

Who are we?



Lightsource bp is a global market leader in the funding, development and long-term management of large-scale solar and storage projects and smart energy solutions. We work closely with local businesses and communities to supply clean, dependable and competitively priced energy. We're dedicated to securing a low-carbon future, and to meeting the dual challenge of an increased demand for energy alongside a need to reduce emissions, in Ireland and worldwide.

Community engagement

It's important to us that the local community are fully informed of the plans for the site, and have the opportunity to comment and learn about the proposal. We will be holding an information event to provide details about our project ideas at this stage, and we welcome your feedback.

The information event will be held on Wednesday 7th June 2023, at:

Grange GAC Club Hall,
Killerig,
Co. Carlow

Drop in any time between 2pm and 8pm. We've set up a dedicated webpage for this proposed project at www.lightsourcebp.com/ie/projects/straboe/, with further project information and opportunities to get in touch with us to discuss the proposal.



Find out more


If you have queries in relation to this project, please contact the project team by calling (0)1 685 6263, or emailing ireland@lightsourcebp.com, quoting "Straboe". You can also message us on Facebook or write to us at Lightsource bp, Trinity House, Charleston Road, Ranelagh, D06 C8X4.


Community Information Pack


Proposed solar and energy storage project at Straboe, Tullow, Co. Carlow.





Statistics

 **119,800MWh** (Megawatts hours) supplied per year

 Equivalent to the energy needs of **26,400** households

 **320** acres of land

 **47,100** tonnes of carbon emissions saved

 Equivalent to taking over **28,300** cars off the road

This project will contribute to meeting Ireland's target of generating 80% of electricity demand from renewables by 2030.

Lightsource bp is working on a proposal for a solar and energy storage project at Straboe, Tullow, Co. Carlow. We will fund the development of a solar PV project connected into the local electricity network, with an output power capacity of 95MWac (Megawatts alternating current), alongside a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) with a capacity of 95MWac.

We've chosen this site after careful consideration, and we're now undertaking a wide range of environmental assessments to help shape our plans. These include landscape and visual, heritage and archaeology, ecology, flooding and more.

A key part of developing plans for the solar and storage project is engaging with local communities, so we're holding an information event to display our plans and gather feedback. Members of the Lightsource bp team will be on hand to answer any questions about the proposal from local residents and interested parties.

Get involved!

Community Information Event

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Our initial thoughts

Proposed solar and energy storage project at Straboe, Tullow, Co. Carlow.

We're still in the early stages, and our plans will evolve based on local input and the results of our ecological, landscape and heritage assessments. These are our current thoughts. For further details, please join us at our community information event on Wednesday 7th June 2023. Drop in between 2pm and 8pm.

Cultural Heritage Impact
We are aware that there are sites of cultural and scientific impact in the area, and have commissioned independent surveys to make sure our proposals will fully assess the potential for archaeology within the site.

Cable Route —
An underground cable will be laid from the proposed 110kV substation along the R418 and R726 to connect into the existing 110kV substation at Johnstown near Carlow town. No new overhead lines will be required as part of the grid connection.

Existing Vegetation
While developing the layout we have sought to maintain the majority of the existing vegetation onsite.

Access (▶)
Proposed construction and operational access will be from Straboe Lane and potentially off the R418 (in 2 locations) and the eastern regional road the R726.

Continued Agricultural Use
These fields are currently used for cropping and grazing. Our proposal includes plans to create a meadow grassland which can be lightly grazed by sheep, so the land under the solar project will maintain an agricultural purpose.

Battery
Our proposal includes battery storage, which allows electricity generated by the solar panels during the day to be stored and used at a later date.

Views and Screening
The site benefits from excellent screening throughout most of the fields selected. In the one area where mitigation planting is required, we will include banded planting.

Native Species
We are undertaking an Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey to inform the layout design and construction mitigation measures.

Green Open Spaces
The project is being designed to leave wide spaces around the site boundaries and between the row of panels to avoid shading the panels. This will leave the majority of the fenced solar array area as uncovered grassland.

New Vegetation Planting
We will submit a detailed planting plan as part of the planning application, which will focus on screening potential views of the installation using vegetation and increasing biodiversity.

Boosting Biodiversity
A bespoke Biodiversity Management Plan will ensure that the existing and new habitats are enhanced or created to benefit local wildlife, and that a Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) will be delivered once the site has been in place five years. As part of this initiative, our landscape planting, seeding and habitat creation plans will focus on native species. We are keen to hear from and work with any local beekeepers and land management organisations to support wildlife and boost the local habitats.

FAQS

Why is this project important?
Solar is a passive form of technology, generating electricity without creating any waste products or pollutants. This makes it an ideal energy source for Ireland.

How will the equipment be protected?
The solar and storage project will be enclosed by a timber and wire agricultural fence about 2 metres in height, and CCTV cameras will monitor the boundary fence and area within the solar installation. These will be specifically positioned to make sure they do not impinge on the privacy of residents.

How are the panels kept clean?
Generally, rainfall helps to keep the panels free of dust and dirt. The panels will be thoroughly cleaned as required using specialist equipment, to make sure the installation is in the best possible condition.

Do solar farms pose a health risk?
No - solar is a passive technology which doesn't produce any harmful by-products. All electrical equipment we use meets the Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive and are CE marked. Lightsource bp is committed to upholding the highest standards of Health and Safety, and all our solar and storage projects are developed with safety as the primary concern.

Will the solar farm cause traffic disruption?
Once the solar and storage project is in place it requires very little maintenance and approximately monthly visits in regular cars or 4x4s would cause no traffic disruption. Whilst the solar and storage project is being constructed, a traffic management plan will be put in place.

