

Who are we?



We are Lightsource, one of the world's leading solar energy companies. We fund, develop and operate solar installations across Europe, America and Asia – working with local communities, businesses and landowners in corners across the globe to develop projects which generate green energy, locally and sustainably. The solar power produced by our projects in Ireland will provide a source of clean, renewable energy which will be used locally by Irish businesses and communities. Our commitment to Ireland is long-term and we believe we can help make Ireland's energy mix more sustainable now and further into the future. We currently have 10 solar farms operating in Northern Ireland. The Muckerstown project is our fifth project in the Republic of Ireland.

Lightsource has offices in Dublin, Belfast, London and Bath – with regional operations and maintenance offices close to all of our existing sites.

Case studies



BLACK PEAK AND MUNCEYS Innovation and Engineering Excellence

In March 2015, Lightsource successfully constructed one of the first ever private substations to be built in the UK. The 132kv substation was constructed to connect two sites, Black Peak and Munceys, to the National Grid, in the absence of an existing point of connection. Though the project was a first for Lightsource and a relatively new endeavour across the UK, we were able to draw on the extensive breadth of experience of our technical and development teams, as well as our strong relationships with industry partners, to successfully complete the project. Once completed, the two nearby sites covered a total of 260 acres, with a combined installed capacity of 50MW, capable of powering more than 16,000 homes.

Get involved!

You can contact us by phone or email. If you would prefer to write to us by hand, please get in touch via email or phone and we will happily send you a pre-paid envelope.

We are still gathering information from our detailed wildlife and landscape assessments in order to refine our designs. As a result, it will be several weeks or months before we submit a formal planning application. Before we submit our planning application, we would welcome any feedback or suggestions you may have.

We welcome you to attend our Community Information Events on the 20th and 21st February (see front page for details). We would also encourage anyone who can't attend the Community Information Event to visit our website where the plans for the project can be viewed and suggestions regarding the proposal can be made.

Best wishes,
The Lightsource Planning Team

The Planning Team
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E: enquiries@lightsource-re.ie
www.lightsource-re.ie



CROOKEDSTONE SOLAR FARM Powering Belfast International Airport

Crookedstone, in Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland, is the first utility-scale solar farm on the island of Ireland. The project was completed in partnership with Belfast International Airport and the solar farm connects directly to the airport's electricity supply – providing 27% of their annual demand and saving 2,345 tonnes of carbon emissions each year, which is equivalent to taking 469 cars off the road each year.

Find out more...

We have many videos on our YouTube channel which provide more detail on the operation of our solar farm sites.

YouTube /LightsourceSolar



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Community Information Pack

PROPOSED SOLAR FARM ON LAND AT MUCKERSTOWN, CO. MEATH



Benefits

Over **11,000** homes powered by clean, locally produced electricity

Designed to accommodate sheep grazing

Biodiversity enhancement opportunities

Education opportunities

Statistics

34 Megawatts (MEC)*

20,000* tonnes of carbon emissions saved, every year

4,494* the equivalent number of large family cars off the road

* Dependent on size of project built

Lightsource is working on a proposal for a solar farm on lands at Muckerstown, 3km south of Ashbourne, off Fleenstown Lane, County Meath. Lightsource develops and operates solar farms and solar rooftop installations in both Ireland and Britain.

The proposed fields which will house this project have been chosen because they are well-screened by surrounding hedgerows and trees, so the surrounding area will have a limited view of the solar farm. The solar farm will be designed to accommodate sheep grazing allowing the land to continue in agricultural production. The wide field margins and boundary hedgerows will be managed to create enhanced habitat for local birds and wildlife. We are currently undertaking a range of environmental assessments which will be submitted with the planning application. More information on these studies will be made available at our community information events (see details below).

Generating energy locally means that Ireland can reduce its reliance on imported fossil fuel supplies. At Lightsource, we work with local communities throughout the life of the solar farm to ensure our projects are the best fit for the local area in which they operate. If you would like to learn more about how you can get involved in this project or for more information on solar energy, please get in touch with our team, or come and meet us in person at our Community Information Events at Coolquay Lodge, between 6 – 8pm on the 20th February and at Kilbride Community Centre, between 2 – 8pm on the 21st February.

Get involved!

COMMUNITY INFORMATION EVENT



We look forward to welcoming you to our Community Information Events which will take place;

Tues 20th February at;
Coolquay Lodge
Coolquay Common
Co. Dublin

Drop in any time between
6.00pm and 8.00pm

Wed 21st February at;
Kilbride Community Centre
Kilbride Village
Co. Meath

Drop in any time between
2.00pm and 8.00pm



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Our initial thoughts...

Proposed plans for Muckerstown Solar Farm, off Fleenstown Lane, County Meath

Our plans are at an early stage, so our design and planting proposals will evolve as we gather local input and assess the results of our ecological, landscape and heritage assessments. Local engagement is very important to us, and our consultations with local communities help us to design the final plan that we will submit to the planning authority. We would love to hear your thoughts and opinions. For further detail on the project, and to meet us in person, please join us at our Community Information Events between 6–8pm on the 20th February at Coolquay Lodge, and between 2–8pm on the 21st February at Kilbride Community Centre.

NB – Provisional solar farm layout illustrated

FAQs

Why harvest energy instead of food?

It isn't a choice – solar farms can do both. The solar farm on land at Muckerstown is being designed to accommodate the grazing of small livestock, enabling us to generate energy whilst continuing the agricultural use of the land.

Will the solar farm impact historical features in the area?

No. We conduct thorough heritage assessments and ensure we avoid areas containing significant buried remains, as well as avoiding sites which would adversely impact views from historical monuments. This site is well-screened from the surrounding area and the proposed panels reach a maximum height of 2.5 metres.

How will the equipment be protected?

The solar farm will be enclosed by a timber and wire agricultural fence of about 2 metres in height, appropriate for its rural setting. This is positioned within the current field pattern and on the inside of any hedgerow planting. No flood lighting is required. CCTV cameras will be installed along the fence-line and are activated by movement. The cameras only monitor the boundary fence and area within the solar farm, so as not to impinge on privacy.

Will the solar farm cause traffic disruption?

Once the solar farm is in place it requires very little maintenance and the occasional visits in regular cars or 4x4s would cause no traffic disruption. Whilst the solar farm is being installed, a traffic management plan will be in place, including organising off-peak daytime deliveries. It would take about 3-5 months to install the solar farm, averaging about 15 deliveries per day. We would welcome your thoughts and suggestions in relation to traffic management and would seek to work with the local community on this area, to arrive at a solution that works.

Is there a danger to motorists or aircraft as a result of reflection from the panels?

No. Solar panels are designed to absorb light rather than reflect it. It is generally accepted that solar farms are not dangerous to aircraft. In fact, many airports have solar installations on their premises. Lightsource has completed a utility-scale solar project with Belfast International Airport. As with all projects, we will be consulting with the Irish Aviation Authority as part of the planning process for the Muckerstown site.

Are solar farms noisy?

Solar is a passive technology, the panels produce electricity silently, so the majority of a solar farm is generally very peaceful aside from the buzz of insects in the grass. The inverters (and the fans which keep them cool) do make some noise, but they are positioned in cabins towards the centre of the site so you would not expect to hear any noise from beyond the site boundary.

How are the panels kept clean?

Typically, in the UK and Ireland, rainfall helps to clean the panels. But occasionally they will need to be cleaned manually using water and a brush. Lightsource uses a tractor-mounted system which we call the "Clean Machine". It is able to clean 10 times more panels per day than hand washing.

Do Lightsource solar farms pose a health risk?

No. Solar farms are passive installations which do not produce any harmful by-products. Certain types of solar panels contain heavy metals, such as Cadmium. However, Lightsource does not use these products. All of the electrical equipment we use meets the Electromagnetic Compatibility (EMC) Directive and is CE marked. The electromagnetic radiation that may be emitted from our electrical equipment will always be below the acceptable thresholds and will not interfere with radio transmissions.



Livestock grazing

The solar farm is being designed to accommodate the grazing of sheep. This will allow for continued agricultural use of the land, enabling the farm to produce food as well as locally-generated energy.



Species-rich grass

Species-rich grass will be sown throughout the site, including the areas oversailed by panels.

Biodiversity enhancement

The design avoids using areas shaded by boundary vegetation by leaving wide field margins around the site perimeter. These spaces can be utilised to improve prospects for wildlife by sowing wild flowers or installing hibernacula – structures for small animals and birds to take shelter in. The specific enhancements we propose here will be decided using the results of our ecological surveys as well as local input and ideas. If you would like to help shape our plans, please get in touch.

Vegetation Retained

The existing trees and hedgerows in and around the site will be retained.



Low height

The panels would reach a maximum height of 2.5 metres so views of the site would be mitigated by surrounding hedgerows and trees. To put that in context, a standard door frame is a little under 2m.



Rural fencing

A timber and wire agricultural fence, appropriate to the rural setting, of about 2 metres in height will be used. The fence will sit inside the surrounding vegetation, leaving wide field margins on the outside.

