

CLEVE HILL SOLAR PARK

Community Newsletter

July 2019

www.clevehillsolar.com



CLEVE HILL
SOLAR PARK

1. Introduction

Cleve Hill Solar Park is a new solar and energy storage park that is being proposed by Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd. The site is on the north Kent coast, located roughly one mile northeast of Faversham, three miles west of Whitstable and situated closest to the village of Graveney.

On 16 November 2018, we submitted our Development Consent Order (DCO) application to the Planning Inspectorate, which was accepted for Examination on 14 December 2018.

This newsletter has been produced to provide you with an update on the Examination period for Cleve Hill Solar Park, including the details of the Issue Specific Hearings and the Accompanied Site Inspection.

2. Our proposals

Our aim is to make Cleve Hill Solar Park one of the lowest cost generators of electricity in the UK. This is at a time when a quarter of the UK's energy generating capacity is due to close. More renewable energy generation is needed to achieve the UK's legally binding "net-zero" emissions target by 2050.

The transition to a low carbon energy system is necessary to avoid the catastrophic effects of climate change to wildlife and humans. Cleve Hill Solar Park offers an economical, safe and low carbon way of delivering clean power to thousands of homes.

3. Our consultation

Between November 2017 and November 2018, we held a pre-application consultation where we met with people from across the community to discuss our proposals and listen to feedback.

Throughout this process, we modified the proposals for Cleve Hill Solar Park in response to the feedback we received. This included a range of mitigation and biodiversity enhancement measures, such as reducing the number of panels and increasing the Habitat Management Area for over-wintering birds. These changes are detailed in full in the Consultation Report.

You can view the full application, including our Consultation Report (APP-022) and other documents within the Examination Library, on the Planning Inspectorate's website at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/cleve-hill-solar-park/>

Cleve Hill Solar Park provides:



Subsidy-free electricity, without public financial support.



Enough clean, renewable electricity to power over **91,000** UK homes.¹



Pioneering **energy storage** technology, providing power to people's homes when it's needed the most.



A Habitat Management Area of **56 hectares (ha)** (138 acres) for over-wintering birds.



An additional **3.64 km** of native hedgerow planting.



A new permissive **footpath** facilitating a round walk from Seasalter Road.



Business rates of around **£1 million** per year for local authorities plus additional business rates attributable to the energy storage.²

¹Based on the calculated estimate of annual energy output from the solar park of approximately 303 GWh and the Solar Trade Association's assumption of 3,300 kWh average annual consumption of electricity for a house.

²Calculations based on Valuation Office Agency (2018).

4. What we have done to date

Environmental Impact Assessment and site selection process

Since 2017, we have undertaken an extensive site selection process and Environmental Impact Assessment for Cleve Hill Solar Park. We have consulted with numerous stakeholders including Swale Borough Council, Kent County Council, Canterbury City Council and their communities to design Cleve Hill Solar Park in response to consultation feedback.

The site adjoins the existing Cleve Hill substation which is currently under-utilised and able to accommodate the generation capacity of the solar park. 95% of the arable land within Cleve Hill Solar Park where development could take place is classified as Grade 3b, which is not the best or most versatile agricultural land.

Onsite biodiversity benefits

We have concentrated panels to cover less than half of that arable land, leaving the remainder to be enhanced by conversion to grassland-based habitats for biodiversity benefit.

The majority of non-arable habitats across the site are also being retained to be managed for improving biodiversity. Through consultation we have agreed with Natural England to provide a 56 ha Habitat Management Area for over-wintering birds.

Medway Estuary and Swale Strategy (MEASS)

Over the past 18 months we have also been in extensive dialogue with the Environment Agency. As a result of these discussions, we have agreed to a time limited consent of 40 years if the Environment Agency can deliver its proposed managed realignment of the flood defences at the Cleve Hill Solar Park site at that time.

Traffic and transportation

Since our formal consultation in June 2018, we have worked to reduce traffic numbers for the construction of the project by nearly 50%. To demonstrate our commitment, we've already undertaken a road condition survey and will be legally bound to undertake further surveys and restore good road conditions post construction.

5. Examination

The Examination period began at the Preliminary Meeting on 30 May 2019 and will end no later than 29 November 2019. Following this, the Planning Inspectorate have three months to prepare a report, including a recommendation for the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The Secretary of State then has a further three months to grant or refuse development consent.

The Planning Inspectorate has produced Advice Notes to help you to participate in aspects of the Examination, which you can view here:

- Advice Note 8.4 – The Examination (December 2016), available at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Advice-note-8-4v3.pdf>
- Advice Note 8.5 – The Examination: hearings and site inspections (December 2016), available at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Advice-note-8-5v3.pdf>

Hearings

The Planning Inspectorate has decided to hold a series of Hearings between 16 – 25 July 2019, outlined in the table overleaf.

Following the representations made at the Preliminary Meeting on 30 May 2019, the Planning Inspectorate have taken the decision to add an additional Issue Specific Hearing on Need on Wednesday 17 July 2019. They have also moved the Issue Specific Hearing on Biodiversity/Nature Conservation Matters to Thursday 25 July 2019.

Accompanied Site Inspection

An Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI) with the Planning Inspectorate will take place on Wednesday 24 July 2019. Participants are asked to meet at Graveney Village Hall at 9.15am in time for the visit to commence at 9.30am. It should be noted that parking is restricted to a maximum of 20 cars and participants are asked to either share transport or, where practicable, walk to the meeting point.

The final itinerary for the ASI will be published on the Project Page of the National Infrastructure website no later than Wednesday 17 July 2019 at <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/cleve-hill-solar-park/>

Please note that the deadline to notify the Planning Inspectorate of your wish to attend the Accompanied Site Inspection was Wednesday 12 June 2019.

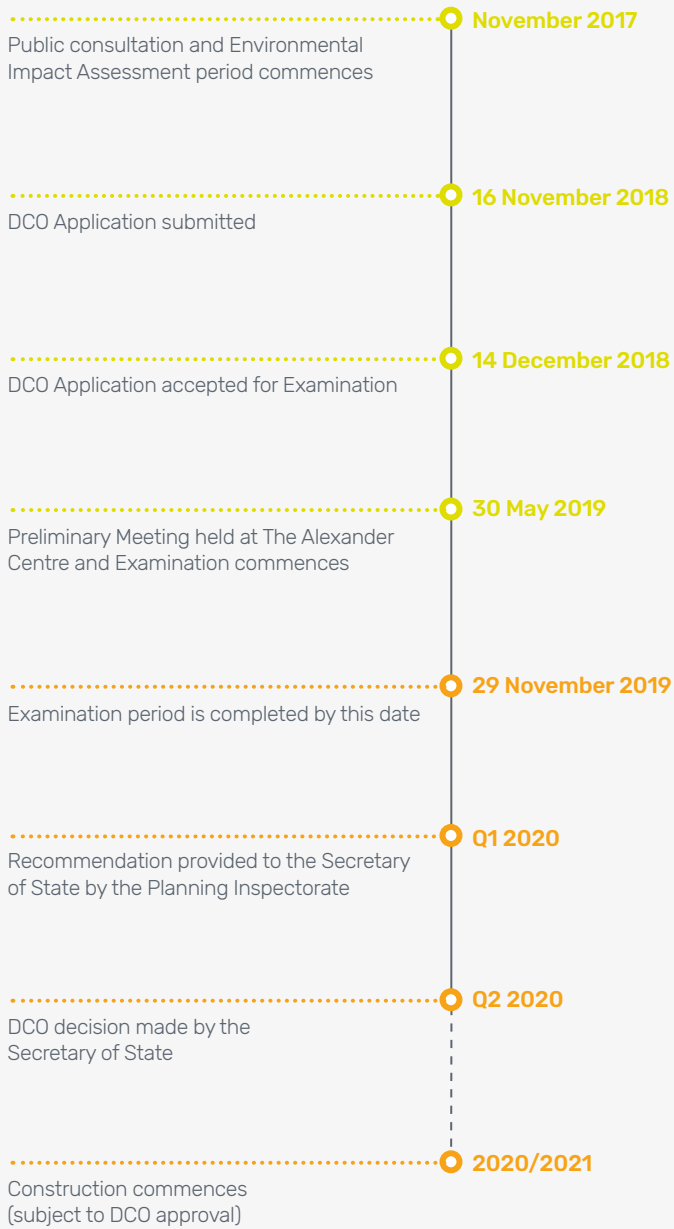
6. Key dates

On 7 June 2019, the Planning Inspectorate published their Rule 8 notification (PD-005) which included the Examination Timetable and details of the Examining Authority's Written Questions.

You can view the Rule 8 Letter and the Examination Timetable in full on the Planning Inspectorate's website (Examination Library reference PD-005): <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/cleve-hill-solar-park/?ipcsection=docs>

Event	Date and time	Venue
Open Floor Hearing 1	16 July 2019, 10.00am (seating available from 9.30am).	The Alexander Centre, 17 Preston Street, Faversham, ME13 8NZ
Compulsory Acquisition Hearing 1	16 July 2019, 2.00pm (seating available from 1.30pm).	The Alexander Centre, 17 Preston Street, Faversham, ME13 8NZ
Issue Specific Hearing: Need	17 July 2019, 10.00am (seating available from 9.30am).	Hempstead House Hotel, London Road, Bapchild, Sittingbourne, ME9 9PP
Issue Specific Hearing: Draft Development Consent Order	18 July 2019, 10.00am (seating available from 9.30am).	The Alexander Centre, 17 Preston Street, Faversham, ME13 8NZ
Open Floor Hearing 2	22 July 2019, 6.30pm (seating available from 6.00pm).	Hempstead House Hotel, London Road, Bapchild, Sittingbourne, ME9 9PP
Issue Specific Hearing: Landscape and Visual Amenities Matters	23 July 2019, 10.00am (seating available from 9.30am).	Hempstead House Hotel, London Road, Bapchild, Sittingbourne, ME9 9PP
Accompanied Site Inspection	24 July 2019. Arrive at 9.15am for a 9.30am start. Itinerary to be published by the Planning Inspectorate by 17 July 2019.	Participants will meet at Graveney Village Hall, Sandbanks Lane, Seasalter Road, Faversham, ME13 9DN. Please note that the deadline to notify the Planning Inspectorate of your wish to attend has now passed.
Issue Specific Hearing: Biodiversity/Nature Conservation Matters	25 July 2019, 10.00am (seating available from 9.30am).	The Alexander Centre, 17 Preston Street, Faversham, ME13 8NZ

7. Timeline



All dates are indicative and subject to change.

8. Contact us

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

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

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

For all information sources please visit our website.

If you would like this document in large print, audio or braille please get in touch as below.



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