

NOTICE OF MOTION	Date of Council Meeting: 15 th January 2025
	Mover: Cllr Ball
	Seconder: Cllr Thorp
	Title of Motion: Protecting our farmland and countryside by prioritising solar panel installations on roofs and car parks

Council Notes:

1. An increased use of renewable energy sources, such as solar power, is critical in meeting the UK's net-zero commitments and tackling climate change.
2. Agricultural land is a finite and invaluable resource for food security, biodiversity, and the rural economy. Open, unspoilt countryside is important for conservation, health and wellbeing and public amenity.
3. Rooftops and car parks represent underutilised spaces that are highly suitable for solar panel installations, without reducing the many benefits of greenfield land, in particular its potential for food production and agriculture.
4. Several successful initiatives, including solar canopies over car parks (as seen in parts of the UK and Europe), demonstrate that solar power can be integrated into urban and suburban spaces effectively, generating significant energy and providing dual use, without the societal costs of losing large areas of greenfield land.

Council Believes:

1. Preserving greenfield land and farmland is essential for ensuring local and national food security, especially in the face of global climate pressures and rising population demands.
2. Solar energy development must be balanced with the need to protect greenfield land for other purposes, including agriculture, and the need to maintain the harmony of our countryside.
3. Encouraging rooftop and car park solar installations will promote sustainable energy generation, while safeguarding land for farming and environmental conservation.

Council Resolves:

1. To adopt a political stance in favour of small, discrete, solar panel installations, supporting their installation on:
 - Rooftops of commercial, residential, and public buildings.
 - Car parks through the development of solar canopies.
2. To encourage the use of brown field land for large-scale solar farms.
3. To actively encourage partnerships with private and public sector organisations to maximise the use of existing infrastructure for renewable energy projects.
4. To campaign at a regional and national level for policies that align with these priorities and provide financial incentives for rooftop and car park solar projects.