CLEVE HILL SOLAR PARK

Introducing Our Proposals and Consultation Programme

Autumn 2017

www.clevehillsolar.com

CLEVE HILL
SOLAR PARK

1. Introduction

Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd is presenting its proposals for a solar park by the north Kent coast.

The Cleve Hill Solar Park would generate renewable power through photovoltaic panels, providing clean power to homes across Kent.

This briefing pack has been produced to let you know who we are, what we are proposing to develop, and how you can influence our plans. If you would like to discuss any of this in further detail, you can get in touch with us using the contact details at the end of this document.

Who We Are

Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd is a joint venture formed by two solar industry specialists – Hive Energy Ltd and Wirsol Energy Ltd.

Founded in 2010, Hive Energy has established itself as the second largest developer of solar parks in the UK, responsible for the installation of 300 Megawatts (MW) of capacity across the country and providing enough clean electricity for over 100,000 homes.

Wirsol is a highly experienced solar park developer, constructor and operator across the UK and Australia. Combining the installation of world-class components and the implementation of rigorous operation and maintenance processes, Wirsol have both built and operate 24 solar parks across the UK. Their success has been underpinned by the formation of long-lasting relationships with local communities and investors.

Saxon Shore Way

Isle Of Sheppey

Aerial View of Cleve Hill with Proposed Red Line Boundary for the Cleve Hill Solar Park

2. Why Solar Power?

The UK has THREE energy priorities:

1. Keeping the lights on by ensuring security of supply through more local energy generation.
2. Switching to a low carbon energy future.
3. Keeping prices low for customers.

Solar power is cost-effective

A quarter of the UK's generating capacity is due to close by 2018, largely due to the closure of many of the UK's power plants. A new mix of energy generation is needed to keep the lights on. Solar parks have for many years been eligible for public subsidies. That subsidy was ultimately paid for by the tax payer and consumer. However, solar developers, like Hive Energy and Wirsol Energy, have been successful in driving down the costs of construction and maintenance, such that the costs of photovoltaic solar power have dropped significantly. Solar power is now one of the most cost-effective sources of electricity generation in the UK. The Government has decided that subsidies should no longer play any role in solar development, which is good news for the consumer. **This means that the Cleve Hill Solar Park does not require government funding.** Across the UK cheap electricity from solar farms could put £425m back into consumers' pockets through reduced energy bills by 2030.[1] Energy from the sun is a free and natural resource. The operating costs of solar farms are very low in comparison.

Solar power can be stored

The UK Government wants smart and clean technologies that are home grown and low cost. This project could have a generating capacity in excess of 350MW. **This is enough clean electricity to power around 110,000 UK homes annually.**[2]

The technology is now available to install a battery storage option, **storing the sun's power** and distributing it to the grid when it's needed the most. Such technologies, enabling a more flexible power system, are estimated by the National Infrastructure Commission to save consumers up to £8bn a year by 2030. Furthermore, given the UK's underlying strengths in science and energy technology, this project could showcase the UK as a global leader in battery technology.

Solar power production is renewable and does not emit CO_2

The UK has ambitious climate change targets, and needs to significantly increase its renewable energy capacity in order to achieve the goal of reducing carbon emissions.[3] In addition, the UK has to address the gap between energy demand and generation caused by the decommissioning of old and polluting power stations which now need to be replaced.

Renewable technologies, such as solar, are required to reduce and manage the levels of carbon that are being emitted into the atmosphere. **It is estimated that for every 5MW installed, a solar farm will power 1,515 homes for a year and save 2,150 tonnes of CO_2.**[4]

Solar farms are also considered to be one of the most environmentally-friendly ways of generating power. They produce practically no noise or waste, require minimal maintenance and represent a reversible land use.

Solar power means big business for UK industry, and more jobs

Technological innovation contributes heavily to our low carbon future. The growing renewables sector is predicted to deliver up to **half a million jobs by 2020**.[5] Currently, the British solar industry is made up of over 2,000 Small and Medium Enterprises, supporting 16,000 jobs.[6] In addition to this, 62% of the capital and operational costs of large-scale solar accrue to the UK, which is higher than for other technologies.[7]

Solar power is a safe form of electricity generation and has environmental benefits

There are minimal, if any, hazards associated with solar parks. Solar photovoltaic panels do not pose a risk of explosion, chemical leaks or toxic fumes, unlike other sources of energy generation.

More favourable land management practices across solar farms are resulting in greater plant diversity on solar farms. Greater botanical diversity leads to an overall increase in species diversity including butterflies and bumblebees.[8] The presence of these species is particularly important for birds of conservation concern.

Solar Panels

[1] Solar Trade Association 2017.

[2] Based on Solar Trade Association's statistic: It is estimated that for every 5MW installed, a solar farm will power 1,515 homes for a year.

[3] The 2008 Climate Change Act established the world's first legally binding climate change target. Following the Act, the UK aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% (from the 1990 baseline) by 2050 (UK Government).

[4] Based on an average annual consumption of 3,300 kWh of electricity for a house (Solar Trade Association).

[5] DECC 2011.

[6] CEBR 2014.

[7] Solar Trade Association 2015.

[8] Hannah Montag, Dr Guy Parker and Tom Clarkson: The Effects of Solar Farms on Local Biodiversity: A Comparative Study (2016).

3. Cleve Hill Solar Park

We are proposing to develop the Cleve Hill Solar Park on the north Kent coast. The project could have a generating capacity exceeding 350MW. This would be enough to power approximately 110,000 homes a year,[9] roughly the equivalent number of households for the Swale and Canterbury Districts combined.[10]

The land will continue to provide space for key bird species as well as enhancing biodiversity through land management practices. There is also the potential for an energy storage solution to be incorporated on site, which would store excess solar power for when we next need it.

The proposed development site is on an area of approximately 890 acres (360 hectares) of agricultural land mostly classified as Grade 3b (moderate/poor). The site is located on the north Kent coast, roughly 1 mile northeast of Faversham, 3 miles west of Whitstable and situated closest to the village of Graveney, ME13 9EE.

Cleve Hill Solar Park would require electrical connection infrastructure and a substation, which we intend to connect to the existing National Grid substation. Adjoining the site is a large 150/400kV electricity substation, which serves the London Array offshore wind farm beyond the mouth of the Thames Estuary to the north. Eight 400kV pylons and power lines currently cross the site.

Public rights of way run across the site, and to the north and west boundaries of the site lies the Saxon Shore Way. Our proposals seek to co-exist with the existing environment and we do not propose to permanently close these pathways.

The vision for the scheme

Our ambition is to deliver a scheme that helps to address national and local objectives, whilst supporting the neighbouring community.

We are committed to generating more renewable energy. We firmly believe that the communities involved should benefit from hosting this renewable energy generation and we will strive to be a good neighbour. To make this happen, we will work with local communities to ensure that our proposals represent an inclusive and holistic scheme.

Our primary objective is to deliver renewable energy generation in a way that respects the interests of local neighbours. Throughout the consultation process for the project we will be inviting ideas from local stakeholders on area improvements, such as enhanced access and facilities for bird watchers or upgrading existing rights of way.

Components of a typical solar farm

1. **Solar Energy**
2. **Fencing**
3. **Solar Panels**
4. **Inverter (DC to AC power converter)**
5. **Landscape Area**
6. **Substation**
7. **Battery Storage**
8. **Underground Cable**

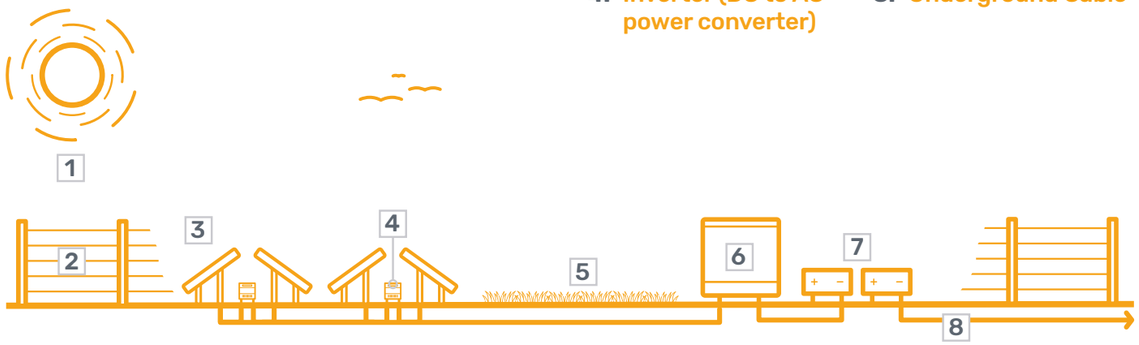


Figure not to scale and for indicative purposes only.

[9] Based on Solar Trade Associations statistic: It is estimated that for every 5MW installed, a solar farm will power 1,515 homes for a year.

[10] Based on 2011 Census information for households with residents in Swale (55,585) and Canterbury (60,771).

Key Benefits of Cleve Hill Solar Park

This project is **non-subsidised** so will not receive government funding.

£1,081,334 revenue per annum will be generated for Kent and Swale Councils.*

Cleve Hill Solar Park could save **150,500** tonnes of CO_2,** equivalent to **29,400** cars.***

Dedicated mitigation areas for **bird species** including: Lapwing, Brent Goose, Golden Plover and Marsh Harrier.

Option for onsite **battery** storage technology.

Cleve Hill Solar Park's capacity should exceed **350MW.**

Cleve Hill Solar Park has the potential to power **110,000 UK homes.**

* Based on 2015 1.3 ROC calculation (£6450 x 350MW) x (0.479), new calculations will come into effect in 2022.

** Based on Solar Trade Association's statistic: It is estimated that for every 5MW installed, a solar farm will save 2,150 tonnes of CO_2.

*** You Sustain (2017), www.yousustain.com.

4. Proposed Site Layout

We have been conducting bird surveys since 2014. There are a number of bird species in the area using more than one habitat. Some feed in the mudflats at low tide and then move up to roost on the saltmarsh or on fields inland of the sea wall.

The Saxon Shore Way long distance walking route runs around the western and northern perimeters of the site.

During the breeding season (April to September) bird species including Marsh Harrier, Little Tern and Lapwing, can be spotted.

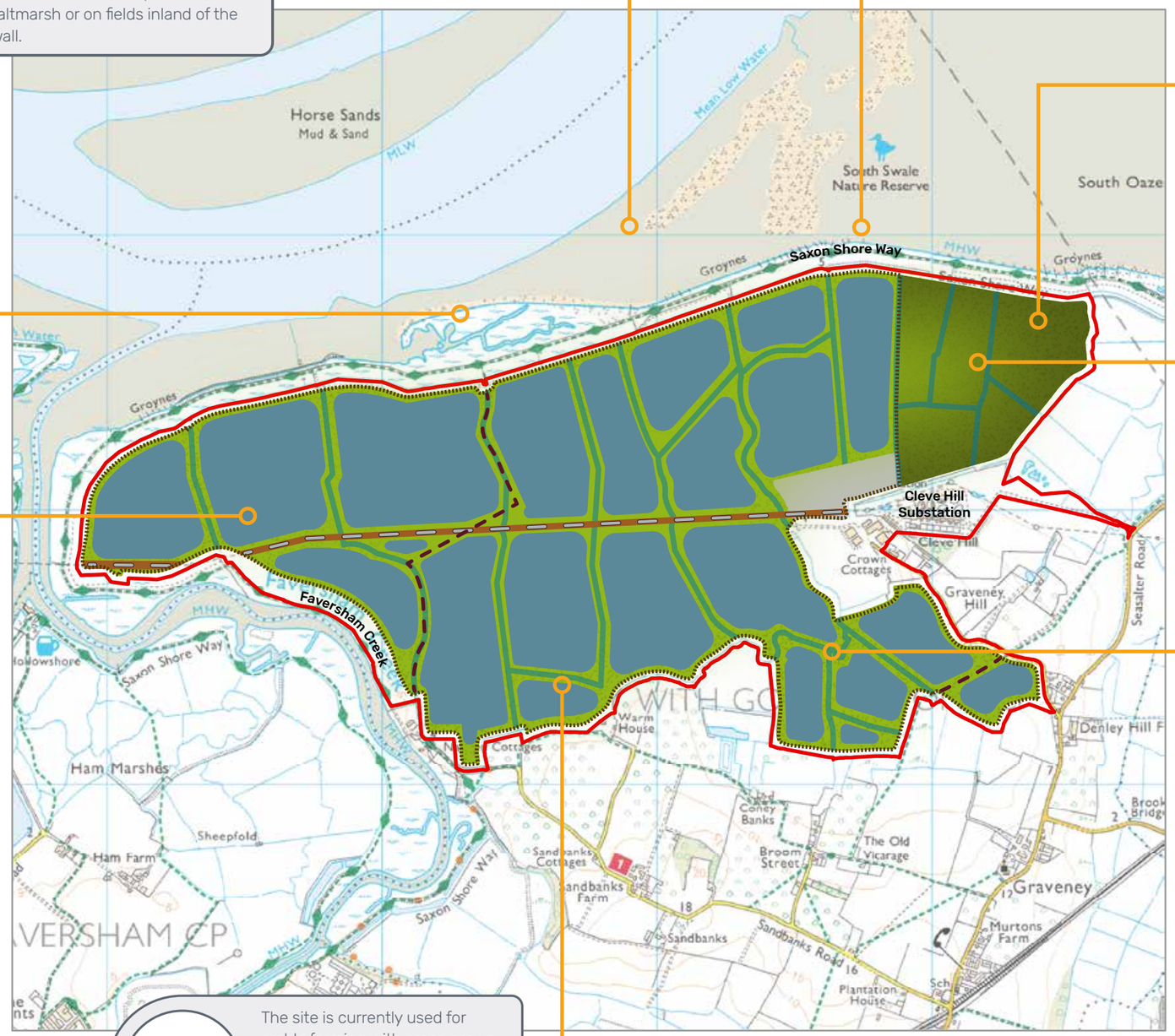
The site is defended from tidal flooding by the sea wall and coastal flood defences.

During the wintering period (September to April) bird species including Golden Plover, Lapwing and Geese, can be spotted.

Ecology surveys for protected species including great crested newts, water voles, bats and badgers have been undertaken in and around the site area.

Intersecting the fields are drainage ditches.

The site is currently used for arable farming with crops grown such as wheat and beans. However, the site is classified as low or poor grade agricultural quality (Grade 3b).



Key

- Site area boundary
- Indicative area for ground mounted solar panels
- Deer fence
- Substation and battery storage area
- Public Right of Way
- Internal access trackway
- Overhead power lines and pylons
- Habitat mitigation area
- Drainage ditches

5. The Local Environment

We have been undertaking bird surveys and getting to know the local environment since 2014.

Through our work we have built up a detailed understanding of the site, as well as neighbouring sites of ecological importance, including the Swale National Nature Reserve and Swale Protected Area. We are keen for our development to support and contribute to the biodiversity of the area and are committed to delivering a nationally significant renewable energy project that respects the local environment.

The proposed site is used by birds, as well as other wildlife. With this in mind, we are undertaking several studies and working with environmental experts to create dedicated areas within the site for a number of species. We consider this to be an opportunity to enhance the wider environment and we propose to set aside areas of the park specifically for wildlife and biodiversity improvements.

Golden Plover

Brent Goose

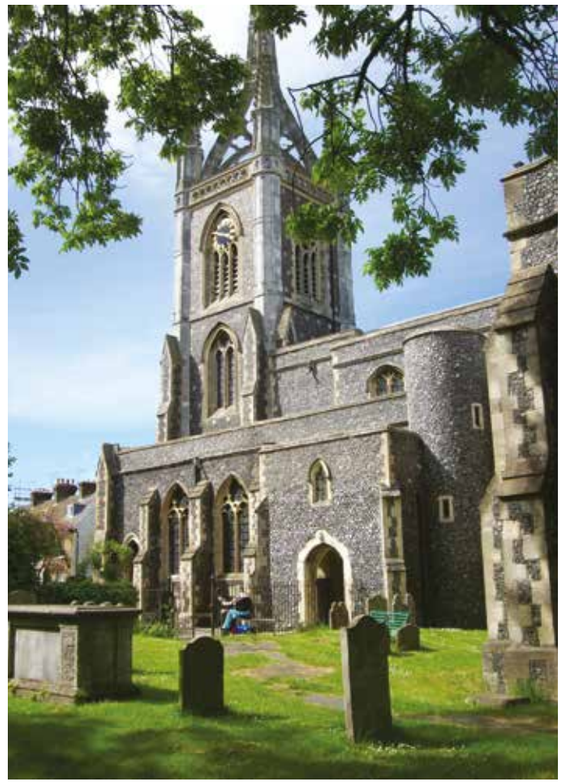
As part of the Environmental Impact Assessment process we will be consulting with a wide range of statutory environmental groups including Natural England and the Environment Agency as well as local groups such as the Kent Wildlife Trust.

As part of the planning process we will be undertaking extensive public consultation to receive feedback to our proposals and understand issues of local importance.

We want to ensure co-existence and harmony between the Cleve Hill Solar Park and its environment. We will be setting aside areas of the park specifically for wildlife and land management.

Marsh Harrier

Lapwing



Saint Mary in Trinity, Faversham

Reed-Filled Ditch, Seasalter

6. The Development Process

Cleve Hill Solar Park is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) as it is proposed to have a generating capacity exceeding 50MW. We will be applying for a Development Consent Order (DCO) through the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). The application will be determined by the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.

A DCO application is planned to be submitted in summer 2018. Prior to this we will be commencing an extensive series of public and statutory consultations on our plans for the scheme.

Public consultation

Currently our proposals for Cleve Hill Solar Park are at an early stage and much work is required to refine the proposals following consultee feedback. We are committed to undertaking clear and comprehensive public consultation before we submit our application. We value local knowledge and we are confident that this consultation process will result in a strong set of proposals that respects the neighbouring community while generating clean energy.

Our public consultation programme will start in autumn 2017 and will continue throughout the development phase of the project up until application submission. Our team are dedicated to working with communities throughout the development of the scheme and beyond should the scheme be granted permission. A key aspect to our process is to ensure people receive useful information and that they are able to comment and provide feedback. We believe in an iterative approach to engaging communities and plan on presenting and refining our proposals across two phases of consultation, as outlined in our Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC). Throughout the process, we will report on the feedback that we have received, and how this has helped to shape our proposals.

Meetings and events

We are planning to hold two rounds of public events at locations across our consultation area, including Graveney, Faversham and Seasalter. These events will give a direct opportunity for people to view our plans and discuss them with members of the team. Our first round of events are proposed for winter 2017. Our second round of events will take place in spring 2018.

We will meet regularly with the Graveney and Goodnestone Parish Council and key local stakeholder groups to share updates and receive feedback on the proposals.

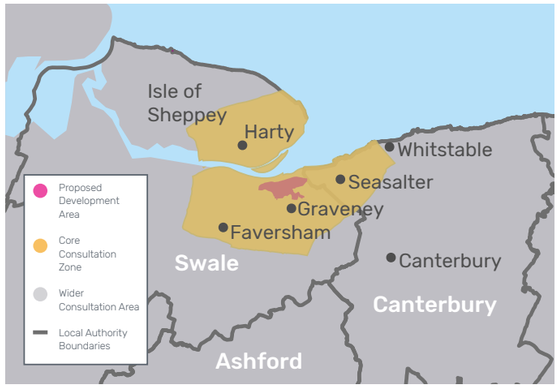
Solar Panels

Literature

Stakeholder briefing packs will be provided to councillors at the start of the consultation to introduce the scheme and inform them how their constituents will be engaged with during the process.

Consultation leaflets will be distributed to all properties within our core consultation zone and will be available at key locations in our wider consultation zone. Leaflets will provide information on the proposals and details of how the local community can have their say.

Newsletters will be distributed on a quarterly basis to update all properties in the core consultation zone on the plans and proposals. Copies of these newsletters will be available on our project website.



Consultation Map

Communication channels

A Freephone information line is available for interested parties to call to ask questions and provide feedback. Please call us on 0800 328 2850.

A project email address is also open for questions and comments. Please email us at info@clevehillsolar.com.

Publicly available information

A dedicated project website will be avaliable to find out more information and provide your feedback. Please visit us at: www.clevehillsolar.com.

Local media publications will publish adverts to inform local communities of our consultation.

Our Statement of Community Consultation

Detailed information regarding the consultation process can be found in our SoCC, which is available to download from our website. Hard copies of the SoCC will also be made available at community access points.

Environmental Impact Assessment

In parallel to the public consultation we will be undertaking extensive environmental surveys and studies and consulting with a range of statutory stakeholders.

Scoping Report
A Scoping Report will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. This will present the development proposals and will describe how we will assess any potential impacts to the existing environment. The feedback that Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd receives on this document from the local planning authorities and statutory consultees will result in a Scoping Opinion from PINS, which will be made publicly available.

Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)
The PEIR will build upon the findings from the earlier scoping documents, as well as the feedback received through consultation. It will incorporate the findings of the surveys and environmental assessments that have been carried out. This will enable consultees to develop an informed view of the potential impacts the Cleve Hill Solar Park may have on the local environment. In our second phase of consultation, we will be seeking feedback on the findings of the PEIR.

Environmental Statement (ES)
The ES will advance the content of the PEIR and will incorporate the responses from the consultation and results of the surveys undertaken. It will also describe any changes to the project and any mitigation measures proposed to be implemented. The ES will form part of the DCO application for submission.

Copies of these reports will be made available as we conduct the public consultation.

Our plans will also need to include a methodology for construction. We are aware of the sensitivities around the previous construction of the Cleve Hill Substation. Our team is already working on a range of proposal options on how to best access the site in a way that minimises disturbance. Options and ideas will be presented to consultees and environmental authorities as our proposals develop to understand the best approach chosen for our final proposals.

Beach at Seasalter

Whitstable Beach

DCO application

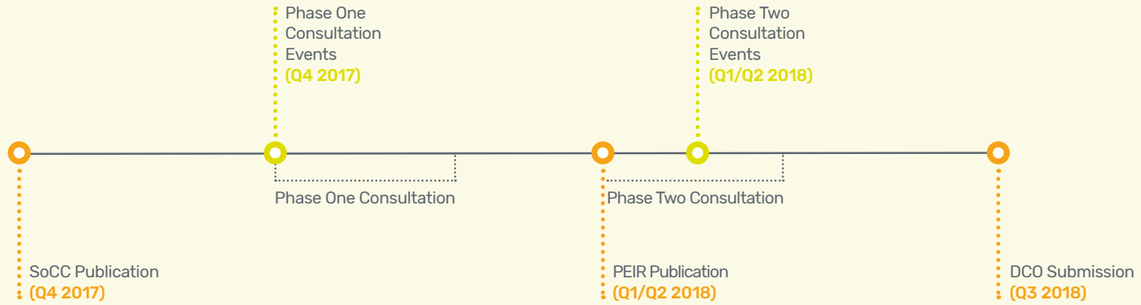
Once PINS has received the DCO application they will consider whether to accept the application for examination. To be accepted, we must satisfy PINS that our pre-application consultation, both with statutory consultees (such as the local planning authorities and Natural England) and local communities, has been undertaken.

To help demonstrate this to PINS, we will submit a Consultation Report alongside the DCO application, outlining how the consultation process has been carried out in accordance with the Planning Act 2008. This report will contain details of the consultation methodology and the feedback submitted in response to the consultation. Explanations will also be provided as to how feedback has influenced our proposals.

If the application is accepted, it will enter a six month examination period. During the examination, either a single inspector, or a panel of inspectors appointed by PINS, will evaluate the application and ask questions of us as the developer, and of statutory consultees. The inspector(s) will also consider the representations of all stakeholders who have made valid representations.

Following PINS' examination, there will be a determination of the application by the Secretary of State. If the application is approved, the DCO will be granted and given authorisation to begin construction and operation of Cleve Hill Solar Park.

Consultation timeline



Saxon Shore Way

Whitstable Beach

7. Contact Us

Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about Cleve Hill Solar Park and our associated consultation programme.

You can contact our Community Relations Team and find out more by using the details below.

All images, graphics and maps in this document are for illustrative purposes only

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