After installation, these cables would no longer be visible, and normal activities could continue above them.

Most cables could be laid through open trenches, where the cable is laid approximately 1m below the ground level, and then soil is replaced on top. Through more sensitive areas, such as woodlands, highways, or streams, we may need to use trenchless crossing methods, such as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD), which drills under the sensitive area and pulls the cable through.

At our second consultation, we presented several options for the cable routes. These were informed by technical assessments, and initial environmental assessments to avoid sensitive areas. We consulted on these cable route options to help make the final decision on which routes to use.

Based on feedback from the consultation and continued environmental assessments, we have now been able to select the preferred cable route, which is shown below. If we have identified you as a land interest on this cable route, our land team will soon contact you to start conversations about being able to use this land.



Next steps

In response to consultation feedback and other project developments, we need to make a few small changes to our project boundary. If this affects you, we will contact you directly.

We are currently in the process of preparing our application for a Development Consent Order (DCO), which we plan to submit in May 2026. The DCO application will include the final results of the EIA within an Environmental Statement, as well as a Consultation Report which details how we have considered all of the feedback we received. These documents will all be public on the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) website.

After we submit our DCO application to PINS, they have 28 days to review the application to assess if it meets the statutory requirements. This is known as 'acceptance'.

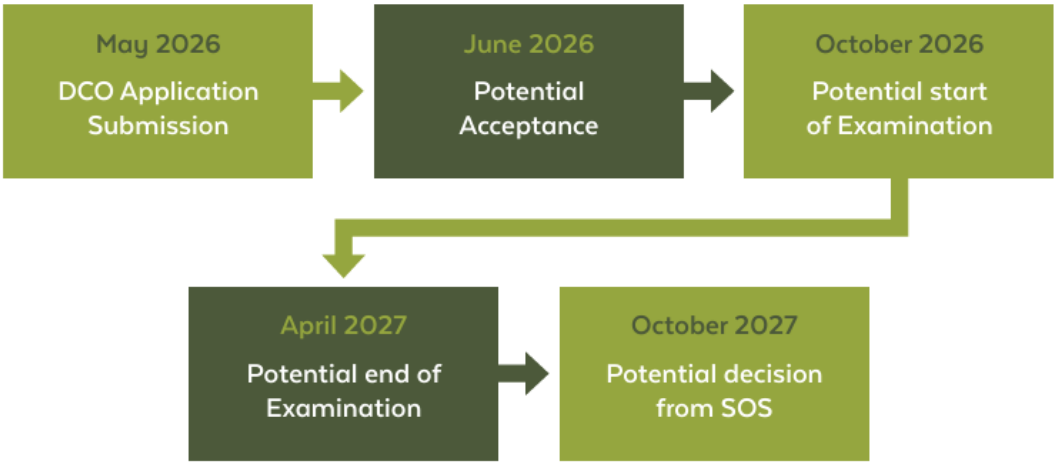
If the application is accepted, then the project enters the 'pre-examination' stage. During this period, PINS will appoint an Examining Authority to review our application. Anyone who wants to register as an interested party can do so during this period, which typically lasts around 3 months. You will be able to register through the PINS website.

Then the project will enter a 6-month period of examination. During this time, the Examining Authority will ask questions of the project team, and interested parties can submit their feedback. All written questions and answers will be made public on the PINS website, and any examination hearings will be open to the public to attend.

After examination, the Examining Authority will have three months to make a recommendation. Then, the Secretary of State will have another three months to make a final decision.

Our communications lines will remain open for any questions you may have.

Timeline



WHITESTONE
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Get in touch

If you would like more information contact us via:

Freephone 0800 688 9936

info@whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk

whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk

Appendix H3.2 Email to Keep Informed List

[redacted]

Our communications lines will remain open for any questions you may have.

Email: info@whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk
Phone: 0800 688 9936

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Community Relations

Website: www.whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk
Phone: 0800 688 9936
Email: info@whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk

In response to feedback from two rounds of consultation and ongoing stakeholder engagement, the size of Whitestone has been reduced significantly. The final size is now 1,169 hectares (2,888 acres), which includes 691 hectares (1,707 acres) for solar and associated infrastructure and 637 hectares (1,181 acres) for environmental mitigation and enhancement. Compared to the initial masterplan, this is a reduction of 37% of the developable area and a reduction of 17% of the total size of the project.

Appendix H3.3 Email to Parish Councils for update

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am emailing you as a host parish council for Whitestone Solar Farm. The below information provides an update on the project and the changes made since the second consultation.

From 16 September until 28 October 2025, we held a second consultation on our updated proposals and the preliminary results of the environmental assessments.

We consulted with the local community, elected officials and technical experts. During this period, we held eight in-person information events which were attended by 718 members of the local community.

We received more than 10,000 pieces of written feedback. We have now reviewed all of the feedback we received. Where the feedback applied to the masterplan, we have made a number of changes to address concerns. Where the feedback applied to our environmental assessments, we are considering those topics as we finalise our Environmental Statement (ES) that we will submit in our application for development consent.


WHITESTONE
solar farm
Community Update Newsletter
March 2026
Consultation
First consultation
10,409
718
Second consultation
Download the Whitestone Solar Farm Community Update Newsletter here

Appendix H3.4 Email to Parish Councillors for meeting

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are writing to invite you to a virtual webinar about our updated masterplans for Whitestone Solar Farm.

The meeting will take place via Zoom on:

Date: Monday 23 March 2026
Time: 6:00pm – 7:00pm
Location: Zoom

This session is for host parish councils of the proposed solar farm and will provide an overview of the updated proposals. This includes changes made in response to feedback from the second consultation which took place from September to October 2025. We received more than 10,000 pieces of written feedback through our paper and online questionnaire, as well as through email and post. We have now reviewed all of the feedback, and along with the environmental and technical assessments, this has informed our updated design, which has resulted in a 37% reduction in the developable area since the initial proposals.

During the session we will show the updated masterplans and explain where the changes have been made, as well as discussing the next steps for the project. There will be an opportunity to ask questions during the session.

Please do let us know if members of the parish council are able to attend the briefing by replying to this email. If you are unable to attend, we are happy to answer any questions you may have over email at info@whitestonesolar-farm.co.uk or over the phone on 0800 688 9936.

Please find the link to register for the online meeting here.

We look forward to speaking with you soon.

Kind regards,

[redacted]

Community Relations

WHITESTONE
solar farm

Appendix H3.5 Email to Ward Councillors for meeting

Good afternoon,

I hope you are doing well. I'm reaching out to invite you to a virtual project update briefing for Whitestone Solar Farm on 8 April 2026 at 11am.

The meeting will take place via Zoom on:

Date: 8 April 2026
Time: 11:00am - 12:00pm
Location: Zoom

This session is for ward councillors and cabinet members and will provide an overview of the updated proposals. This includes changes made in response to feedback from the second consultation, which took place from September to October 2025.

We received more than 10,000 pieces of written feedback during the statutory consultation period. This feedback, along with results from various environmental and technical assessments, have informed our updated design. This includes a 37% reduction in the developable area since the initial proposals.

During the upcoming session we will provide an overview of the updated masterplans, explain where changes have been made, and provide you with further information about next steps. We will then open it up to any questions you may have on the revised plans.

Do let us know if you are able to attend the briefing by replying to this email. If you are unable to attend, we are happy to answer any questions you may have via email at info@whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk or over the phone on 0800 688 9936.

Please find the link to register for the meeting here.

Best,

[redacted]

WHITESTONE
solar farm

Contact

Whitestone Net Zero Ltd

info@whitestonesolarfarm.co.uk

0800 688 9936