

# 1. Introduction

**Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd is intending to develop land on the north Kent coast as a solar farm development to be known as Cleve Hill Solar Park (the "Solar Park"). Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd would welcome your views about our proposals for the Solar Park.**

This document, known as a Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC"), outlines the opportunities available for you to engage throughout the process. It also explains how Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd intends to consult with you, the local community, during the development of the Solar Park. Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd recognises consultation to be a vital stage in the development of our proposals, and this will be undertaken in accordance with section 47 of the Planning Act 2008.

We want to listen to your views and work with you to develop our proposals for the Solar Park. This will allow us to develop our plans responsibly and in a manner that supports local community interests.

# 2. About Us

Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd is a joint venture between 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 Energy is a highly experienced solar park developer, constructor and operator across both 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.

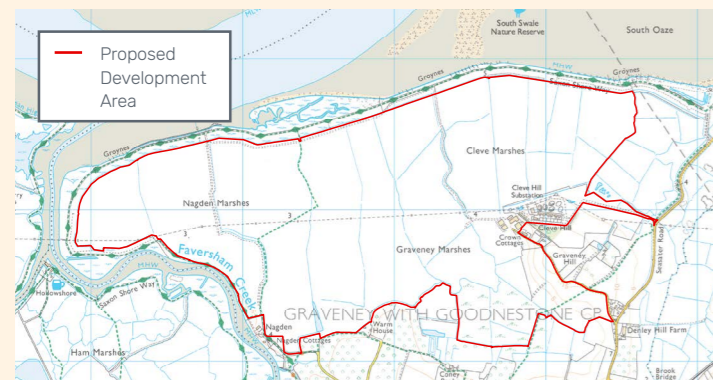
# 5. What Will We Consult On?

Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd will be seeking feedback on all aspects of our plans for the Solar Park. This will involve asking local community members to give us their views about our proposals. For example, we will be seeking feedback to help develop our proposals regarding issues such as, but not limited to:

- **Short term and temporary impacts during construction**, such as upon wildlife and local residents.
- **Long term operational impacts**, such as upon wildlife, landscape and views.
- **Benefits**, such as contributing towards low carbon energy production and providing security of energy supply.

The parameters of the Solar Park, known as the Project Envelope, will be discussed at community consultation events. These include the size, scale and construction methodologies of the project. More information will become available regarding these aspects as our proposals develop.

Figure 2: Proposed Solar Park site



Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data.

# 3. Cleve Hill Solar Park

The proposals for the Solar Park include:

- A solar array, which will provide electricity to the national grid to power UK homes
- An anticipated potential output from the solar array of over 50 MW
- Electrical connection infrastructure, where capacity is available at the existing Cleve Hill onshore substation
- The potential for an energy storage solution
- Land for ecological mitigation, with particular consideration to bird species

The development will be sited on approximately 360 ha (890 acres) of land on the north Kent coast, approximately 2 km northeast of Faversham and 5 km west of Whitstable, ME13 9EE.

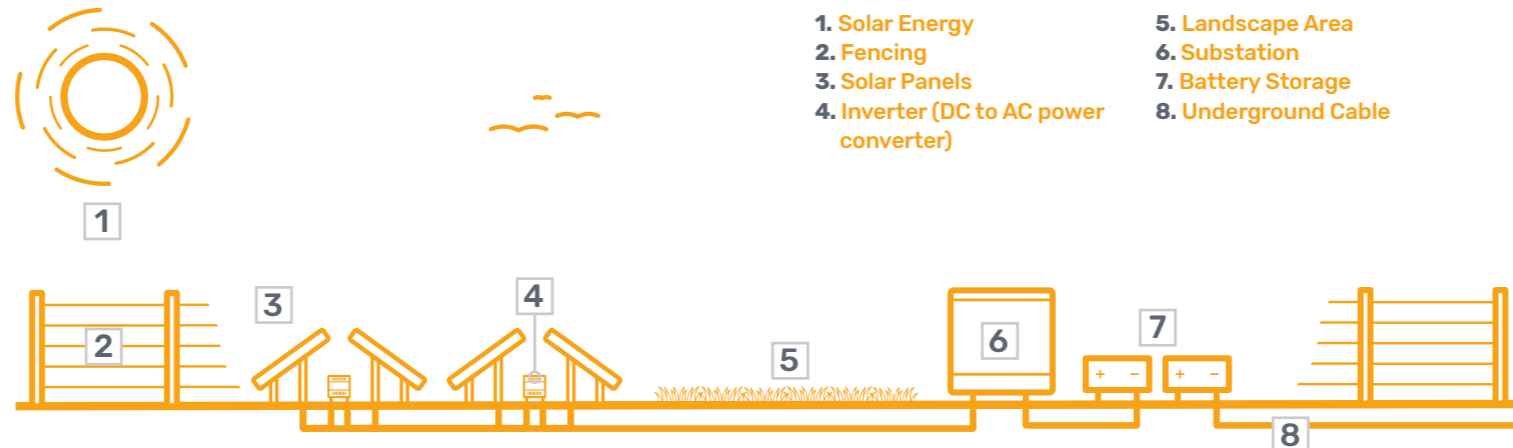


Figure not to scale and for indicative purposes only.

# 6. Who Will We Consult?

This consultation is open to anyone who may be interested or in any way feel impacted by our proposals to develop the Solar Park. Our communication channels (detailed later in this SoCC) can be used by interested parties or individuals to get in touch with us to find out more information and comment on our proposals.

Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd has also spoken to the local planning authorities for the site and surrounding communities to better understand the area and help us to proactively engage with local stakeholders. This community mapping of the local area has informed a consultation area to guide our future engagement.

## Core Consultation Zone

A core consultation zone has been agreed. This zone centres on the proposed development site and extends outwards to include the nearest villages of Graveney, Goodnestone, Harty (Sheppey) and Oare, as well as the built-up area of Faversham and the majority of Seasalter. Properties within the core consultation zone will directly receive our consultation materials, such as leaflets and newsletters.

## Wider Consultation Area

Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd recognises that there may be some interested individuals or parties that do not live within the agreed core consultation zone. We are committed to ensuring that these people are still aware of the Solar Park proposals and their opportunities to get involved. Means such as media advertising will be used to notify residents within the wider local area of our consultation. Informative consultation materials will also be available to view and collect from identified community access points outside of our core consultation zone.

Electricity generated by the solar array is expected to be transferred through an on-site substation to the national grid via the existing London Array Cleve Hill Substation, which is located immediately adjacent to the site.

## Benefits of the Solar Park:

- **A new mix of energy generation is needed to keep the lights on in the UK. It is important for clean technologies to help replace lost capacity while reducing carbon emissions.**
- **Solar energy is free, natural and a never-ending resource.**
- **Subsidies no longer play any role in solar development and so the Cleve Hill Solar Park will not receive any government funding.**

Figure 1: Components of a typical solar farm

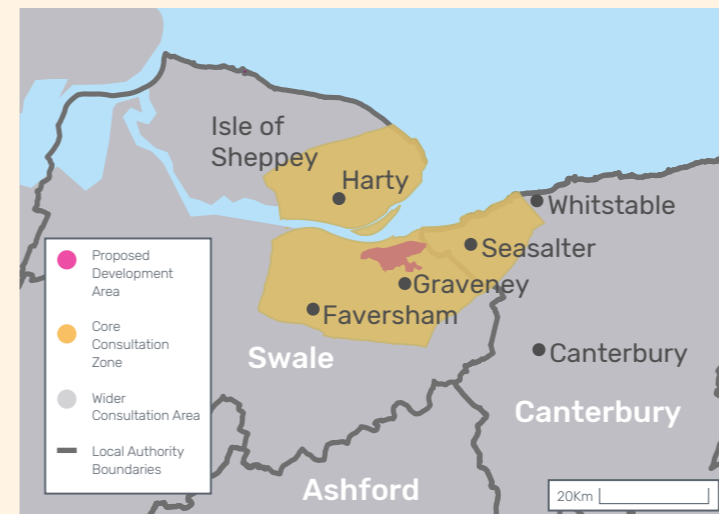
- 1. Solar Energy
- 2. Fencing
- 3. Solar Panels
- 4. Inverter (DC to AC power converter)
- 5. Landscape Area
- 6. Substation
- 7. Battery Storage
- 8. Underground Cable

We will be visiting areas within the consultation zone throughout the development of the proposals to meet with communities, provide information and listen to feedback on the proposals.

Throughout the development of our proposals for the Solar Park, we will continue to work with local planning authorities to identify any relevant community groups, business organisations and area committees who should be consulted. As well as the community consultation, we will be discussing the project with a range of statutory consultees, including:

- Owners, tenants and occupiers of the land included within the DCO application
- Environmental groups, including: Natural England, Environment Agency, Kent Wildlife Trust etc.
- Interest groups and organisations
- Local authorities and parish councils

Figure 3: Consultation zone



# 4. The Planning Process

Due to its proposed generation capacity being over 50 MW, the Solar Park will be classified as a Nationally Significant Energy Project (NSIP). Therefore, in order for the development to be authorised, Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd must make an application to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) for a Development Consent Order (DCO). This application will be examined by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS), the agency responsible for managing the examination process for NSIPs, who will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS).

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. Explanation will also be provided as to how your feedback has influenced our proposals.

Following PINS' examination, which will include considering valid representations made by stakeholders, there will be a determination of the application by the SoS. If the application is approved, the DCO will be granted to authorise the construction and operation of the Solar Park.

# 7. Environmental Information

Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Solar Park. The methodology and scope of the EIA will be agreed with the relevant regulatory and environmental bodies, the SoS, and your local planning authority.

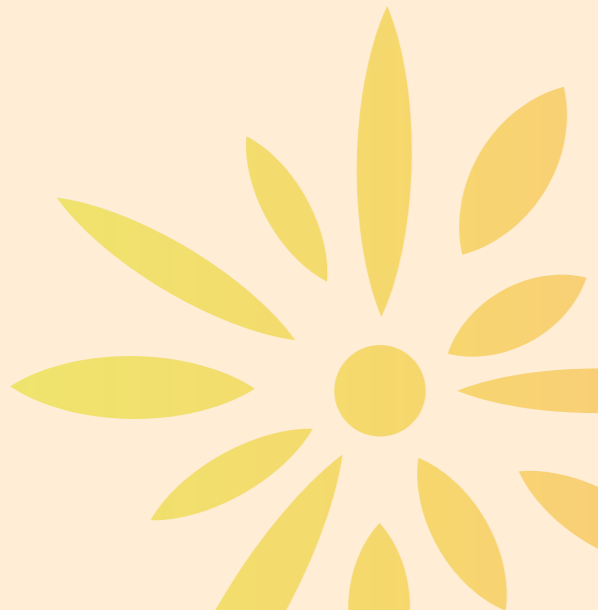
The following reports (listed below) will be consulted on as part of the EIA process and as the DCO application is prepared:

**Scoping Report** – The Scoping Report will present the Project Envelope, and will be informed by desk-based research on the proposed development site's existing environment. The report will describe the processes we will undertake to assess any potential impacts to this existing environment. Feedback on this document from the local planning authorities and statutory consultees will result in a Scoping Opinion. A copy of the Scoping Report and Scoping Opinion will be made available for public inspection.

**Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)** – The PEIR will build upon the findings from the previous scoping documents and the feedback received through consultation. It will incorporate 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 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 continue to 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 that need 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.

## CLEVE HILL SOLAR PARK



### Contact us

Our consultation team are on hand to take your questions and register your comments on the proposals for Cleve Hill Solar Park.

#### You can get in touch by:

**Writing to us at:**  
**Freepost: Cleve Hill Solar**

**Emailing us at:**  
**info@clevehillsolar.com**

**Calling our Freephone information line:**  
**0800 328 2850**

**Visiting our website at:**  
**www.clevehillsolar.com**

Should you require this document in large print, audio or braille then please contact us at the details provided.

## 8. Public Consultation

The consultation process for the Solar Park will be held over two phases.

### Phase One Public Consultation

Phase One of the public consultation is proposed to begin in Autumn 2017 and will last for at least 28 days. This non-statutory consultation phase will formally introduce community members to our proposals for the Solar Park. We will seek to gather local knowledge to help develop and refine our proposals.

Phase One consultation will include a round of community consultation events, which are open to all interested members of the public. Attendees will have the opportunity to view informative materials on the project, discuss the proposals with members of the team and provide their feedback on the proposals. Details of the first round of events are below.

### Phase Two Public Consultation

Phase Two of our public consultation is proposed to take place in Spring 2018 and run for at least 28 days. This statutory consultation, in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act, will allow us to update you on our project plans, including how the feedback we received in Phase One has influenced our proposals for the Solar Park. At this stage, we will also be able to consult on our PEIR, as described in Section 7 of this document. More specific details of Phase Two consultation will be publicised through the appropriate channels listed in Section 10.

### Ongoing Consultation

Any interested parties are welcome to get in touch with us ahead of the consultation process formally opening. Our contact details are listed at the end of this SoCC. From now until our application is submitted, we will consider the feedback and comments we receive on an ongoing basis, and incorporate within our proposals where possible.

You will also have the opportunity to formally comment on our proposals for the Solar Park when the DCO application is submitted to PINS. Guidance on the process can be found on the PINS website at:

<http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>

### Consultation Reporting

As part of our consultation process, we will publish a Consultation Report that:

- Describes our consultation process
- Explains how we have satisfied and adhered to legal requirements
- Details how we have worked with your local planning authorities to ensure our consultation is suitable for your area
- Provides a summary of the feedback and consultation responses we have received
- Responds to the feedback we have received, including explaining how it has influenced our proposals

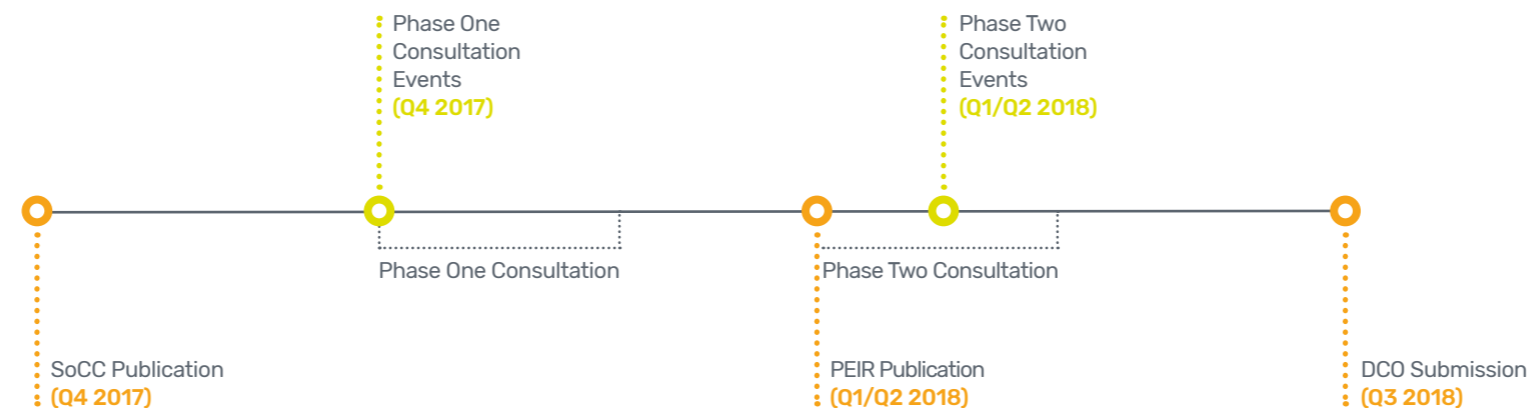
## Phase One Event Details



We will be hosting our Phase One community consultation events on the following dates:

- **Tuesday 5 December from 5pm to 8pm**, at Sheppey Evangelical Church, Warden Bay Road, Leysdown ME12 4NA
- **Wednesday 6 December from 11:30am to 7:30pm**, at Faversham Assembly Rooms, 66 Preston St, Faversham ME13 8PG
- **Thursday 7 December from 1.30pm to 8pm**, at Graveney Village Hall, Graveney, Faversham ME13 9DN
- **Friday 8 December from 12.30pm to 4.30pm**, at Seasalter Christian Centre, Faversham Road, Whitstable, Kent, CT5 4AX

## 9. Consultation Timeline



## 10. How Will We Consult?

### Face-to-Face

**Consultation events** will be held, offering you the opportunity to discuss our proposals with us and provide your feedback.

**Stakeholder meetings and briefing sessions** may be arranged with your local Parish councils and with key local stakeholder groups.

### Literature

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

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

**Newsletters** will be available online and regularly distributed within the core consultation zone to update residents on the plans and proposals.

### Open Communication

**A Freephone information line** is available for interested parties to call to ask questions and provide feedback: **0800 328 2850**

**A project email address** is also open for questions and comments: **info@clevehillsolar.com**

### Publicly Available Information

**A dedicated project website** is live for you to find out more information and provide your feedback: **www.clevehillsolar.com**

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

## Local Authority Contacts

Hard copies of this document and our future consultation leaflets will be available to you at the following public buildings and libraries:

- Faversham Library, Newton Road, Faversham, Kent, ME13 8DY
- Boughton-under-Blean Library, Village Hall, Bull Lane, Boughton-under-Blean, Faversham, Kent ME13 9AH
- Teynham Library, 131 London Road Teynham, Sittingbourne Kent ME9 9QJ
- Sheppey Gateway, 38-42 High Street, Sheerness, Kent, ME12 1NL
- Swale Borough Council, Alexander Centre, Faversham ME13 8NY
- Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East St, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT
- Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ
- Canterbury City Council, Military Road, Canterbury, CT1 1YW



All graphics for illustrative purposes only