

# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – RECORD OF DECISION

**DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:** Mr David Brazier, Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport

**DECISION NO:**  
14/00076

**For publication**

**Subject:** Position Statement on Development of Large Scale Solar Arrays

**Decision:**

As Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport, I agree to support the approach taken in the position statement and endorse the document as setting out the position of KCC in the assessment of solar arrays and provision of comments to districts. In addition, I agree that support should be sought from the Kent Planning Officers Group (KPOG) for the adoption of the document across the districts.

**Reason(s) for decision:**

The District Councils are the determining authorities for planning applications for large scale solar arrays, but KCC is a formal consultee and provides advice on matters including the landscape/visual, ecological, historical and agricultural impacts of these schemes. A decision is required to enable the position statement to be adopted by KCC which will ensure consistency across the County when being consulted by District Councils for planning applications on large scale solar arrays.

**Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:**

On 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014 the Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee endorsed that the Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport support the policy statement as setting out KCC's position on the assessment of solar arrays and the provision of comments to districts.

Following input from the Cabinet Committee discussion references to the historical environment have been strengthened within the position statement to make a clear distinction between the possible impacts on World Heritage Sites, protected monuments, archaeological sites and heritage assets.

**Any alternatives considered:**

Alternatives considered include not producing a KCC Position Statement and responding to planning applications for large scale solar arrays as and when they are submitted to the District Councils.

Kent is currently experiencing an unprecedented number of planning applications for large scale solar farms. This reflects the county's southerly position and good solar resource and the availability of attractive government support. There is concern about the scale and potential cumulative impact these solar farms could have on the Kent countryside particularly in terms of visual, ecological, historical and agricultural impacts. It would not be possible for KCC to achieve a consistent evaluation of solar farm impacts across Kent without the adoption of a KCC Position Statement.

**Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:**

None

signed

date

22.7.14