

Appendix 1

DARSHAM VILLAGE HALL Solar panel project

Company	Survey conducted	Base cost excl. VAT	No. panels	System size	Panel warranty	Inverter size	Inverter warranty	Battery storage	Battery warranty	Solar hot water	Vehicle charger	Emergency backup	Bird protection
Square1 Installations	Yes	£20,588.00	27	11.2 kw	10 years	10 kw	5 years	11.6 kw	10 years	Included	Included	£1,200.00	£595.00
East Green	No	£27,872.25	28	11.62 kw	15 years	Not stated	12 years	13.5 kw	10 years	£650.00	£1,400.00	Not quoted	£850.00
Greenscape	No	£25,057.54	28	11.76 kw	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	11.6 kw	Not stated	Not quoted	Included	Not quoted	Not quoted
Greenscape	No	£27,009.71	36	15.12 kw	Not stated	Not stated	Not stated	11.6 kw	Not stated	Not quoted	Included	Not quoted	Not quoted

Notes

Objectively, based on the above, the clear frontrunner is Square1 Installations. They are not only by far the most affordable, but their quote also is the most comprehensive and includes much more than the others in terms of solar hot water and a vehicle charger. They were also the only company to conduct an on-site survey and to provide a wealth of information with their quote.

Of the two companies to provide some warranty information, Square1 Installations has the shorter warranty, although we could make enquiries regarding the cost of an extended warranty, if appropriate.

One of the key reasons that we are pursuing this project is due to the village hall's status as a REST centre in the event of an emergency. Square1 Installations is the only company to have even acknowledged this request in its quote.

Bird proofing would be essential. Issues with birds (especially pigeons) trying to nest underneath panels are common, and this can cause quite substantial mess and ultimately damage.

Considerations

Due to any potential project being funded from the Parish Council CIL fund, we need to understand how this works logistically - would the council essentially give the village hall the money? This then raises the issue of how to reclaim the VAT. If the council buys the system directly, there is then the potential issue of ownership and responsibility for future maintenance/repairs, as well as rights to any income made. This requires careful consideration and enquiries.

Following enquiries with the CIL team, they made specific mention of an electric vehicle charger in relation to CIL eligibility, although they did not define how they would expect that charger to be used. I think a charger would be a very useful asset, provided that there are clear rules in place regarding its use (e.g., only when the village hall is in use, or only by villagers). Alternatively, it could be made into an income source in its own right, if you decided to charge for usage, either by way of an annual membership or pay-per-use method). Again, there needs to be careful consideration of how you would want this to work.