

31 May 2018

Dear Sir/ Madam,

**Consultation in respect of proposed development – the Cleve Hill Solar Park**

**Statutory Consultation under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 and Regulation 13 of Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017**

You have been identified as a consultee for the purposes of section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 and/or Regulation 13 of Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. This statutory consultation commences on 31st May 2018 and closes on **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> July 2018**. Please see below for more information on how to view and comment on our proposed application.

We are writing to consult with you on a proposed solar park, the Cleve Hill Solar Park that the applicant, Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd (hereafter referred to as "CHSPL") is proposing to develop. Cleve Hill Solar Park is planned to be located at Cleve Hill, Graveney, situated approximately 2 km north-east of Faversham and 5 km west of Whitstable on the north Kent coast, with a proposed generating capacity of over 50 megawatts (MW).

It is proposed that the Cleve Hill Solar Park would consist of solar photovoltaic panels, along with inverters and cables and battery storage. The electricity generated and stored would connect to the existing National Grid substation, located to the east of the proposed Cleve Hill Solar Park site, from where it will enter the national grid. An area of the site to the north east of the site is proposed to be dedicated as a managed habitat area for birds. Works of maintenance may also be required during the operational lifetime of the project to the sea defence beneath the Saxon Shore Way, which is located along the north and west boundaries of the site.

**THE DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER APPLICATION**

As the proposed generating capacity of the Cleve Hill Solar Park would exceed 50 MW it is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project as defined by Section 15(3) of the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) ("the Act"), for which CHSPL must apply for a Development Consent Order ("DCO"). If the DCO application is accepted, the Planning Inspectorate will then process and examine the application and then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy. The final decision on the DCO application will be made by the Secretary of State.

The DCO application will contain full details of the Cleve Hill Solar Park and will be accompanied by an Environmental Statement prepared under Section 37(3) of the Act and in accordance with the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 ("the Regulations").

The proposed DCO will include powers for CHSPL to construct, operate, maintain and decommission the Cleve Hill Solar Park. Maintenance works may be required to the sea defence. If so, those works



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and access to them may be required along the foreshore seaward of Mean High Water Springs. Therefore, the proposed DCO will also include a Deemed Marine Licence to authorise those works.

CHSPL expects to be able to secure the land and rights it requires for the Cleve Hill Solar Park through private negotiation and has already secured an interest in the majority of the site. However, to ensure that the land and rights required for the entire project can be obtained, the proposed DCO application will also seek powers for the compulsory acquisition of land, and rights over land, including the power to take temporary possession of land to construct and maintain Cleve Hill Solar Park and associated works.

In accordance with Regulation 13 of the Regulations and section 48 of the Act, CHSPL must publicise the proposed application. A notice publicising the proposed application is enclosed with this letter.

The Cleve Hill Solar Park is currently in the pre-application phase, with a DCO application expected to be submitted in Summer/Autumn 2018. Under the Act, CHSPL is required to carry out consultation on the proposed DCO application before submission. It will have regard to the responses received in the final design of the Cleve Hill Solar Park, and in the assessment and mitigation of its environmental impacts. A Consultation Report explaining how CHSPL has had regard to responses will be submitted as part of the DCO application.

This consultation includes:

- Consultation with prescribed bodies, host and neighbouring authorities and any persons with an interest in land affected by the Cleve Hill Solar Park (under Section 42);
- Consultation with the local community in the vicinity of the Cleve Hill Solar Park (under Section 47); and
- General public consultation on the Cleve Hill Solar Park (under Section 48).

CHSPL has prepared a Preliminary Environment Information Report ("PEIR"). The PEIR sets out the preliminary findings of the Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") undertaken to date and forms the basis of this statutory consultation. A non-technical summary of the PEIR has also been prepared. The purpose of the PEIR is to enable consultees to understand the likely environmental effects of Cleve Hill Solar Park and to help inform consultation responses.

Consultees are invited to consider the proposed application for the Cleve Hill Solar Park and the information provided in the PEIR. CHSPL is keen to receive your comments on the Cleve Hill Solar Park and the PEIR.

It should be noted that the EIA is an on-going process and the project design for Cleve Hill Solar Park continues to evolve.

**PLEASE FIND ENCLOSED**

- Hard copy of the Cleve Hill Solar Park site plans.



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- Hard copy of the notice publicised in accordance with Section 48 of the Act. This notice includes details of public consultation events and locations where the consultation material can be inspected free of charge.
- A USB device containing full PEIR including a Non-Technical Summary.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Documents, plans and maps showing the nature and location of the Cleve Hill Solar Park, including the PEIR (with a non-technical summary) for the Cleve Hill Solar Park, will be available for viewing free of charge during consultation from 31 May 2018 until 13 July 2018. Details of the venues, including opening times are provided in the Notice enclosed with this letter.

The consultation documents will also be available at public exhibitions to be held in June, details for which are provided in the Notice enclosed with this letter.

Further information regarding the Cleve Hill Solar Park can be found on the Cleve Hill Solar Park website: [www.clevehillsolar.com](http://www.clevehillsolar.com)

### **RESPONDING TO THIS CONSULTATION**

CHSPL welcomes your comments on the Cleve Hill Solar Park and the PEIR. Any responses to, or other representations in respect of, the Cleve Hill Solar Park and/or the PEIR should be sent to CHSPL:

- By email to: [info@clevehillsolar.com](mailto:info@clevehillsolar.com) or;
- By post to:

FREEPOST: Cleve Hill Solar

Any response or representation must be:

- received by CHSPL no later than 13 July 2018 to be considered;
- be made in writing;
- state the grounds of the response or representation;
- indicate who is making the response or representation; and
- provide an address to which any correspondence relating to the response or representation may be sent.

Please note that responses and other representations will be recorded in the Consultation Report and may be made public.



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Guidance on the pre-application process and the Act can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website: <http://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice/>

## NEXT STEPS

As mentioned above, consultation under section 42 of the Act and Regulation 13 of the Regulations is a formal part of the pre-application process for a DCO application. CHSPL will have regard to comments received during the consultation period and a Consultation Report explaining how CHSPL has had regard to responses will be submitted as part of the DCO application.

If you have any questions regarding the process or content of this consultation, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours faithfully,

Hugh Brennan



Managing Director

For and on behalf of Cleve Hill Solar Park Ltd



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