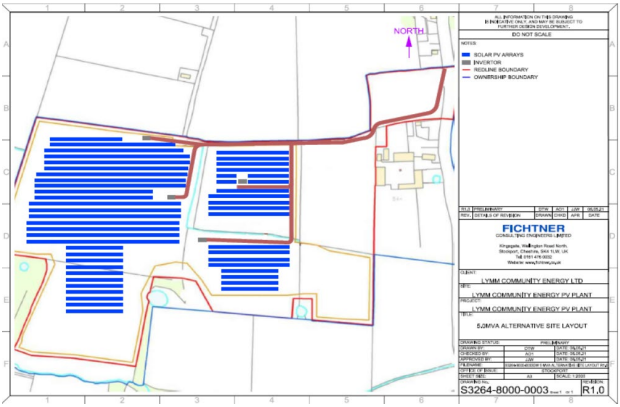


# Lymm Solar Farm

# RCEF Stage: 2



One of the proposed fields for the solar farm with the view facing towards Crouchley Hall Farm and Yew Tree Farm in the distance

Key Facts	
Technology	Solar photovoltaic (PV)
No/size of panels	11,084 x 540w
Spacing	4.5m between rows to allow for maintenance and continued use of the land.
Community Benefit	Surpluses allocated to our Community Benefit Fund

## The Story

Lymm Community Energy (LCE) has successfully installed (in 2015/16) and operated solar PV systems (126kWp) in the four primary schools in Lymm and our shareholders encouraged us in 2020 to make a new investment in renewable energy generation. This led us to the identification of an opportunity to construct and operate a solar farm of 5MW capacity on about 26 acres of land owned by a local farmer which is the subject of the RCEF project. A positive outcome to the Stage 1 feasibility study in 2021 has resulted in us securing Stage 2 funding to carry out more detailed work on planning, land lease, grid connection, fundraising and business planning. The project received widespread support for the local community from the community engagement programme in 2021 and is endorsed by Lymm Parish Council and Warrington Borough Council.

## Challenges & Risks

The main challenge has been the connection to the local grid with the original capacity of 5MW allowed by SPEN being cut back to 2.5MW due to reverse power constraints at the local substation. We are currently investigating innovative ways in which we can still install the full capacity. We would be installing on green belt land and have engaged a planning consultancy to carry out a range of surveys required by the Council before submitting the planning application. The financial plan was complicated by the current energy market chaos and the difficulty of predicting long-term prices.

## Lessons Learned

Getting pre-planning advice from the Council has been very useful for the full planning application. Land lease negotiations have been protracted and need to be started as early as possible. Confirming grid connection offer and costs early – our costs have increased significantly since the first offer from SPEN. Scheduling planning surveys to minimise disruption to the land owner and to avoid missing key timing windows e.g. for rare species.

## Key Figures

<b>Project size:</b>	5MW solar PV
<b>Tech type</b>	
<b>Energy Generation</b>	5.4 million kWh/year
<b>Private finance leveraged</b>	TBC
<b>CO2 savings</b>	1,130 tonnes/year
<b>RCEF grant</b>	Stage 1: £24,017 Stage 2: £99,980

## Further Notes

LEP area: Cheshire & Warrington

Link for further info:  
<https://lowcarbonlymm.org.uk/lymm-community-energy/>