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UK - Monday 19 November 2018

**Pioneering Cleve Hill Solar Park Planning Application Submitted to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS).**

Cleve Hill Solar Park - the pioneering solar and energy storage scheme which aims to be amongst the lowest cost generators of electricity in the UK and will not require government subsidies, submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) on the 16<sup>th</sup> November 2018 for determination by the Secretary of State for BEIS. Having initiated the first bird survey four years ago in 2014 the submission is a significant milestone, marking the commitment and passion from the team for this ground-breaking project. Extensive pre-application consultations, rigorous environmental studies and engagement with nature conservation bodies have all shaped the application.

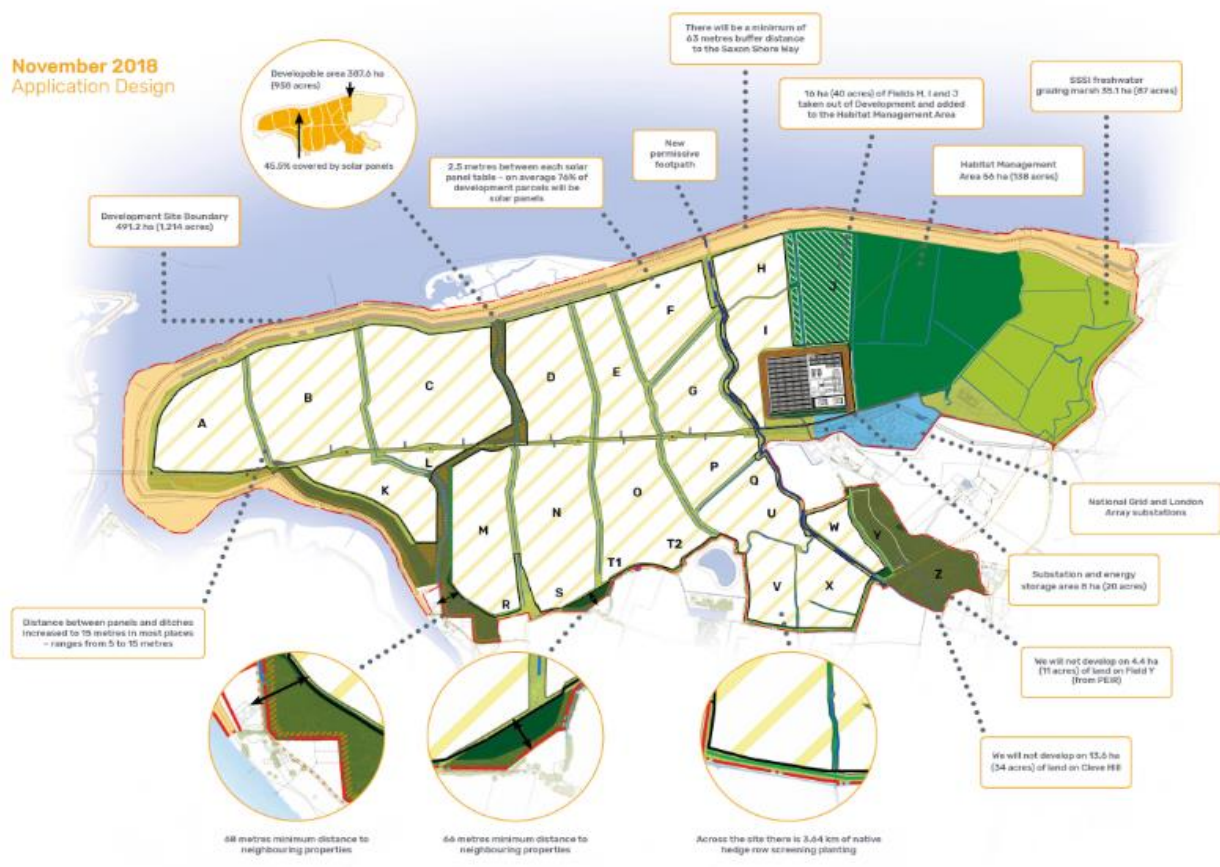
Cleve Hill Solar Park will be the UK's first solar scheme to be classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) due to its anticipated generation capacity being over 50MW. This landmark proposal located on the north Kent coast will aid a low carbon economy and support the UK target of reducing our carbon emissions by 80%. Cleve Hill Solar Park will power over 91,000 homes with clean, affordable electricity along with preventing the emissions of over 2.2 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>. The project also includes energy storage provision, which is a fundamental part of the Government's Clean Growth Plan; Cleve Hill's energy storage will enable renewable energy to be delivered to homes at times of high demand on the network.

The pre-application consultations have been invaluable in shaping the submitted application - the project includes biodiversity improvements and effective environmental management of the land. Cleve Hill Solar Park proposals have been revised to remove 28.5 hectares (70 acres) of solar panels in response to local feedback. Included on site is also a habitat management area of 56 hectares (138 acres) for migratory birds. To address visual impact, the plans now include 3.5km of hedgerow planting as well as lowland meadow for invertebrates and pollinators, specifically bees. Modifications to the project have been in direct response to feedback from stakeholders across the community and key environmental stakeholders such as Natural England and the Environment Agency.

Simon McCarthy, Cleve Hill Project Director for WIRSOL Energy stated, "Rather than construct a solar park in accordance with an existing planning consent, the DCO process has been an incredible opportunity for Wirsol to design a scheme in response to a comprehensive consultation process. Wirsol, our partners at Hive and the wider team have actively engaged with all stakeholders to inform the submitted application. Wirsol have recently commissioned the largest solar / storage site in Australia - Cleve Hill could also deliver huge carbon emission savings, directly endorsed by the Paris Climate Agreement of 2015."

Hugh Brennan, Managing Director of Hive Energy says, “Hive Energy hugely enjoyed and valued working with Wirsol on this landmark project. Throughout the process Simon and his colleagues guided matters expertly, and Hive are proud to have partnered with Wirsol on this development - the UK’s first solar and storage Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project. It is without doubt that this is an unprecedented project which is exactly why we have endeavoured to absorb and amend the designs to create what we believe will be a project of enhancement on multiple levels - sustainability, biodiversity, and carbon emission commitments, as legislated by governments across the world”.

A final decision is not expected to be made by the Secretary of State until 2019-2020. For more information about the proposals and details of the consultation events can be found on the project website: [clevehillsolar.com](http://clevehillsolar.com)



(Cleve Hill Application Design, November 2018)

**Notes to editors:**

Founded in 2010 by Giles Redpath, Hive Energy has become established as one of the largest and most experienced UK solar developers, responsible for installation in excess of 300 MW of generating capacity across the country.

Hive developed the Southwick Estate Solar Farm in Hampshire which was energized in March 2015 and was at the time the largest solar park in the UK at 48MW installed capacity. Hive is now commencing to roll out a pipeline of subsidy-free solar parks in the UK.

Building on its UK experience, Hive has opened a number of overseas offices and is currently developing a pipeline of international projects across Europe, South America, Africa and Asia. Hive managed the construction of, and owns and operates 111MW solar parks in Adiyamen, Turkey and is currently finalizing construction plans for a 58MW park in Cuba. Hive is committed to taking the knowledge and expertise built up in the UK to develop low cost large scale solar across the world.

Wirsol Energy Ltd was formed by Mark Hogan under its parent Wircon GmbH. Wirsol is a highly experienced solar park developer, constructor and operator across the UK, Europe and Australia. In the UK Wirsol have built 24 solar parks, equivalent to 159MW across the UK to date and is now rolling out 62MWp of subsidiary free solar park pipeline across 4 projects in the UK. Wirsol and its parent Wircon GmbH have extensive experience across Europe, specifically in Germany, Netherlands and Denmark. Over the last 2 years Wirsol have established themselves as #1 in Australia having acquired and constructed and connected 397MWp across 5 solar sites in Queensland and Victoria having also just announced a 50MWh Storage facility attached to the Gannawarra Solar Site – the largest solar/storage site in Australia. Wirsol take great pride in combining the installation of world-class components and the implementation of rigorous operation and maintenance processes. Wirsol and the Wircon group currently own and operate solar parks across 3 continents.

Wirsol's success has been underpinned by the formation of long-lasting relationships with local communities and investors across the >1GWp of solar that has been deployed over recent years.

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