CSA environmental

PEOPLE, PLACES AND NATURE

RENEWABLE & SUSTAINABLE ENERGY

MASTERPLANNING | ECOLOGY | LANDSCAPE | HERITAGE

PLANNING WITH CONFIDENCE

CSA has the inhouse expertise to assist you with your sustainable energy project. Our multi-disciplinary approach means that we are well placed to provide co-ordinated advice to ensure that any proposal is robustly underpinned by expert advice and technical surveys. We have worked on numerous sustainable energy projects including proposals which could affect environmentally sensitive landscapes, designated habitats or lie within the Green Belt. Our varied expertise and knowledge of the UK planning system, the natural and built environment and the energy sectors means that we are well placed to advise on key aspects of your project.

Key Disciplines:

- **Landscape Planning & Design**
- **Ecology**
- **Archaeology & Heritage**
- **Masterplanning**
- **Graphic Design**

An Expert Eye

CSA's multi-disciplinary approach means that we are well placed to provide clear and comprehensive advice and identify potential opportunities and constraints at the outset of a project to ensure the best possible chances of achieving planning consent.

We pride ourselves on:

- Our integrated multi-disciplinary team
- Providing clear, accessible advice
- Having a detailed understanding of planning and the environment
- Working with stakeholders to provide successful outcomes
- Delivering projects which consider commercial objectives and benefit people, places and nature
- Bringing great design and innovative thinking
- Providing a responsive and high-quality service
- Creating an exciting, inclusive and happy working environment

Key Facts

- Established in 1998
- Offices in Basingstoke, Brighton, Tewkesbury, Hertfordshire and Sheffield
- 70+ full-time members of staff, plus seasonal staff and specialist associates
- Working on projects all over the UK for a national client base, including housebuilders, utility companies, conservation organisations, land promoters, landowners and public bodies
- Registered practice with the Landscape Institute, the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, and the Urban Design Group

LANDSCAPE PLANNING & DESIGN

Our experienced landscape team has worked on numerous sustainable energy schemes across the UK, providing landscape and Green Belt advice to support their successful delivery. We pride ourselves on providing accurate advice on the opportunities and constraints presented on a site, the appropriate measures to mitigate adverse landscape effects, and how to deliver environmental gains.

We can help you with:

- Initial landscape advice
- Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments
- Environmental Statement chapters
- Green Belt advice and reviews
- Verified and non-verified visualisations
- Landscape strategies / detailed landscape design
- Expert Witness

ECOLOGY

Our highly qualified and skilled ecologists can identify potential conflicts at an early stage and devise appropriate mitigation strategies. We have extensive experience of Biodiversity Net Gain and work closely with our landscape architects to deliver balanced solutions.

We can help you with:

- Ecological Assessments
- Habitats Regulations Assessment
- Biodiversity Net Gain
- Protected species and habitat surveys
- Environmental Statement chapters
- Landscape and Ecology Management Plans
- Expert Witness

ARCHAEOLOGY & HERITAGE

Through a detailed analysis of the archaeological and heritage potential of a site, we provide a clear understanding of the heritage resource and advise on the steps necessary to achieve planning consent.

We can help you with:

- Heritage and Archaeological Impact Assessments
- Constraints and opportunities mapping
- Co-ordinating archaeological fieldwork contractors
- Expert Witness

MASTERPLANNING & GRAPHIC DESIGN

Our masterplanning team are experienced in understanding the opportunities provided by a site and knitting together the technical advice from other disciplines. We can assist you with developing your renewable and sustainable energy proposals for a site through the preparation of engaging layout plans. Together with our graphic design team, we can prepare attractive graphic material for Design and Access Statements or Vision Documents through the preparation of engaging layout plans..

We can help you with:

- Site layout proposals
- Design and Access Statements
- Vision Documents
- Leaflets and brochures

CASE STUDIES

Lord Bridges Solar Farm

Planning approval was granted in August 2023 for a major new solar farm in the Cambridge Green Belt. The proposal will serve Cambridge University's energy needs and make a significant contribution to its commitment to reducing its emissions from fossil fuel consumption. The new solar farm will generate 30,457 megawatt hours (MWh) per annum, which equates to 26% of the University's 2019 electricity consumption.

CSA's Role

- Landscape, visual and Green Belt advice to support the proposal.
- Preparation of LVIA and verified visualisations from selected viewpoints.
- Preparation of landscape strategies to provide mitigation and environmental / ecological benefits.
- Working with Council Landscape Officers to develop the scheme and to offset concerns relating to the potential impacts of the proposal.

Quorn Solar Farm, Leicestershire

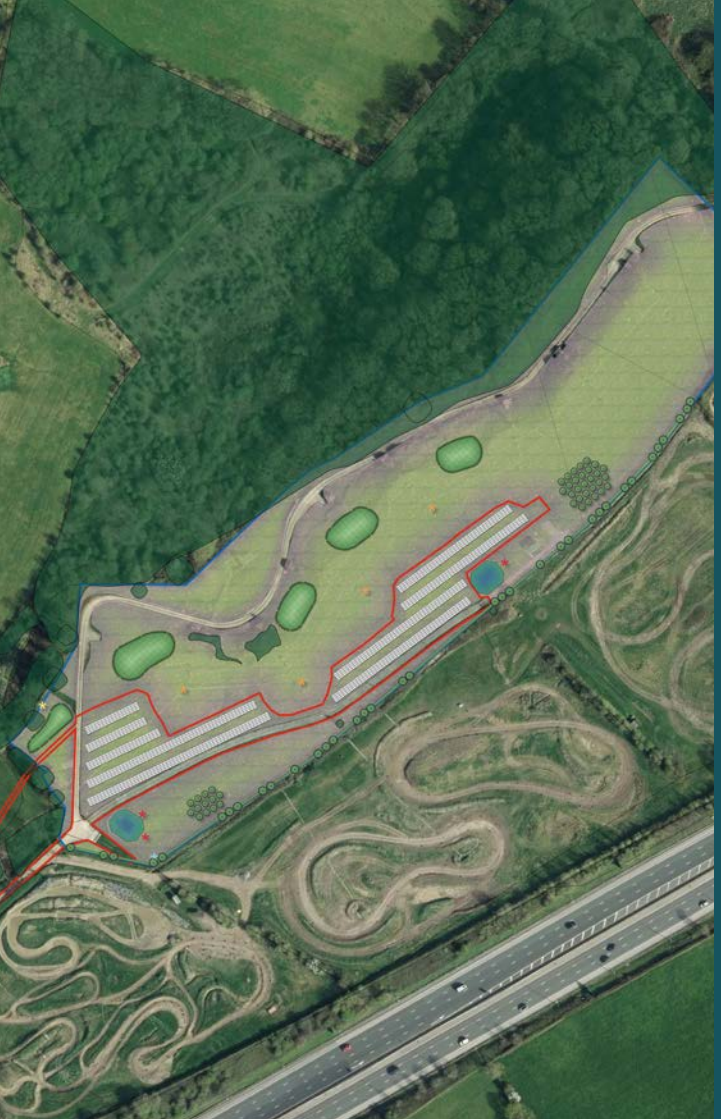
CSA acted for Leicester County Council on a detailed planning application for a 10 megawatt solar farm and commercial development. CSA landscape architects worked closely with the design team and client to develop a sensitive layout and mitigation strategy. The scheme was granted approval in 2022.

CSA's Role

- Preparation of detailed LVIA.
- Visualisations from selected viewpoints showing landscape mitigation in Years 1 and 15.
- Landscape strategy to demonstrate enhancement measures, including new trees, hedgerows, ponds and wildflower grassland.

"In my opinion the Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment undertaken by CSA Environmental has been thoroughly carried out and demonstrates that the proposed development will not lead to significant adverse landscape and visual effects..."

- Officer at Leicester County Council (2022)



Hallen Petroleum Storage Depot Solar Energy Park

The Site is located within the Green Belt, with Spanorium Hill an area of ancient woodland and a SNCI to the north and west. CSA's landscape architects and ecologists provided advise on landscape, Green Belt and ecological constraints to inform the application proposals, which were subsequently approved.

CSA's Role

- Officers agreed with the findings of CSA's LVIA and the proposed mitigation measures concluding that the effect on Green Belt Openness would be limited and that '… *the scheme has been designed to ensure the solar farm is assimilated into the landscape as well as possible.*'
- Suite of ecology surveys undertaken and appropriate mitigation strategies to protect and increase biodiversity on the site.
- Preparation of Landscape and Biodiversity Strategy and Landscape and Ecology Management Plan.

Solar Scheme in the South Downs National Park

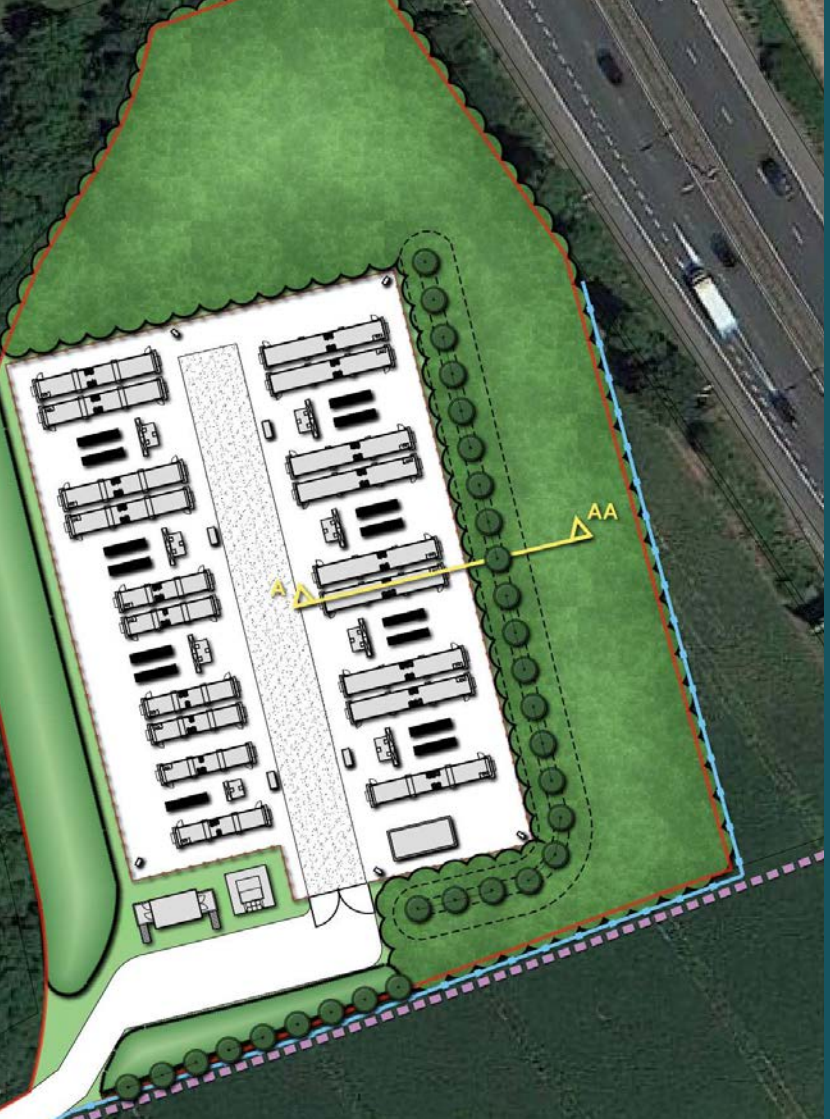
CSA was appointed to advise in respect of an Appeal against refusal of a planning application for a small solar development located within the South Downs National Park. The proposals were to serve the adjacent water pumping station and were located in close proximity to a nearby settlement. There was some intervisibility with viewpoints on higher ground in the National Park and neighbouring footpaths.

CSA's Role

- CSA undertook their own landscape and visual appraisal of the site.
- CSA recommended additional landscape mitigation measures and prepared a detailed landscape scheme to demonstrate how these proposals could be delivered to provide additional screening, contribute to local landscape character and provide biodiversity benefits.
- CSA prepared a landscape appeal statement which formed part of the written representations to the planning inspectorate. The statement considered the impact of the proposals on local views and character, in particular key views from within the National Park.

Battery Storage Scheme

CSA were appointed to provide landscape and visual advice to support amended proposals for a battery storage facility. The site is located in the Green Belt. CSA reviewed the consented scheme and assessed the implications of the proposed changes on local landscape character, views and the openness of the Green Belt.



CSA's Role

- CSA undertook their own landscape and visual appraisal of the site.
- CSA prepared a detailed landscape scheme to accompany the submission, including an enhanced planting specification for tree planting and provision of a landscaped bund. The amendments ensured that although the revised proposals were taller than the consented scheme the mitigation would remain robust.
- The Council agreed with CSAs findings and the revised scheme was approved.

BASINGSTOKE
01256 632340
basingstoke@csaenvironmental.co.uk

BRIGHTON
01273 573871
brighton@csaenvironmental.co.uk

HERTFORDSHIRE
01462 743647
ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk

SHEFFIELD
sheffield@csaenvironmental.co.uk

TEWKESBURY
01386 751100
tewkesbury@csaenvironmental.co.uk

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