Solar Power Expansion in the UK: From 16.9GW to 47GW by 2030

The UK's total solar capacity reached 16.9 GW by the end of June 2024, according to data from the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ). This represents an 8.5% increase (1.3 GW) compared to the previous year.

The total capacity is distributed across over 1.5 million domestic and commercial solar installations. In 2023, 196,782 new solar projects were added, marking the second-highest annual total for new installations, following the 208,586 installations in 2011.

The UK government set an ambitious goal of achieving 45GW-47GW solar generation capacity by 2030, which means the UK needs to triple its solar capacity over the next decade.

Based on a recent news item on the Solar Power Portal and research by KCSA, we have compiled a roundup of Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) projects currently in pre-application, pre-examination, and examination phases.*

To find out more out the NSIP planning process, click here

Pre-Application Projects

Developers in the pre-application stage assess community and environmental impacts through consultations and scoping reports. Here are the key projects expected to progress in 2025:

Kingfisher Solar Farm, East Riding, N Yorks

- Capacity: 320MW solar PV
- Developer: Ørsted
- Timeline: Early (Non-statutory) Consultation (February – March 2025)

Leoda Solar Farm, Lincs

- Capacity: 500-600MW solar PV with BESS
- Developer: Telis Energy, UK
- Timeline: Non-statutory consultation 6 March 2025

East Park Development, Beds

- Capacity: 400MW solar PV, 100MW battery energy storage system (BESS)
- Developer: Brockwell Solar and Storage
- Timeline: DCO application expected January-March 2025; construction may begin in 2027.

Frodsham Solar, Cheshire

- Capacity: 130MW solar PV with BESS
- Developer: Cubio Sustainable Investments
- Timeline: DCO application expected Spring 2025

Great North Road Solar and Biodiversity Park, Notts

- Capacity: 800MW solar PV
- Developer: Elements Green
- Timeline: Post statutory consultation phase. DCO application expected August 2025

Fosse Green Energy Solar Project, Lincs

- Capacity: >50MW with BESS
- Developer: Windel Energy
- Timeline: Post-statutory consultation phase. DCO application expected Autumn 2025

Rosefield Solar Farm (EDF and PS Renewables), Bucks

- Capacity: 500MW grid connection secured with BESS
- Developer: EDF and PS Renewables
- Timeline: Post-statutory consultation phase. DCO application expected late 2025

Mylen Leah Solar Farm, East Riding of Yorkshire

- Capacity: 500MW solar PV
- Developer: Statkraft
- Timeline: Post-non statutory consultation. DCO application expected end 2025

Whitestone Energy Park, Yorkshire

- Capacity: 750MW with BESS
- Developer: Green Nation
- Timeline: Statutory consultation Summer/Autumn 2025. DCO application expected Spring 2026

White Elm Solar Farm, Suffolk

- Capacity: >50MW with BESS
- Developer: ELMYA
- Timeline: Non-statutory Summer 2025. DCO application expected July to September 2026

Temple Oaks Renewable Energy Park, Lincs

- Capacity: 250MW solar PV with BESS

- Developer: Ridge Clean Energy Limited
- Timeline: No date given for DCO application

South Kent Energy Park, Kent

- Capacity: 500MW solar PV
- Developer: Low Carbon
- Timeline: Community engagement to end 17 January 2025. No date given for DCO application)

Island Green Power Projects

- Green Hill Solar Farm, Northants: 500MW solar PV with BESS (DCO application expected April 2025).
- East Pye Solar Project, South Norfolk: 500MW solar PV, 500MW BESS (Statutory consultation Summer 2025; DCO application expected late 2025).
- Lime Down Solar Project, North Wilts: 500MW export, 250MW import, 1,000MWh BESS (Statutory consultation completed; DCO application expected Autumn 2025).
- The Droves Solar Farm, Norfolk: 500MW and BESS (DCO application expected Winter 2025)
- Light Valley Solar Plant, North Yorks: 500MW solar PV with BESS (Statutory consultation; DCO application expected January 2026)

RWE projects

- Steeple Renewables, Notts: 400MW solar PV, 200MW BESS (Statutory consultation now closed; DCO expected Q2 2025)
- Tween Bridge Solar, Doncaster/North Lincs: 600MW solar PV with storage (Currently in statutory consultation; DCO expected Q4 2025)
- High Grove Solar, Norfolk: 720MW solar PV (Statutory consultation Spring 2025; DCO expected Q4 2025)
- Lostrigg Solar Farm, Cumbria: 100MW solar PV (Currently in statutory consultation; DCO expected Autumn 2025)

Downing Renewable Development projects

- Kingsway Solar, South Cambs: 500MW solar PV with storage (DCO application expected Autumn 2025).
- Meridian Solar, Lincs: 750MW solar PV with BESS facility (Statutory consultation begins April 2025; DCO application expected Q3 2025)

Pre-Examination Projects

In the pre-examination phase, the planning inspectorate reviews DCO applications and appoints an Examining Authority. Public registration to give feedback is crucial during this stage.

Dean Moor Solar Farm, West Cumbria

- Capacity: 150MW solar PV, 100MW BESS
- Developer: Firma Vogt Solar (joint venture)
- Timeline: Accepted by the Planning Inspectorate; DCO application Spring/Summer 2025).

Beacon Fen Energy Park, Lincs

- Capacity: 400MW solar PV, 600MW BESS
- Developer: Low Carbon
- Timeline: Preparing to submit DCO application (was expected March 2025).

Peartree Hill Solar Farm, East Riding of Yorkshire

- 320MW solar PV.
- Developer: RWE
- Timeline: DCO application expected January 2025

One Earth Solar Farm, Notts

- Capacity: 740MW export/import connection agreed with National Grid
- Developer: Ørsted and PS Renewables
- Timeline: Pre-examination period March-June 2025; DCO application expected Summer 2025

Botley West Solar Development, Oxfordshire

- Capacity: 840MW solar PV
- Developer: Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP)
- Timeline: Entered pre-examination in December 2024; accepted for examination. Pre-registration period ends 27 Feb 2025; Preliminary meeting for the Examination period set for Tuesday 13th May

Examination Phase and Beyond

During this phase, applications are scrutinized before a recommendation is made to the secretary of state.

Fenwick Solar Farm, Yorkshire

- Capacity: 237.5MW co-located solar-plus-storage
- Developer: Boom Power

- Timeline: The DCO application for Fenwick Solar Farm was submitted for consideration on the 30 October 2024 and accepted by PINS for Examination on 29 November 2024. The Planning Inspectorate has up to six months to carry out the examination.

Stonestreet Green Solar Farm, Kent

- Capacity: 165MW generation, 99.9MW export
- Developer: Evolution Power
- Status: Accepted for examination in July 2024
- Timeline: Recommendation to the energy secretary expected by the end of January 2025 if the six-month time limit is met.

Byer's Gill Solar Farm, County Durham

- Capacity: 180MW solar PV
- Developer: RWE
- Timeline: The Planning Inspectorate accepted the application to proceed to the next stage of the planning process 8 March 2024

Tillbridge Solar Limited, Lincs

- Capacity: 500MW
- Developer: Joint venture by Tribus Clean Energy and Recurrent Energy
- Timeline: Recommendation expected by January 2025 with decision by the energy secretary by Q3 2025. Public hearings will take place in January 2025.

Oaklands Solar Farm, South Derbyshire

- Capacity: 138MW
- Developer: BayWa r.e.
- Timeline: Recommendation report to the secretary of state by March 2025.

East Yorkshire Solar Farm, Yorkshire

- Capacity: 400MW
- Developer: Boom Power
- Status: Examination period closed
- Timeline: Examination period concluded at the end of November 2024; recommendation phase expected to complete by 21 February 2025. The energy secretary's decision is anticipated by May 2025.

Helios Renewable Energy Project, North Yorks

- Capacity: 250MW solar PV, 190MW generation
- Developer: Enso Energy
- Timeline: Examination to close by June 2025.

Springwell Solar Farm, Lincs

- Capacity: 800MW
- Developer: EDF Renewables & Luminous Energy
- Timeline: Examination expected by April 2025. Plans for a temporary solar farm have been refused. Accepted for examination 18 December 2024.

DCO Decisions

None currently pending

Decision

Cleve Hill Solar Park, Kent

- Capacity: 373MW solar PV with option for BESS
- Developer: Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd
- Decision: May 2020. Approved
- Construction began in early 2023 and is expected to be completed by Autumn 2025.

Cottam Solar Project, Lincs/Notts

- Capacity: 600MW solar PV
- Developer: Island Green Power
- Decision: September 2024. Approved

Gate Burton Energy Park, Lincs

- Capacity: 500MW solar PV with BESS
- Developer: Low Carbon
- Decision: On 12th July 2024, Low Carbon received the DCO planning consent. This and Cottam Solar Project are in close proximity with the intention to share the grid connection

Heckington Fen Solar Plant, Lancs

- Capacity: 500MW solar PV
- Developer: Ecotricity
- Timeline: Planning decision delayed to 2025; updated information due January 2025. Approved Jan 2025

West Burton Solar Project, Lincs

- Capacity: 500MW solar PV
- Developer: Island Green Power

- Timeline: Deadline for the Secretary of State to make their decision on the application is 24 January 2025
  Approved Jan 2025

Little Crow Solar Park, Lincs

- Capacity: 150MW solar PV
- Developer: INRG
- Decision: April 2022 DCO planning consent with non-material changes.
- Construction of the Little Crow Solar Park in the UK is expected to begin in 2025, with commercial operation starting in 2027

Longfield Solar Farm, Essex

- Capacity: 400MW solar PV with BESS
- Developer: EDF Renewables
- Decision: 26 June 2022 DCO planning consent
- Landscaping works have now commenced to plant new trees and hedgerows at locations around the Longfield site.
- It will also kick-start a programme of research to look at the positive impacts large-scale solar farms can have on biodiversity and wildlife in the UK. The research will tie into Longfield's plans and commitments to deliver substantial biodiversity enhancements through habitat restoration and management.

Mallard Pass Solar Project, Lincs

- Capacity: 350MW solar PV
- Developer: Windel Energy and Recurrent Energy. Acquired by Quinbrook Solar Feb 2025
- Decision: 12 July 2024 DCO planning consent with post-decision correction order

Sunnica Energy Farm, Suffolk/Cambs

- Capacity: 500MW solar PV with BESS
- Developer: Tribus Energy and PS Renewables
- Decision: 12 July 2024 DCO planning consent with post-decision correction order

*Information has been checked against the relevant websites but some details and timelines may be subject to change. Data correct as of 2 March 2025.