

Construction starts on new solar array at Weeton Barracks

1 year ago



Work will shortly start to construct a solar array at Weeton Barracks in Lancashire that will generate over one third of the site's energy needs.

The work has been funded under the British Army's Project Prometheus, a scheme that is increasing renewable energy across the Army estate through installation of solar arrays on suitable military sites. The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) contracted the work to [Mitie](#) & Custom Solar on behalf of the Army.

The 1,638 panels will cover an area of approximately 3,600 m² of land, which had previously been used for hangars until they were demolished a number of years ago. Once complete later this year, the array will generate 648 Mwh per year of environmentally-friendly energy. This is anticipated to provide 35% of the site's energy needs, saving energy costs for the taxpayer and reducing the proportion of energy used at Weeton Barracks generated by fossil fuels.

Lieutenant Colonel Jamie Walkworth RE, Assistant Head of the Army's Sustainability, Efficiency and Exploitation team, said: "We are delighted to see work getting underway to deliver a new solar installation at Weeton Barracks.

"By increasing the supply and availability of renewable energy on Army sites, we are building a more sustainable estate that will enhance our energy resilience and support operational capability, while protect the environments where our people live, work and train."

Maj Peter Reid, 1 LANCS Quartermaster, said: "It is excellent to see the significant investment in renewable

energy here at Weeton Barracks, which will reduce our impact on the environment through on-site electricity generation. The new solar farm will also bring additional benefits to the site by protecting and enhancing the local wildlife and providing us with a platform for local engagement and learning.”

Katie Owen, DIO’s Project Manager, said: “This is the first ground-mounted array to be started under the second phase of Project Prometheus and follows from the success of the first phase of the work. Once complete, a significant proportion of Weeton Barracks energy needs will be met by electricity generated on site.”

Gary Sucharewycz, Managing Director for Solar and Storage, Custom Solar, part of Mitie, said: “We’re proud to be supporting the Defence Infrastructure Organisation on this major step on its path to decarbonising the British Army’s estate. Strengthening our existing partnership with the DIO, we look forward to bringing our expertise in large-scale solar infrastructure on this latest project towards developing more high-performing places for military personnel to live and work.”

The site surrounding the solar array will also be planted with a variety of plants including grasses, shrubs and bushes in an effort to improve the biodiversity and available habitats.

The Army’s first solar farm opened at the Defence School of Transport in Leconfield in 2021 under the first phase of Project Prometheus. A further three arrays have since been delivered at Baker Barracks on Thorney Island, Rock Barracks in Suffolk and Duke of Gloucester Barracks.

Under the second phase of the project, over 1200 roof-mounted solar panels have already been fitted to buildings at Army garrisons across Salisbury Plain Training Area. In addition, solar arrays are being considered for other military sites as well as Weeton Barracks over coming years. The potential locations include Kinloss Barracks and Glencorse Barracks in Scotland, Bassingbourn Barracks in Cambridgeshire, the Military Corrective Training Centre (MCTC) in Colchester, Larkhill Garrison in Wiltshire and the Army Air Corps Centre in Hampshire.