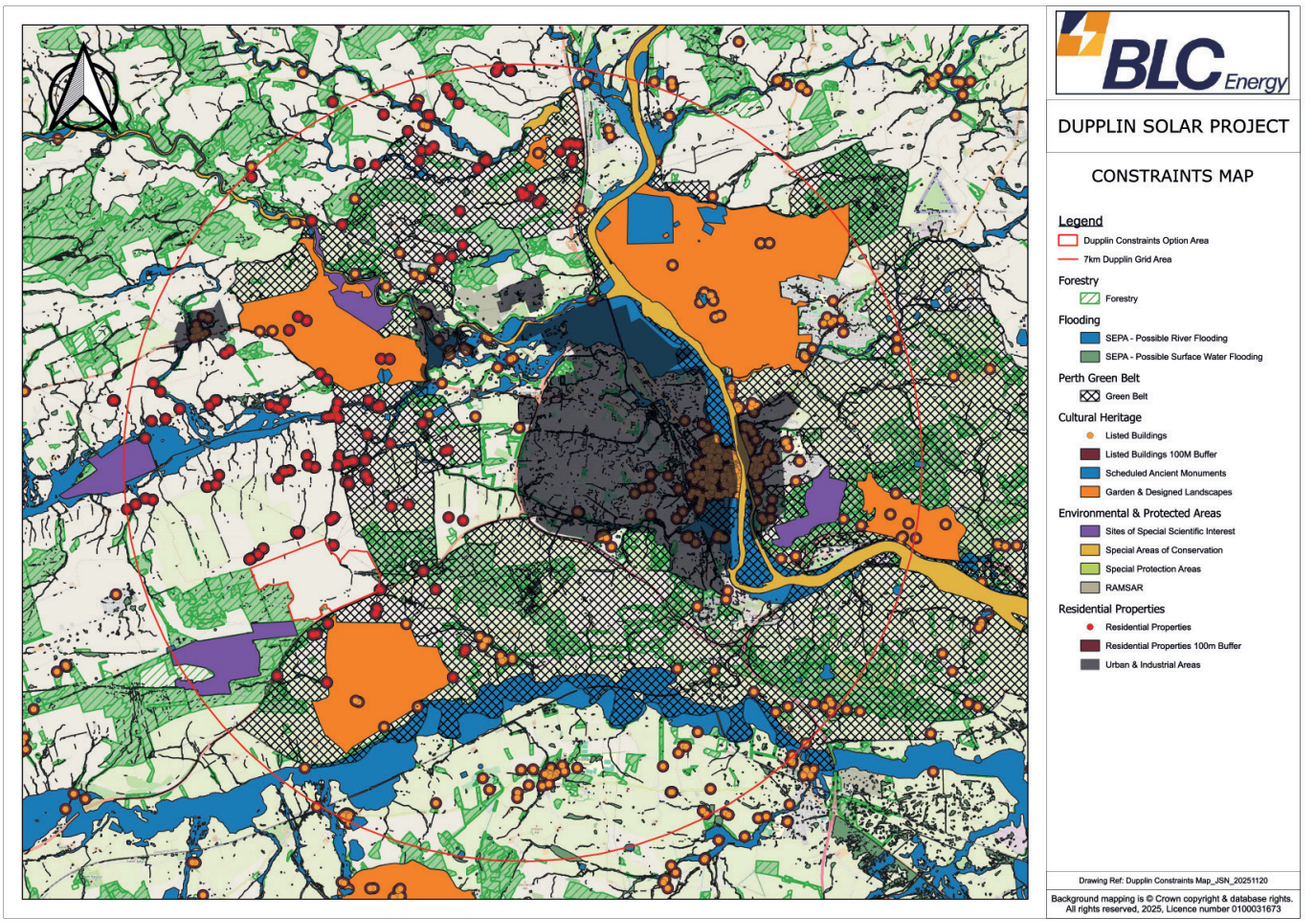
CONCERN: Loss of agricultural land

REPLY: There will be no permanent loss of agricultural land, prime or otherwise. Land use will change from intensive arable production to low intensity sheep grazing and generation of renewable energy over the course of approximately 40 years. Low intensity grazing provides a means of managing grassland while maintaining agricultural productivity and increasing its conservation value. This type of agricultural management, which includes decreased activity and disturbance from humans and machinery, can bring about significant increases in wildlife populations on agricultural land which have solar development. The lack of any use of fertiliser or pesticides, which are used in intensive agricultural systems, as well as the lack of machine cultivation which causes soil compaction, will result in a significant improvement to soil quality and natural soil nutrients. Ultimately, the limited physical infrastructure that is required on the ground area (around 5%) for a solar farm allows for quick and easy restoration of land back to its existing agricultural land use, but with much improved soil quality and biodiversity.

CONCERN: Better alternative sites, including homes' rooftops

REPLY: A detailed constraints mapping exercise (shown below) was undertaken to identify areas with 7km of the grid connection location at Burghmuir, Perth. This site was the only one that could accommodate the project without impacting on environmental designations.

We acknowledge that there are significant opportunities for roof-mounted solar development. However, there are limitations which need to be considered, including the fact that not every roof has the required orientation, pitch or structural integrity to maintain solar panels, cleaning and repairs can be difficult, there may be issues with shading from trees, chimneys or neighbouring buildings and improper installation can lead to damage to the roof fabric. Also, in this part of Scotland, any energy generating projects exceeding 200kW needs an expensive Transmission Impact Assessment to be carried out which invariably makes any project at this scale unviable. For reference in England, this threshold is 5MW (5000kW). Until this is amended large scale rooftop solar in Scotland is not viable.



CONCERN: Visual impact on the countryside

REPLY: The existing ground cover would be predominantly retained within the Site and significant new planting of trees and hedgerows, as well as wildflower meadows establishment will be undertaken. The main development area within the Site is situated at a low lying elevation, and show that visibility of the solar array would be very limited to the immediate area around the Proposed Development or within the Dupplin Estate.

There will be no views from Tibbermore/Gloagburn and very distant views from small parts of the South side of Methven. Below are 3 images that show what the project will look like from the A9 to Tibbermore Road. The first as it is today with no building, the second with the project built and the third after 10 years hedgerow growth.

VIEWPOINT 3: View west from minor road (left)

Draft

Dupplin Solar

VIEWPOINT 3: View west from minor road (left)

Draft

Dupplin Solar

VIEWPOINT 3: View west from minor road (left)

Draft

Dupplin Solar

CONCERN: Infrastructure and possible worsening of flooding in the area

REPLY: An appraisal has been undertaken of the potential impacts the Dupplin Solar project could have on the water environment with details set out in the environmental impact assessment. It has been shown that the Proposed Development is not considered to be at risk of flooding and that surface water attenuation measures in accordance with sustainable drainage principles can be provided to control both the rate and quality of discharge from solar project, so that flood risk to downstream land and property is not increased.

CONCERN: Conflict with Perth West development

REPLY: The two developments are completely separate and not linked other than being within the same landownership. The Perth West development is planned to be to the East of the Lamberkin woods. The solar development is to the West of the woods c1.8km away (along the A9).

CONCERN: Too close to homes and local disruption

REPLY: The closest visual receptors are residences located to the north, and commuters utilising the A9 northbound carriageway to the south. Potential impacts on visual amenity for residential receptors and drivers have been investigated through extensive landscape and visual analysis, as described within Chapter 5 of the EIA Report. Existing ground cover would be predominantly retained within the Site and significant new planting of trees and hedgerows, as well as wildflower meadows will be planted. Significant buffers have been added, removing any solar panels or other infrastructure in proximity to the residential properties. Access to local residential areas along Old Gallows Road to the north of the Site will remain unaffected throughout the construction and operational phase of the Proposed Development. All traffic required for the project build and operation will exit the A9 on the Kinkell Bridge/Roman Road (C411) and will not pass any properties.

CONCERN: Lack of local benefits

REPLY: We committed to providing a community benefit fund of £500 per megawatt per year, meaning £48,750 per year would be made available for local causes and initiatives over the 40 year project life. As part of this fund, we are also interested in rolling out a **Local Energy Discount Scheme** whereby households near the project can get direct discounts off their energy bills. This scheme is already in operation on an Octopus owned project elsewhere in Scotland and we are committed to offering on the solar projects we are developing including Dupplin.

As part of the wider indirect economic benefit arising from this project, we estimate that during the construction phase, the Dupplin Solar development will contribute approximately £1.11 million to the immediate local area, £2.22 million in Perth and Kinross and £3.17 million in Scotland. Over the operational period of the Dupplin Solar development, it has been estimated that the proposed Development could generate a cumulative total of £9.3 million in the local area, £18.7 million in Perth and Kinross and £25.2 million for Scotland. (The detail of this information is included in the planning application).

CONCERN: Noise that comes from the solar

REPLY: The Dupplin Solar Development will not generate any noise when operational, as the solar array does not emit noise which would impact neighbouring amenity.

The highest background noise source is from traffic on the A9. Construction noise would be managed via the Construction Environmental Management Plan.

CONCERN: Too many developments in the area

REPLY: We are aware that there are a number of other wind, solar and battery projects that are, and have been, promoted in the local area. It is unlikely that these will all be consented and built (a battery scheme was rejected at planning and subsequently has been dropped). Currently there is no national guidance to steer developers towards areas for development (unlike with Offshore windfarms) and therefore it is left up to industry to identify and develop sites.

Each project however should be assessed on its own pros and cons and there should not be a blanket rejection of all projects.

The demand for electricity in the UK is expected to double or triple by 2050 as we move away from fossil fuels for heating/cooking and transport. This could require a quadrupling of wind and solar deployment to meet this demand. (Current demand is circa 319TWh (terrawatt hours) per annum, 2050 demand is likely to increase to between 570 - 785TWh) (**www.gov.uk/government/publications/energy-and-emissions-projections-2023-to-2050**).

The potential cumulative effects of the Dupplin solar project in combination with the proposed Kinnon Park solar development would not be significant due to the distance between them and the effect of intervening landform.

CONCERN: No trust in developers or decision makers

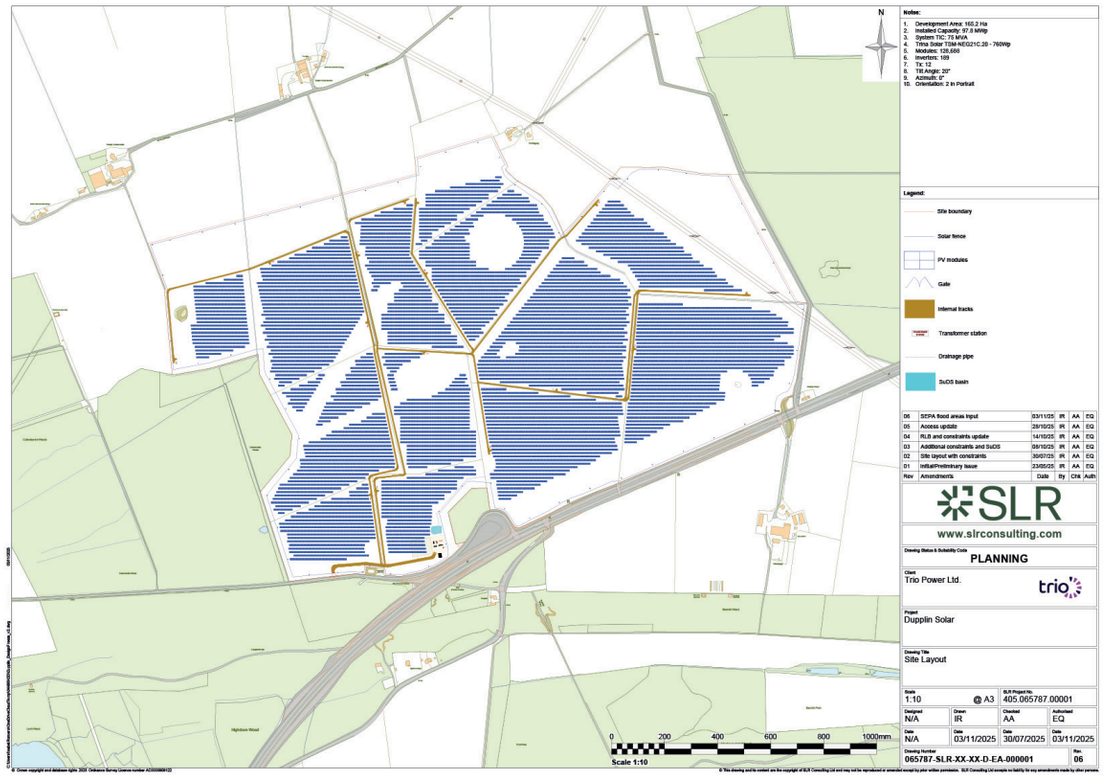
REPLY: BLC Energy (as a local company based in Aberuthven) and Octopus Renewable Infrastructure Trust understand the importance of ensuring all information provided on the projects we develop is as accurate as possible and available to everyone to see. All documents from the planning application and environmental impact assessment will be available both on the Energy Consents Unit and BLC Energy websites to view. Hard copies will also be available to view at Perth and Crieff libraries.

The Dupplin Solar project planning application will be determined by Scottish Ministers and the process is managed by the Energy Consents Unit of the Scottish Government. Perth & Kinross Council is a key stakeholder in this process as are other statutory agencies such as NatureScot, SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland etc. There is a well understood, rigorous examination process undertaken to assess the impacts of this project and these stakeholders can object if they feel that the project has negative environmental impacts that can't be mitigated.

CONCERN: Traffic in the area

REPLY: As discussed earlier, all traffic required for construction and operation of the project will come off the A9 and onto the C411 (Kinkell Bridge/Roman Road) and will not pass any properties.

No site traffic will use the A9 – Tibbermore Road, the Perth/Tibbermore Road or the Perth/Methven (A85) Road.



CONCERN: Tourism

REPLY: Views of the solar array would be very limited to the immediate area around the Proposed Development or within the Dupplin Estate. New hedgerow and tree planting will help screen the site and therefore no likely impact on tourism from the project is expected. The community benefit funds could also be used to improve local facilities thereby creating a positive impact on tourism.

CONCERN: Impact on Tibbermore Church

REPLY: No construction or operational access will be provided from the U47 road (the road between the A9 and Tibbermore) adjacent to the Tibbermore Church. Due to the landform and topography, there is expected to be no views of the solar panels from the church. The new hedgerow and tree planting will help ensure this as well.

CONCERN: Pedestrian access during roadworks

REPLY: There are no Core Footpaths within or in proximity of the Site. The only informal path network that would be potentially utilised by locals /dog walkers would be Old Gallows Road (approximately 200m north of the Site boundary), where several residential dwellings are located. Local and residential access at Old Gallows Road will be maintained for the duration of the construction and operational phases of the Proposed Development. Internal access tracks have been designed so that construction traffic will avoid the residential dwellings on Old Gallows Road. As detailed earlier, there will be no site traffic on the A9 – Tibbermore Road (U47).

CONCERN: Historical battle areas

REPLY: The Battle of Tippermuir (1644) was fought nearby and it has been confirmed by relevant consultees (the 1st Marquis of Montrose Society, Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust and Historic Environment Scotland) that the solar project is not located within the precise geographical location of the battle itself which occurred closer to Perth. Old Gallows Road runs east to west approximately 300m north of the Site and is considered relevant to the battlefield.