Key benefits

The Robin Hood Solar Farm project will help to secure the UK's energy, assist in addressing the climate emergency and provide community benefits to the local area.

Powering local homes

The solar farm would generate enough clean, renewable energy to power the equivalent of 16,200 homes. This is around 85% of households in Braintree town, which has c.19,000 homes.

Energy security and lower bills

The proposals will deliver a secure supply of clean energy, thereby helping to provide energy security to the UK. The development of clean energy in the UK will enable the shift away from fossil fuels, which are exposed to volatile price changes in the international oil and gas markets. Solar farms create energy that is not subject to finite limits, as is the case for oil and gas. Transitioning to this form of energy generation (and other renewable sources) gives much greater certainty for the long-term future of energy supply to the UK, and helps reduce energy prices in our day to day lives.

Supporting the local economy

The project will deliver meaningful, long-term benefits to the local economy. Beyond generating clean energy, it will create employment opportunities during both construction and operation, helping to support local jobs and skills. We are committed to using local suppliers and contractors wherever possible, ensuring that investment stays within the community and directly benefits local businesses.

The land will remain in agricultural use throughout the life of the solar farm. The current farmer will continue to use the farm's existing meadows for cattle grazing and hay production. Within the solar farm itself, the solar panel design has been designed to allow for low-intensity sheep grazing between and beneath the rows, thereby continuing to support farming practices.

Additionally, a dedicated community benefit fund will be established to support local projects and the local economy.

Tackling climate change

The Robin Hood Solar Farm project will contribute towards the UK's transition to a low carbon economy and will help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in line with local, national, and international targets, including the legally binding commitment to reach Net Zero by 2050.[3]

The proposal would also play an important role in meeting the UK Government's ambition for 95% of the country's electricity demand to be met through clean energy sources by 2030.[4]

The project would make use of existing grid infrastructure by connecting directly to the 132kV overhead line already running through the site. This enables installation of renewable energy generation without the need for costly upgrades to the grid which might take years to deliver.

Biodiversity

Qualitas Energy is committed to ensuring that the impacts on wildlife are minimised and that the project will deliver biodiversity and habitat improvements. The project will deliver meaningful benefits for wildlife through new tree and hedgerow planting, and will seek to deliver more than the required 10% biodiversity net gain required by UK law.[5]

[3] HM Government (2008). *Climate Change Act 2008*. Available at: Climate Change Act 2008

[4] Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A new era of clean electricity, April 2025. Accessed via: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-power-2030-action-plan/clean-power-2030-action-plan-a-new-era-of-clean-electricity-main-report

[5] Environment Act 2021: Environment Act 2021

Community Benefit Fund

At Qualitas Energy, we are committed to meaningful community engagement and delivering long-term value to the local area surrounding the proposed Robin Hood Solar Farm.

As part of this commitment, we will actively work with local residents, community organisations, and other key stakeholders to gather feedback and better understand how our investment can deliver benefits to the nearby community. The Robin Hood Solar Farm represents a significant opportunity to bring lasting benefits to the area. Ensuring a thoughtful and effective community offering is a top priority.

Qualitas Energy intends to establish a community benefit fund worth approximately £500 per installed megawatt of capacity per year, index linked. At 60 MW capacity, the fund would provide £30,000 per year. With an operational life of 40 years, the community benefit fund from the Robin Hood Solar Farm would total approximately £1.2million over the project lifetime.

The Community Benefit Fund will seek to provide financial support for activities and projects within the local area following the construction and energisation of the project. Our approach is guided by the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aims to support initiatives that enhance the local community and promote the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of the area.

The approach for our Community Benefit Fund will be determined as we develop our planning submission for Robin Hood Solar Farm, in consultation with the local community.