

# Time is ticking: Why it's vital to secure your approval for solar now

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**With the price of energy jumping as much as 130% in the last year<sup>1</sup>, solar has gone from being a 'maybe' to a 'must' for many farmers.**

Whilst it's a given that the sooner you install solar, the sooner you can start saving on bills; there's another important reason to act fast now - and it may not be what you think.

## Finite capacity, filling up fast

The National Grid ESO (Electricity System Operator), is the organisation tasked with the safe, efficient and reliable delivery of electricity across the UK. Locally the Grid's network is managed by the District Network Operator (DNO) - previously known as Western Power in the South West and SSE further east. The DNO doesn't only maintain pylons, substations and cables. Crucially, it also decides whether your solar panel system can be connected to the National Grid, before it goes live. And this is the important bit - it's not a given they'll always say 'yes'.

Farmers and agricultural businesses are finding it increasingly difficult to connect their new solar systems to the National Grid. And the reason - lack of capacity. In some cases, the grid is unable to handle excess energy, independently generated and fed back to the grid. This is a massive concern and unless our country's power infrastructure is upgraded, the problem is likely to get worse<sup>2</sup>.

Not many people know about this issue - but it's crucial that you're aware. Capacity on the National Grid is a **disappearing resource** that's being consumed over time by others.

So, if you're thinking about solar for your farm or business, it's essential that you understand two things today:

1. The size (maximum generation capacity), of your system you'll want to **potentially connect** to the grid in the future; based on your budget, infrastructure, energy bills and - ultimately - the Return on Investment (ROI) you're looking to achieve.

2. The size (maximum generation capacity), of your system you'll be **allowed by your DNO to connect** to the grid in the future.

## Not just a phase - another consideration

To be able to generate enough power to have a meaningful impact on your business energy bills, your site will ideally have a three-phase supply.

If you have a split-phase supply, this can also work well for solar but is less common.

A single-phase supply, typically used in residential properties, will restrict you to around 4kW of solar capacity - enough to generate around 4,000kWh of free power each year. For context: a small dairy farm uses around 80,000kWh of energy each year.

Therefore, a single-phase supply may not be enough to help you significantly reduce your energy bills.

## Working for you

Our surveyors will be able to determine the optimum size solar array for your business; having consulted you on the type of energy supply you have on-site, your building stock, the location of your electricity meters and the amount of energy you're using.

Armed with this information, we'll apply, on your behalf, to your local DNO, to obtain their authorisation for connecting your new system to the grid.

## The good news

We've been installing solar for farms and businesses for twelve years, working closely with the DNOs during this time. They know our customers' applications are based on detailed, specialist evaluations, and this helps to ensure your approval process runs smoothly.

So let's help you get connected. Give our team a call today.

Thank you to all our customers: past, present and future. Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!



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