Lime Down
Solar Park

Consultation Report Appendices

Appendix B: EIA Scoping

September 2025

Planning Inspectorate Reference: EN010168

Document Reference: APP/5.2

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q); Planning Act 2008; and Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations

List of Contents

1 Example Scoping submission email – 17 July 2024

Project update: Submission of EIA Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate

info@limedownsolar.co.uk
To [redacted]gmail.com
Cc [redacted]

Reply | Reply All | Forward

Wed 17/07/2024 10:31

240716_LimeDownSolarPark_ProjectLocationMap_Updated July 2024.pdf
2 MB

Dea[redacted]

Project update: Submission of EIA Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate

I firstly wanted to write and congratulate you on your triumph at the polls on 4th July. You must be delighted – the win was well-earned, and testament to your hard work and tireless campaigning. The fact of you becoming not only the first MP for the new constituency, but the first ever female to be elected for the area and the first non-Conservative MP in more than 100 years must also be a source of pride.

Myself and [redacted]eally welcomed the opportunity to meet you and [redacted]n 13th June and while respecting that you have concerns regarding our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park, I look forward working with you and your office as we continue to refine our proposals for the Project. I would like to give you every confidence that we are committed to keeping yourself and your constituents informed as we progress so we can address any questions or concerns you may have.

My reason to writing to you so soon after the election is to let you know that on Tuesday 16 July we submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). This represents the next milestone in the development of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park.

The purpose of EIA is to comprehensively identify and evaluate the likely significant effects of a proposed development on the environment so we can then determine measures to reduce or manage any likely significant adverse effects.

Production of a Scoping Report is the initial stage of the EIA process. It sets out the proposed scope of the EIA, and our submission of this Report to PINS forms a formal request for a Scoping Opinion under Regulation 10(1) of the EIA Regulations.

Our Scoping Report for Lime Down Solar Park includes:

- A description of the proposed development, including its location and technical capacity
- A description of baseline information and further data to be obtained
- The methodologies we will use to assess environmental factors
- The proposed scope of the assessments we will carry out
- Potential impacts of the Project and associated mitigation
- An explanation of the likely significant effects of the development on the environment
- The approach to cumulative assessment

EIA Scoping Process

Over the next 42 days PINS will consult various consultation bodies, including the local authority, Statutory Environmental Bodies (SEBs) and other stakeholders that have specific expertise and responsibilities related to environmental protection, to gather their views on the scope of the environmental assessment.

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PINS will then compile the feedback received and provide us with the 'Scoping Opinion' outlining those key areas and issues we need to address in the Environmental Statement that will be submitted as part of our application for development consent. A copy of the Scoping Opinion will be published on the PINS website. As well as the feedback received, Scoping Opinion will also set out details of those bodies who have been consulted, and the feedback they provided.

For those who would like to be notified when PINS publishes information about the Project – including the Scoping Opinion – there is the option to register your details directly with PINS via the Lime Down Solar Park page on its website: Linked here.

Site Boundary – Additional Land

Over the course of the initial consultation we held earlier this year, people raised concerns about the potential impact of the development on treasured views and walks, wildlife, and local ecology. We have listened to these concerns and worked in consultation with the Project landowners to consider how to enhance protection of those features people identified as being important.

This has resulted in an additional 44 hectares of land being made available to the design, presenting the opportunity for us to use a similar area of land to enhance buffer zones and move solar infrastructure away from sensitive areas and receptors such as the Cotswold National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswold AoNB), nearby heritage assets including the Fosse Way, landscape features, and public rights of way, as well as residential properties.

Details of the additional land included are set out in the EIA Scoping Report, and I have attached a map for your information to show you where this land is located.

Further consultation

The Scoping Opinion PINS provides us with, together with ongoing environmental survey, baseline characterisation, design development and environmental assessment work, will inform the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

We will present the PEIR as part of the next stage of consultation. This is a statutory stage of consultation required by the application process, over the course of which we will invite yourself and all those local communities, organisations and groups with an interest in the project, to provide your views and feedback on our proposed development.

We anticipate the next stage of consultation will take place in early 2025, during which time we will invite your views on:

- The location of equipment for the solar arrays
- The route of an underground cable connection from the solar park to Melksham substation
- How we propose to build the Project
- The measures we are proposing to mitigate the effects of the project

Ongoing work

We are currently in the process of reviewing all the feedback submitted in response to the initial stage of non-statutory consultation we held earlier this year.

Over 1,400 individuals, groups and organisations took the time to provide us with their views as part of this consultation. We are now going through all the submissions we received to identify the issues and concerns raised so we can consider them alongside the findings from our environmental surveys and technical studies, as we continue to refine and shape our proposals for the Project.

Ahead of statutory consultation taking place next year, we expect to be able to provide you with a summary of the findings from this first stage of consultation and confirm any decisions we have made in the interim. We expect to publish this update in September.

Next steps

While appreciating you are busy, if you have any questions about the information contained in this letter, would like to discuss our proposals in more detail, or discuss how we can work most effectively with you and the local community you represent through the development process we would welcome the opportunity to meet with you.

If this would be of interest to you please do contact us to discuss the possibility of coordinating a meeting, otherwise we will continue to keep you updated as the development process progresses.

In the meantime, if you have any questions or require further information please do contact the community relations team by calling **0808 175 6656** or sending an email to info@limedownsolar.co.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Senior Project Development Manager
Lime Down Solar Park

2 Example Scoping submission letter – 17 July 2024

Project Community Relations:
T: 0808 175 6656
E: info@limedownsolar.co.uk
FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

«AddressBlock»

17 July 2024

«GreetingLine»

Project update: Submission of EIA Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate

As someone who has registered to receive updates about Lime Down Solar Park, I am writing to let you know that on Tuesday 16 July 2024 we submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). This represents the next milestone in the development of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park.

The purpose of EIA is to comprehensively identify and evaluate the likely significant effects of a proposed development on the environment so we can then determine measures to reduce or manage any likely significant adverse effects.

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EIA Scoping Process

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PINS will then compile the feedback received and provide us with the 'Scoping Opinion' outlining those key areas and issues we need to address in the Environmental Statement that will be

submitted as part of our application for development consent. A copy of the Scoping Opinion will be published on the PINS website.

The Scoping Opinion will set out details of those bodies who have been consulted, and the feedback they provided.

You can register your details directly with PINS on its website if you would like to be notified when it publishes information about the Project – including the Scoping Opinion – via the Lime Down Solar Park page HERE [Lime Down Solar Project - Project information (planninginspectorate.gov.uk)].

Site Boundary

Over the course of the initial consultation we held earlier this year, people raised concerns about the potential impact of the development on treasured views and walks, wildlife, and local ecology. We have listened to these concerns and worked in consultation with the Project landowners to consider how to enhance protection of those features people identified as being important.

This has resulted in an additional 44 hectares of land being made available to the design, presenting the opportunity for us to use a similar area of land to enhance buffer zones and move solar infrastructure away from sensitive areas and receptors such as the Cotswold National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswold AoNB), nearby heritage assets including the Fosse Way, landscape features, and public rights of way, as well as residential properties.

Details of the additional land included are set out in the EIA Scoping Report, and I have attached a map for your information to show you where this land is located.

Further consultation

The Scoping Opinion PINS provides us with, together with ongoing environmental survey, baseline characterisation, design development and environmental assessment work, will inform the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

We will present the PEIR as part of the next stage of consultation. This is a statutory stage of consultation required by the application process, over the course of which we will invite yourself and all those local communities, organisations and groups with an interest in the project, to provide your views and feedback on our proposed development.

We anticipate the next stage of consultation will take place in early 2025, during which time we will invite your views on:

- The location of equipment for the solar arrays
- The route of an underground cable connection from the solar park to Melksham substation
- How we propose to build the Project

- The measures we are proposing to mitigate the effects of the project

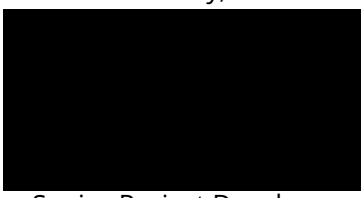
Next steps
We are currently in the process of reviewing all the feedback submitted in response to the initial stage of non-statutory consultation we held earlier this year.

Over 1,400 individuals, groups and organisations took the time to provide us with their views as part of this consultation. We are now going through all the submissions we received to identify the issues and concerns raised so we can consider them alongside the findings from our environmental surveys and technical studies, as we continue to refine and shape our proposals for the Project.

Ahead of statutory consultation taking place next year, we expect to be able to provide you with a summary of the findings from this first stage of consultation and confirm any decisions we have made in the interim. We expect to publish this update in September.

If you have any questions about the information provided please do contact the community relations team by calling **0808 175 6656 or sending an email to info@limedownsolar.co.uk.**

Yours sincerely,



Senior Project Development Manager
Lime Down Solar Park

Enclosed: Updated Project location map

3 Accompanying Scheme Map

Project Location Map - updated 16 July 2024

Lime Down Solar Park

An additional 44 hectares of land has been made available to the design process. This presents the opportunity to move solar infrastructure away from sensitive areas and receptors such as the Cotswold National Landscape (formerly known as the Cotswold AoNB), and nearby heritage assets including the Fosse Way. The location of this land is shown in dark green.

The green-shaded area represents the project boundary encompassing areas for solar infrastructure, habitat enhancements, biodiversity net gains, and buffer zones designed to maintain distance from receptors such as landscape features, Public Rights of Way, and residential properties.

We have identified three broad corridors for routing the underground cable to connect the solar park to the Melksham substation. Work is underway to select the path that best minimises environmental and social impacts.

LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Additional Land
- Energy Storage and/or Substation Location Options
- Underground Cable Route Corridor Options
- Melksham Substation
- Railway Station
- Railway
- Woodland

4 Press Release – 18 July 2024

T: **0808 175 6656**
E: **info@limedownsolar.co.uk**
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LIME DOWN SOLAR REACHES DEVELOPMENT MILESTONE WITH SUBMISSION OF SCOPING REPORT

- **Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consultation with expert bodies**
- **Additional 44 hectares of land included to enhance buffer zones between infrastructure and sensitive assets such as the Fosse Way and residential properties.**
- **Statutory consultation on detailed proposals expected to take place in early 2025.**

On Tuesday 16 July, Island Green Power submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping report for Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate. This marks the next milestone in development of proposals for the Project after the first stage of community consultation which took place earlier this year.

The proposals for Lime Down Solar Park include installation of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic panels, onsite battery energy storage and installation of underground cable that will connect the site to the national grid at Melksham substation approximately 20 kilometres away. Subject to being agreed by planning authorities and the community, Lime Down Solar Park could deliver up to 500 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy, enough to power over 115,000 homes annually.

Will Threlfall, Senior Project Development Manager, Island Green Power said: "*We are pleased to reach the next milestone in the development of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park. The Scoping Report gives more detail on the project and sets out the environmental criteria we'll use to evaluate the potential effects of any development. Our findings will guide actions to reduce and manage impacts on the local landscape and environment, and address residents' concerns.*

We'd like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the initial consultation. Your feedback highlighted how important the area is and the need to protect treasured views and walks, wildlife, and local ecology. All the points raised are reflected in this Environmental Scoping Report and will be factored into our development of the project.

In response to feedback, we've worked with the project landowners and are pleased to confirm that an additional 44 hectares of land has been made available for the project design. This land will be used to increase buffer zones, putting more distance between solar infrastructure and sensitive areas such as the Cotswold National Landscape, heritage assets including the Fosse Way, landscape features, Public Rights of Way, and residential properties."

EIA Scoping Process

Over the next 42 days, the Planning Inspectorate will consult on the Lime Down project proposals with stakeholders including Wiltshire Council, Statutory Environmental Bodies (SEBs) and other groups with specific expertise and responsibilities related to environmental

protection. This feedback will then be used to provide Island Green Power with Scoping Opinion setting out key areas that must be addressed as part of the application for development consent for Lime Down.

Scoping Opinion, together with the findings from ongoing environmental surveys and assessments and design development work, will inform the development of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). This is a core document that informs the second stage of consultation.

Next steps

The second stage of consultation is expected to take place in early 2025 to provide people with another opportunity to comment on proposals for Lime Down ahead of an application for development consent being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

During this statutory stage of consultation, the community will be asked to share their views on the design of the project including where equipment is located; the route of the underground cable connection between the solar park and Melksham substation; construction; and the measures being put in place to reduce the project's impact on the local area.

People wishing to receive updates and information about the ongoing development process and future consultation for Lime Down Solar Park are encouraged to register their details on the project website www.limedownsolar.co.uk.

The project team can be contacted direct by calling 0808 175 6656, or sending an email to info@limedownsolar.co.uk

ATTACHED: Lime Down Solar Park – Project location map (updated July 2024)

END

For all media enquiries please contact:

- [redacted]
- Tel: [redacted]
- Email: [redacted]@countercontext.com / [redacted]@countercontext.com

Notes to editors

About Lime Down Solar Park

- Lime Down Solar Park is anticipated as being able to generate around 500MW of electricity. Since its generation capacity exceeds 50MW, the project is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).
- The development consenting regime for an NSIP comes under the Planning Act 2008. This means that we need to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build, operate and decommission Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate rather than the local planning authority.

T: **0808 175 6656**
E: **info@limedownsolar.co.uk**
FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

Lime Down Solar Park

- In the case of energy related NSIPs, the Planning Inspectorate acts on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy and Net Zero. The Planning Inspectorate will carry out an examination of our application and then make a final recommendation to the Secretary of State on whether to grant consent. The Secretary of State will make the final decision on whether to grant consent for Lime Down Solar Park.
- We expect the development process, including DCO submission and examination, to span two to three years. We intend to submit our application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate in late 2025. Subject to obtaining consent, the earliest construction would start is 2027.
- While the DCO application will not be submitted to the local planning authority, Wiltshire Council and stakeholder groups will play a key role in the planning process and will be extensively consulted as the project progresses.
- You can find more information about the application process for NSIP Projects on the Planning Inspectorate website, please visit the PINS webpage linked here.

Information about EIA Scoping

- The Planning Inspectorate has published an FAQ about the EIA Scoping Process on its website.
- This is available to view and download here.

About Island Green Power

- Established in 2013, Island Green Power (IGP) is a leading developer of renewable energy projects, with a focus on utility-scale solar farms and battery storage systems. Its mission is to help the UK increase our solar energy generation, making more renewable energy possible whilst drastically reducing our carbon emissions.
- IGP is committed to responsible land use and believes that the development and delivery of solar farms and battery storage systems can be achieved in harmony with their environment.
- Directly engaging with residents, landowners, businesses, and members of the community remains key to a successful development process. **For additional information about IGP visit www.islandgp.com**

5 Scoping submission Website update – 17 July 2024

8 Mar

Update — March 2024

We are pleased to announce that our project website for Lime Down Solar Park is now available and our Stage One community consultation will be starting soon.

Please feel free to visit this website to find out more about us, the project, the development process and stages of consultation.

This website will be updated with more information at the start of the Stage One consultation, on Thursday 14 March 2024. The Stage One consultation will last 6 weeks and close on Friday 26 April 2024.

To receive direct notifications via email when Stage One launches and moving forward, please register for updates by clicking here.

〈 **Update — March 2024**

Contact Us:
Email: info@limedownsolar.co.uk
Call Freephone: 0808 175 6656
Write to: FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

The Project

Environmental Impact Assessment

Lime Down Solar Park is classified as an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) development. This requires us to assess the potential significant environmental impacts of our proposed development, as mandated by the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017.

EIA is the iterative process in which the assessment of environmental impacts is carried out in parallel with the development design process. We will use EIA as a tool to identify the potential effects Lime Down might have on the environment – benefits as well as negative impacts.

The purpose of the EIA process is to make sure that where we identify any significant effects, we put in place measures to reduce any negative impacts, while also seeking to enhance positive effects.

Our initial work has identified a number of environmental considerations which will inform the development of our detailed design for Lime Down Solar Park. A summary of these topics can be found on this webpage below.

EIA is broken down into many topics that we need to assess. These include:

- Ecology and biodiversity
- Landscape and visual
- Cultural heritage
- Transport and access
- Soils and agriculture
- Hydrology flood risk and drainage
- Socio-economics, tourism and recreation
- Noise and vibration
- Climate change
- Air quality
- Health
- Waste

For each of these topics we will assess the impact of the project on them throughout its lifecycle from construction through to operation and decommissioning.

The results of the EIA will be set out in the Environmental Statement (ES) which will be included in our final DCO application.

The local environment

We have been getting to know the local environment through site visits, early-stage environmental surveys and desk-based information gathering. The results of this work will help to shape our project design.

Because we are at an early stage of the project development process, the information below provides a summary of the assessments we plan to carry out and the work we have done so far. We will be able to provide more information on the likely environmental impacts associated with our proposed development and how these will be managed at the next stage of consultation.

In the meantime further information on this is also available in the EIA Scoping Report we submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2024. Please see the EIA Scoping section at the top of this webpage for more details, including a link to view the Scoping Report documents.

Stage 1: EIA Scoping

- We have now prepared our EIA Scoping Report and we submitted this to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 16 July 2024. You can read it on the PINS webpage for the project linked here.
- The EIA Scoping Report provides an overview of our proposed development and the environmental baseline surveys that we intend to undertake, describe how we intend to assess any likely significant environmental effects, and set out the proposed scope and content of the EIA and ES.
- The scope of the EIA will be informed by technical expertise and by engagement with stakeholders to ensure that the methodologies for environmental assessments are sufficient to accurately identify and understand the environmental impacts of Lime Down Solar Park.
- PINS respond to the Scoping Report by issuing a Scoping Opinion, which will set out comments on our proposed approach to the EIA and the topics we need to take forward for assessment and should be presented in the ES.

  To be notified directly when PINS publishes information about the Project – including the Scoping Opinion – you can register your details directly with PINS via the Lime Down Solar Park page on its website here.

Stage 2: Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

- We are required by the Planning Act 2008 to prepare a PEIR
- A core technical document the PEIR will set out the initial findings of the EIA and identify those measures we are proposing to reduce, enhance and improve the effects our proposed development may have on the environment.
- The PEIR will be presented at statutory consultation so technical stakeholders, local communities, individuals and interested parties can develop an informed view of the potential impacts Lime Down may have on the local environment and provide us with their views and feedback.

Stage 3: Environmental Statement (ES)

- After statutory consultation we will produce the ES.
- This will be prepared based on the Scoping Opinion and will advance the content of the PEIR, incorporating feedback received during statutory consultation and the public and the outcomes of our assessments undertaken.
- The ES will describe any changes to the project and those measures we are proposing to implement to reduce, improve or enhance the impacts of the project
- The ES, along with a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) will form part of the DCO application we submit to PINS.

Ecology and Biodiversity +

Landscape and visual +

Archaeology and Cultural heritage +

Transport and access +

Soils and agriculture +

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage +

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation +

Noise and vibration +

Other environmental topics +

Latest Update

17/07/2024

On 16 July 2024 we submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report for Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). This marks the next milestone in development of proposals for the Project after the first stage of community consultation which took place earlier this year.

Welcome

Island Green Power is developing proposals to build a new solar and battery energy storage project along with the infrastructure needed to export the electricity it generates onto the national grid.

Lime Down is proposed as being built on land near Malmesbury in North Wiltshire. The electricity generated by the proposed solar park would be exported via an underground cable connection into the existing national electricity transmission system at Melksham substation.

The project is anticipated as being able to deliver up to 500 megawatts (MW) of renewable electricity through ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV panels). This is enough clean, affordable electricity to power approximately 115,000 homes every year.

The UK has set ambitious climate change targets to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050 and to ensure that the energy supply remains secure, reliable, and affordable. Together with legally binding commitments such as these, the UK Government has further set out how the deployment of renewable technologies such as solar will be accelerated in the latest plan Powering Up Britain (April 2023). Lime Down could make a vital contribution to achieving these targets by ensuring the supply of clean, affordable electricity to UK consumers when it's needed.

The amount of electricity Lime Down Solar Park could generate is exceeds 50MW. It is therefore classed as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP). The development consenting regime for a NSIP comes under the Planning Act 2008. This means to get permission to build and operate the solar park we need to apply to the Planning Inspectorate for a Development Consent Order (DCO). We anticipate submitting our application to the Planning Inspectorate in Autumn 2025.

Where we are now

On 16 July 2024 we submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS). This is available on the PINS webpage for Lime Down Solar Park, linked here.

This marks the next important milestone in the ongoing development of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park further to holding Stage One Consultation on our early stage proposals for the Project in March 2024.

The purpose of EIA is to comprehensively identify and evaluate the likely significant effects of a proposed development on the environment so we can then determine measures to reduce or manage any likely significant adverse effects.

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Over the next 42 days, PINS will consult various consultation bodies, including the local authority, Statutory Environmental Bodies (SEBs) and other stakeholders with specific expertise and responsibilities related to environmental protection, to gather their views on the scope of the environmental assessment.

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About us

Established in 2013, Island Green Power (IGP) is a leading developer of renewable energy projects.

We specialise in the development of utility-scale solar projects and battery energy storage systems; overseeing the entire development process from start to finish, including sourcing land, securing grid connections and obtaining planning consents.

We are committed to help the UK decarbonise and meet net zero goals. Our mission is to help the UK increase its solar energy generation, making more renewable energy possible while drastically reducing carbon emissions.

Over the last decade we have successfully delivered over 34 projects worldwide totalling more than one gigawatt of clean, renewable energy assets. This includes 17 projects in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

We are equally committed to responsible land use, developing projects that work in harmony with local communities and the environment, while delivering bespoke benefits and enhancements best suited to the surroundings.

With a core team based in London, we are also supported by an established network of professional advisors and local partners in the various markets in which we operate.

The Project

Community benefits and Biodiversity Net Gain

As part of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park, we will support surrounding communities and deliver benefits to the local environment.

Community benefits

Island Green Power offers a community benefits package with the renewable energy schemes that it promotes.

We believe those communities closest to the proposed development should benefit from it – with them also being best placed to recommend what they believe a 'community benefit' should be.

We are committed to working with you to identify and define community benefits. As part of our initial Stage One consultation we therefore invited your suggestions for local schemes and projects we could support – potentially for both on-site and off-site initiatives.

On-site environmental mitigation and enhancements will be inherent within the material design and development process for the solar park.

These include protection of existing ecological features such as woodland, hedgerows and ponds, and delivery of biodiversity net gain through additional planting to encourage more native wildlife increasing habitats and food sources for insects and birds, and maintaining existing wildlife corridors. Additional considerations could include the creation of opportunities for public access and recreation, and improving amenity resources in the area.

Off-site, we are considering the possibility of supporting initiatives to make improvements to existing community amenities, such as sports facilities, children's playground, and village halls, or provision of electric charging points or provision of subsidised solar PV for domestic installation.

We are keen to explore opportunities for existing footpaths to be enhanced with educational walk boards, wildflower meadow planting, and seating or bird watching areas, as well as the introduction of new paths across and around the site area. We encourage feedback from anyone who has ideas on this topic.

Biodiversity net gain (BNG)

A well-managed solar farm can be a nature reserve – helping boost and protect wildlife and extend biodiversity.

As the panels are set on posts with minimal disturbance to the ground, much of the land is available to support new plants and animal life.

From November 2025, there will be a legal requirement for developers of NSIP projects to show their projects will boost biodiversity by a minimum 10 per cent. This means our plans need to ensure that local wildlife habitats are in a measurably better state than before. Lime Down Solar Park could boost local biodiversity through means such as establishing wildflower areas that provide habitats for pollinators and birds, promoting wetland habitats to reduce flood risk and support aquatic and avian life, and restoring hedgerows and native species.

To design Lime Down Solar Park in a way that boots and enhances local wildlife by delivering a net gain in biodiversity, specific examples of benefits we are looking at delivering are listed below:

- Sowing land between and under the arrays as grassland and meadow management with a mix of some areas being grazed
- Filling gaps in existing hedgerows with additional native species to increase diversity
- Managing hedgerows to enable wildlife to benefit from them year-round.
- Maintaining appropriate vegetated buffers with native planting.
- Installing bird nest and bat boxes on trees to provide opportunities for a range of local species
- The creation of new woodland blocks and belts
- New tree planting where appropriate

The Project

Connecting to the Grid

National Grid's Melksham substation is located approximately 20 kilometres (km) south of the sites just to the north of Melksham and west of the A350.

At this stage we have identified three cable route search corridors electrical connection between the solar park and Melksham substation could follow:

- South from the 400kV substation, going across the M4 near Sevington then to the east of Yatton Keynell continuing to run south across the A420, then west of Gastard and east of Corsham until it reaches Melksham substation.
- South from the 400kV substation, crossing the M4 near Leigh Delamere, before continuing to the west of Kington St. Michael, across the A420, east of Gastard and West of Norton.
- A route that broadly follows the A350 road having run south from M4 junction 17.

We have selected these route corridors to minimise ecological impact and preserve cultural heritage by avoiding designated ecological areas, mature and historic woodlands, listed buildings, scheduled monuments, and conservation areas. Additionally, we have aimed to reduce their length and the number of crossings over roads, railways, watercourses, and hedgerows as much as possible.

We are now carrying out studies to refine these corridors so we can select one and determine the exact route the connection between the solar park and Melksham substation will take.

What is a route corridor?

A route corridor is a broad ribbon of land through which an electrical connection could be routed. The corridor may vary in width depending on a range of factors including the location of:

- Built up areas where people live
- Infrastructure including roads and railway lines.
- Physical landscape features as well as other features that may be sensitive in terms of ecology, heritage or landscape
- Protected sites including nature conservation areas

We anticipate the connection for Lime Down Solar Park would be built using underground cable installation.

Underground cables can be buried in areas without land restrictions. However, after the land is restored, restrictions may be applied to avoid the risk of cables being disturbed or damaged.

A sealing end compound will be needed where a section of underground cable comes above ground. For example, were it joins Melksham substation.

Contact Us:
Email: info@limedownsolar.co.uk
Call Freephone: 0808 175 6656
Write to: FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

Consultation

Overview of consultation stages

Public consultation is a crucial component of the pre-application process for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs).

We are committed to early and continuous engagement to ensure that the development of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park is informed and shaped by community input. Local communities, residents, and councils play a vital role in this process.

The design process for the proposed development will be iterative and will be informed by feedback received during the two stages of community consultation that are planned for the project.

Stage One non-statutory consultation

An initial non-statutory consultation stage began on Thursday 14 March and ran for six weeks, until Friday 26 April.

During this time, we presented our early-stage proposals for Lime Down Solar Park and sought your feedback on our plans. Stakeholder feedback provided, alongside ongoing studies and surveys, is being used to help shape and refine our proposals. During this Stage One consultation, we committed to engaging with local communities regarding our initial plans to offer you the opportunity to share your perspectives and feedback with us at an early stage in the development process.

More information on Stage One is available here on our webpage *Stage One Consultation*.

Stage Two statutory consultation

Further to developing more detailed proposals for the project, we will then carry out a second stage of consultation ('Stage Two'). This will be a statutory stage of consultation as is required by the Development Consent Order process. We expect to carry out this second stage of consultation in early 2025.

This statutory stage is required for NSIP applications and will focus on:

- Our updated design for the solar park, including the location of equipment.
- The route of the underground cable connection between the solar park and Melksham substation.
- Construction (how we are proposing to build the project).
- The measures we are proposing to put in place to reduce the project's impact on the local area.

We will review our detailed proposals in light of the feedback received from this second consultation, along with the outcomes of ongoing assessments, to finalise and submit our application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate.

As the applicant, we have a duty to demonstrate how we have taken your views into account in developing our final proposals for Lime Down Solar Park. The application we submit to the Planning Inspectorate will include a **Consultation Report** summarising all the issues raised in feedback to consultation along with an explanation of how we have taken views into account to develop our final proposals.

This Report, along with all the other application documents will be published on the Planning Inspectorates website should our application be accepted for examination. Register your details with us here to be notified directly when this information is available to view.

Further opportunities to contribute

The second stage of consultation will likely be the last time we consult on our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park before submission.

However, if the Planning Inspectorate accept our Development Consent Order application for examination, you will then be able to register your interest in our proposals with them. The Planning Inspectorate will then keep you informed about the progress of our application as well as further opportunities to inform and contribute to that process.

Benefits

In addition to supporting the UK on a national level by creating low-cost, renewable energy, we believe those communities closest to the proposed development should benefit from it – with these communities being best placed to recommend what they believe a 'community benefit' should be.

We are committed to working with local communities to identify and define community benefits. In addition, we are exploring the possibility of generating local job opportunities during the construction and operational phase of the project. More information on this can be found on our webpage *Benefits* available here.

We are keen to hear your suggestions on local schemes and projects that we could support or implement to benefit the communities closest to the project.

For direct updates on the project and upcoming consultation activity, you can register your details with us by clicking here.

Contact Us:
Email: info@limedownsolar.co.uk
Call Freephone: 0808 175 6656
Write to: FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

Contact us

We want to keep you informed about Lime Down Solar Park.

We have established dedicated communications lines for Lime Down to ensure you always can get in touch with a member of our stakeholder engagement team, from **9am to 5pm**, **Monday through Friday** (excluding bank holidays).

Please register with us via this link to keep informed about Lime Down Solar Park.

Further, please feel free to get in touch using any of the communications lines listed below.

- Email: **info@limedownsolar.co.uk**
- Freephone information line: **0808 175 6656**
- Freepost: **FREEPOST Lime Down Solar*** *Free of charge, no need for a stamp.

Alternatively, if you have any questions or would like to find out more about the project please complete the contact form below to get in touch.

Name (required)

Email (required)

Phone

Message (required)

Would you like to receive news and information about Lime Down Solar Park straight to your inbox? (required)

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

Send

The Project

Development process

Lime Down Solar Park is anticipated as being able to deliver up to 500MW of electricity. As its generation capacity exceeds 50MW, the project is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

The development consenting regime for an NSIP comes under the Planning Act 2008. This means that we need to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build, operate and decommission Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate rather than the local planning authority.

In the case of energy related NSIPs, the Planning Inspectorate acts on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy and Net Zero. The Planning Inspectorate will carry out an examination of our application and then make a final recommendation to the Secretary of State on whether to grant consent. The Secretary of State will make the final decision on whether to grant consent for Lime Down Solar Park.

We expect the development process, including DCO submission and examination, to span two to three years. We intend to submit our application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate in late 2025. Subject to obtaining consent, the earliest construction would start is 2027.

Please see below our project timeline, noting that all dates are indicative and may be subject to change.

While the DCO application will not be submitted to the local planning authority, Wiltshire Council and stakeholder groups will play a key role in the planning process and will be extensively consulted as the project progresses.

You can find more information about the application process for NSIP projects on the Planning Inspectorate website here.

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Write to: FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

Stage One Community Consultation - Mar 24

Copies of all the the documents and information relating to Stage One Community Consultation on Lime Down Solar Park can be found here.

- Consultation Information Leaflet
- Feedback Form
- Poster
- Consultation Postcard
- Advert
- Event Display Panels
- Online Webinar Presentation Slides

Maps and plans

- Indicative Masterplan
- Lime Down A
- Lime Down B
- Lime Down C
- Lime Down D
- Lime Down E
- Cable Corridor Search Area 1a
- Cable Corridor Search Area 1b
- Solar Sites
- Land at Melksham Substation

If you would like a document in large text or an alternative format please contact us on:

- Tel: **0808 175 6656**
- Email: **info@limedownsolar.co.uk**
- Post: **FREEPOST Lime Down Solar**

You can also use the contact form linked here.

FAQs

Who is developing Lime Down Solar Park?

Island Green Power, a leading developer of renewable energy projects with a focus on utility-scale solar farms and battery energy storage, is proposing to develop Lime Down Solar Park. At Island Green Power, our mission is to help the UK increase our solar energy usage, making more renewable energy possible whilst drastically reducing our carbon emissions.

We have successfully delivered 34 solar projects worldwide totalling more than 1GW of capacity. This includes 17 solar projects in the UK and Republic of Ireland.

Committed to responsible land use, we believe that the development and delivery of utility-scale solar farms can be achieved in harmony with their surroundings.

For more information, please visit the Island Green Power website at: https://www.islandgp.com/

What is Lime Down Solar Park?

Island Green Power is bringing forward proposals to build a new utility scale solar and battery energy storage project on land near Malmesbury in North Wiltshire.

Known as Lime Down Solar Park, the development would comprise the installation of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panel and a battery energy storage system (BESS), plus infrastructure to connect the solar park to the national grid at Melksham Substation via an underground cable so electricity it generates can be made available to the 45 homes and businesses

The project is anticipated as being able to deliver up to 100 megawatts (MW) of electricity. This is enough clean, affordable energy to power around 11,000 homes annually.

Where is Lime Down Solar Park proposed as being located?

The solar park is located entirely within the administrative boundary of Wiltshire. It is proposed as being build across five sites comprising approximately 900 hectares (2,224 acres) located to the north of the M4, southwest of Malmesbury. A sixth site is located on land near Melksham substation, approximately 23 kilometres (km) to the south of the solar development sites. This site has been identified as one of two potential sites on which a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) could be located.

The electricity generated by the solar park is expected to be exported to the national grid at Melksham substation by installing an underground cable. This electrical connection will form part of the design for the project.

Studies are being carried out to identify the exact route an underground cable will follow to make the connection. At this stage we have identified three broad corridors within which a cable could be routed as follows:

- South from the 400kV substation, south across the M4 near Sevington then east of Hatton Keynell. Then running south across the A420, then west of Gastard and east of Corsham until it reaches Melksham substation.
- South from the 400kV substation, south across the M4 near Leigh Delamere then west of Kington St. Michael, across the A420 road, east of Gastard and West of Notton.
- A route that broadly follows the A350 road having run south from M4 junction 17.

We have not yet finalised the layout at this early stage in the development process, as this will evolve based on the findings from environmental and technical surveys we are carrying out and feedback we receive through consultation and engagement. We are grateful for feedback we have received to our Stage One community consultation regarding the proposed locations for solar, BESS and cabling and are reviewing your comments to determine which may be the most suitable to the local community and environment.

Preliminary environmental work is also currently being undertaken to determine where we would locate equipment, with assessments also being carried out to identify those areas that will be set aside to create new or enhancing existing habitats, as well as buffer zones to maintain a respectful distance between infrastructure and existing homes, landscape, ecological features, and Public Rights of Way.

What are the timescales for delivering Lime Down Solar Park?

We anticipate that the development process through DCO submission and examination will take between two to three years. We intend to submit our DCO application to PINS in late 2025. Subject to achieving consent, construction would start no earlier than 2027.

Our indicative timeline can be found on the Development Process page here.

Why are we proposing Lime Down Solar Park?

Lime Down Solar Park will provide a significant amount of clean electricity for business and homes in the region, supporting national and regional aims to decarbonise our electricity systems and bolster our energy security.

The way we consume energy is already changing. The move towards renewables and the transition away from fossil fuels is an environmental and economic necessity. National electricity demand is increasing and expected to double by 2050. To hit our net zero and climate change targets, boosting our solar energy capacity is an essential component.

Solar power is a clean, predictable, homegrown source of energy that gets power into the system and peoples home faster than any other renewable. The British Energy Security Strategy, published in April 2022, specifically aims to increase the UK's solar capacity fivefold by 2035, equivalent to around 70 gigawatts of generation capacity. To read the security strategy click here.

Expected to deliver 500 megawatts of clean, predictable and affordable energy, Lime Down Solar Park would contribute to the Government target to reach net zero by 2050 and its vision for decarbonisation of the energy sector by 2030 (insert here).

What is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)?

A Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) is a project over a certain size or scale which means it is considered by the Government to be of national importance.

Lime Down Solar Park is classified as an NSIP because the amount of electricity it is anticipated as delivering (up to 50MW) exceeds the minimum 50MW threshold set out in the Planning Act 2008 which qualifies it as an NSIP.

For project with a generation capacity of less than 50MW a developer is required to apply for planning permission from the relevant local planning authority under the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA).

The development regime for an NSIP comes under the Planning Act 2008. This means we need to submit an application for a Development Consent Order (DCO) to build, operate and decommission Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate rather than a local planning authority.

In the case of energy related NSIPs the Planning Inspectorate acts on behalf of the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero. It will carry out an examination of our application for development consent for Lime Down Solar Park and then make a recommendation to the Secretary of State on whether to grant consent. The Secretary of State will make the final decision on whether to grant consent for the Project.

While our DCO application will not be submitted to the local planning authority, Wiltshire Council and stakeholder groups will play a key role in the planning process and be consulted as the Project progresses.

You can find more information about the application process for NSIPs on the Planning Inspectorate website here.

Will local communities be able to have their say on our proposals?

Yes. Public consultation forms an important part of the pre-application process for NSIPs. Early ongoing engagement will serve to inform and influence the design of our project throughout the pre-application stage of the development process with Wiltshire Council, political representatives, and local communities all having an important role to play.

We are committed to engaging openly throughout the development process, carrying out clear, comprehensive and accessible public consultation before we submit our application.

The development of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park will therefore be an iterative process structured to make sure that people receive information at the right time so they have the opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to the process from an early stage.

Before submitting our application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate we plan to conduct two stages of consultation to invite feedback on proposals.

We held an initial stage of non-statutory consultation March to April 2024. While not formally required, this first stage of consultation was intended to provide local communities and interested parties with the opportunity to gain an understanding of the development we are proposing, so they could tell us about any issues or concerns they would like us to consider as we progress the design for the project.

You can find out more about Stage One Consultation here.

The next stage of consultation we carry out will be statutory consultation as required by the application process for NSIPs. We anticipate this will be carried out in early 2025. For statutory consultation we will adopt a consultation taking place we will publish a Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC). This will set out how we engage with and obtain feedback from local communities and residents on our detailed proposals for Lime Down Solar Park.

This second stage of consultation will give people the opportunity to comment on our updated proposals and how they have evolved since the first stage of consultation. Areas we will be specifically seeking views and comments on include:

- The location of equipment for the solar arrays
- The route of an underground cable connection from the solar park to Melksham substation
- How we propose to build the Project
- The measures we are proposing to mitigate the effects of the project

We will review our detailed proposals in light of feedback we receive from this second consultation, along with the outcomes from ongoing assessments, so we can finalise and submit our application for development consent to the Planning Inspectorate.

How will the local community benefit from our proposals?

We believe those communities closest to the proposed development should benefit from it – with these communities being best placed to recommend what they believe a 'community benefit' should be. The proposals will be designed to considerately respond to the landscape and around the Site, including existing and new paths and open spaces. Lime Down Solar Park could provide opportunities for public access and recreation, improving amenity resources in the area.

We are committed to working with local communities to identify and define community benefits and we want to hear your suggestions on local schemes and projects we could support or deliver to benefit those communities closest to the project.

How have we acquired the land on which the project is proposed?

Lime Down Solar Park Limited has entered into option agreements with landowners to lease the land proposed for solar panels, substations, energy storage and other associated development relating to the project.

The option agreements we have in place ensure that the land will be available to lease subject to the project being granted development consent, securing our future ability to develop the land for solar energy production and energy storage.

The option agreements we have with landowners are standard for the industry in that they are a legally binding contracts which grant us the exclusive right, but not the obligation, to lease the land for the construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning of the project.

The agreements set out the duration of the option period (i.e. the period within which we need to decide whether to proceed with taking the lease), conditions under which the option can be exercised, rights to carry out surveys, and the lease terms if the option is exercised.

As with any option agreement, during the option period, landowners are restricted from entering into similar agreements with other parties and must comply with the terms set out in the agreement.

As a responsible developer we are committed to transparency and ensuring fairness in the agreement process. All the option agreements with landowners for Lime Down Solar Park were signed voluntarily, with each landowner being advised by independent solicitors to ensure they fully understood the terms and implications so they could make an informed decision on whether to sign the agreement.

Is Lime Down Solar Park supported by government subsidies?

Lime Down Solar Park will not require any public money, subsidy or funding. This is one of the benefits of solar, compared to other forms of renewable (and non-renewable) energy generation – if the site is commercially viable, and costs are as expected, projects like Lime Down Solar Park can be subtly delivered by private investment with no impact to the Taxpayer.

Furthermore, the proposals for Lime Down Solar Park include a community benefit package, which we seek to provide to the local area. We invite your ideas and suggestions to determine the specifics of this fund, which will be decided as we move forward.

FAQs

Who is developing Lime Down Solar Park?

What is Lime Down Solar Park?

Where is Lime Down Solar Park proposed as being located?

What are the timescales for delivering Lime Down Solar Park?

Why are we proposing Lime Down Solar Park?

What is a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)?

Will local communities be able to have their say on our proposals?

How will the local community benefit from our proposals?

How have we acquired the land on which the project is proposed?

Is Lime Down Solar Park supported by government subsidies?

News

Here you can find the latest updates regarding Lime Down Solar Park, including information at key milestones in project development.

17/07/2024

Latest update

On 16 July 2024 we submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Scoping Report for Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).

Read More

27/04/2024

Update — April 2024

Our first stage of community consultation has now closed. Our Stage One Consultation ran for six weeks, from Thursday 14 March 2024 to Friday 26 April 2024.

Read More

14/03/2024

Update — March 2024

Our Stage One consultation is now open until 26 April 2024. Please click this banner to find out more.

Read More

08/03/2024

Update — March 2024

Our Stage One consultation will begin soon. Please click this banner to find out more.

Read More

Contact Us:
Email: info@limedownsolar.co.uk
Call Freephone: 0808 175 6656
Write to: FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

27 Apr

Update — April 2024

Our first stage of community consultation has now closed. Our Stage One Consultation ran for six weeks, from **Thursday 14 March 2024 to Friday 26 April 2024.**

The purpose of this consultation was to introduce Island Green Power, present our early proposals for Lime Down Solar Park, and give you the opportunity to provide your feedback. We would like to thank all those who have participated in our first round of community consultation, whether this has been through attending one of our events, contacting our communications channels, or providing feedback.

We held a series of in-person and online exhibition events during the first stage of consultation, providing opportunities for the community and key stakeholders alike to find out more information about the proposals and provide their feedback.

We are now reviewing all the comments submitted to us during the consultation to shape a strong set of proposals that are sensitive to and respect concerns of local communities. Our focus is on providing accurate and honest information to build an understanding of how Lime Down Solar Park can generate cheap low carbon energy, bring benefits while minimising adverse impacts on the local environment and surrounding communities.

We will soon produce a Stage One Consultation Summary Report which will include a summary of the feedback submitted to this consultation along with an overview of how we've taken your views into account as we continue to develop our proposals. If you would like to be notified directly when the Consultation Summary Report is made available, or receive information about future engagement and the next stage of consultation we will carry out on our more detailed proposals for Lime Down Solar Park, please register for updates by clicking here.

〈 Latest update

Update — March 2024 〉

Contact Us:
Email: info@limedownsolar.co.uk
Call Freephone: 0808 175 6656
Write to: FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

17 Jul

Latest update

Lime Down Solar reaches development milestone with submission of scoping report

- **Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping Report submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consultation with expert bodies**
- **Additional 44 hectares of land included to enhance buffer zones between infrastructure and sensitive assets such as the Fosse Way and residential properties.**
- **Statutory consultation on detailed proposals expected to take place in early 2025.**
- **The Planning Inspectorate published the Scoping Report on their webpage for Lime Down Solar Park, available here.**

Island Green Power has today submitted an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) scoping report for Lime Down Solar Park to the Planning Inspectorate. This marks the next milestone in development of proposals for the Project after the first stage of community consultation which took place earlier this year.

The proposals for Lime Down Solar Park include installation of ground-mounted solar photovoltaic panels, onsite battery energy storage and installation of underground cable that will connect the site to the national grid at Melksham substation approximately 20 kilometres away. Subject to being agreed by planning authorities and the community, Lime Down Solar Park could deliver up to 500 megawatts (MW) of renewable energy, enough to power over 115,000 homes annually.

Will Threlfall, Senior Project Development Manager, Island Green Power said:

> *'We are pleased to reach the next milestone in the development of our proposals for Lime Down Solar Park. The Scoping Report gives more detail on the project and sets out the environmental criteria we'll use to evaluate the potential effects of any development. Our findings will guide actions to reduce and manage impacts on the local landscape and environment, and address residents' concerns'.*
>
> *'We'd like to thank everyone who took the time to respond to the initial consultation. Your feedback highlighted how important the area is and the need to protect treasured views and walks, wildlife, and local ecology. All the points raised are reflected in this Environmental Scoping Report and will be factored into our development of the project.*
>
> *'In response to feedback, we've worked with the project landowners and are pleased to confirm that an additional 44 hectares of land has been made available for the project design. This land will be used to increase buffer zones, putting more distance between solar infrastructure and sensitive areas such as the Cotswold National Landscape, heritage assets including the Fosse Way, landscape features, Public Rights of Way, and residential properties.'*

EIA Scoping Process

Over the next 42 days, the Planning Inspectorate will consult on the Lime Down project proposals with stakeholders including Wiltshire Council, Statutory Environmental Bodies (SEBs) and other groups with specific expertise and responsibilities related to environmental protection. This feedback will then be used to provide Island Green Power with Scoping Opinion setting out key areas that must be addressed as part of the application for development consent for Lime Down.

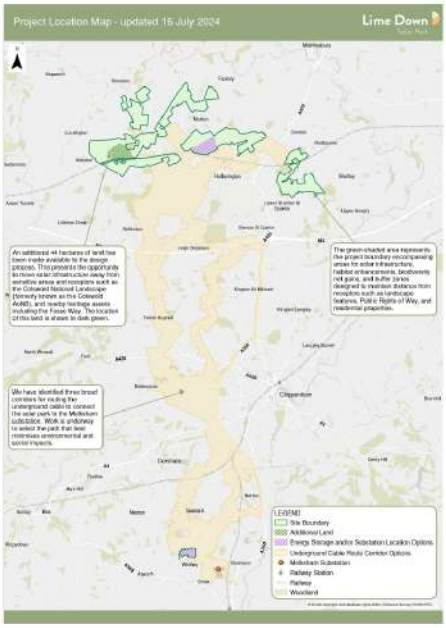
Scoping Opinion, together with the findings from ongoing environmental surveys and assessments and design development work, will inform the development of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR). This is a core document that informs the second stage of consultation.

Next steps

The second stage of consultation is expected to take place in early 2025 to provide people with another opportunity to comment on proposals for Lime Down ahead of an application for development consent being submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

During this statutory stage of consultation, the community will be asked to share their views on the design of the project including where equipment is located; the route of the underground cable connection between the solar park and Melksham substation; construction; and the measures being put in place to reduce the project's impact on the local area.

People wishing to receive updates and information about the ongoing development process and future consultation for Lime Down Solar Park are encouraged to register their details with us here.



Update — April 2024 ›

14 Mar

Update — March 2024

We are pleased to announce that our Stage One community consultation began on Thursday 14 March 2024 and will be running for a 6 week period, until Friday 26 April 2024.

We want to ensure that those communities living and working in proximity of where we are proposing to build Lime Down Solar Park have a chance to inform and potentially influence the development of our proposals from an early stage.

This initial stage of consultation provides the first opportunity for us to introduce Island Green Power (the developer behind the project), to share information about our plans for Lime Down Solar Park and to give you the opportunity to provide us with your views. We will use feedback you submit to this consultation to help us identify and better understand the potential impacts of our proposals so we can decided how and where we build the scheme with as minimal impact while treading as lightly as possible on the local area and communities living there.

To find out more about our proposals at this stage, please visit our webpage *The Project - Our proposals*.

To find out more about who we are, please visit our webpage *About Us*.

To find out more about what we are consulting on during this Stage One Consultation, please visit our webpage *This Consultation*.

To find out more on how you can take part, please visit our webpage *How to Provide Feedback*.

The deadline for responding to the Stage One consultation is 26 April 2024. Please contact our community relations team (details provided below) if you have any questions on our proposals or this consultation. If you would like help accessing the information available or support to respond to the consultation. You can also visit our webpage *Contact Us* and fill out the digital form provided to get in touch.

To receive direct notifications via email when Stage One closes and moving forward, please register for updates by clicking here.

〈 **Update — April 2024**

Update — March 2024 〉

The Project

Our proposals

Lime Down Solar Park would comprise the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and an on-site battery energy storage facility, plus infrastructure to connect the scheme to the national grid at Melksham substation so the electricity it generates can be made available to the UK's homes and businesses.

The project is anticipated as having a generation capacity of around 500 megawatts (MW). This is equivalent to providing enough clean energy to power around 115,000 homes.

Location

The project is entirely located within the administrative boundary of Wiltshire. The solar park element is proposed as being built across five sites comprising agricultural land of approximately 857 hectares (2,118 acres) located to the north of the M4, southwest of Malmesbury. A sixth site is located on land near Melksham substation, approximately 20 kilometres away from the solar development sites. This site has been identified as the potential location for a Battery Energy Storage System.

As shown in the maps here, the six sites making up the solar park have been identified as follows:

- Lime Down A – located to the east of Commonwood Lane
- Lime Down B – located to the east of the Fosse Way
- Lime Down C – lies across the Fosse Way to the east of Alderton
- Lime Down D –lies immediately to the north of the Great Western Railway line and Hullavington, south of Bradfield Wood
- Lime Down E – located to the south-west of Rodbourne, and south of Corston
- Land at Melksham substation – sits to the west of Melksham Substation and lies on the northern edge of Whitley

PDF copies of these maps, as well as our Stage One Consultation Indicative Masterplan, are available as PDF copies for you to view, download and print on our ***Documents*** webpage. An interactive map where you can search for a location is also available on our webpage ***The Project – Overview***.

Site Selection

We have selected the solar development sites after considering Government policy on new renewable energy projects. This includes examining whether they are within a viable distance of an available grid connection, have suitable levels of irradiation (sunlight) and other considerations such as environmental constraints, the distance of the site from dwellings, agricultural quality of the land, and accessibility.

Further to engagement with landowners who confirmed their willingness to enter into lease agreements, the solar park development sites were identified as suitable for a number of additional reasons:

- They comprise large arable fields of regular shape
- Gently undulating topography makes the sites technically suitable for solar development and maximising the efficiency of panels
- Existing hedgerows, tree belts and woodland around and across the sites mean they are well screened
- Most of the sites are located in Flood Zone 1 which is defined as having low risk of flooding
- There are only a small number of residential properties in proximity of the sites and effective landscaping and screening could be employed to offset or reduce any visual impacts
- The land is predominantly classified as Grade 3b (moderate quality agricultural land) with some Grade 3a (good quality agricultural)
- There are existing accesses for construction vehicles

For more detailed information on our proposals for the solar park, please visit our webpage *The Project – The Solar Park*. For more information on the route corridor options we have identified for underground cabling, please visit our webpage *Connecting to the National Grid*.

Register for updates

Please register your contact details with us if you would like us to send you project updates straight into your inbox.

Name (required)

Email (required)

Sign up for news and updates

Phone

Are you registering contact details on behalf of an organisation?

Yes

No

If yes, which organisation are you registering details on behalf of?

I wish to be kept informed

Yes

No

Submit

Consultation

Stage One Consultation — March 2024

This consultation has now closed.

We held a first stage of non-statutory consultation on our early-stage proposals for Lime Down Solar Park between 14 March 2024 and 26 April 2024.

Primarily aimed at introducing Island Green Power and presenting our emerging proposals for Lime Down Solar Park, the purpose of this consultation was to give individuals and interested parties the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the proposed development and share their views and local knowledge to help inform and shape our proposals from an early stage in the development process.

Copies of the consultation materials produced to inform this stage of consultation can be found here.

Community information events

Over the course of the consultation we held a programme of six in-person events and two online webinars. Recordings of the webinars which took place are available to view and download below:

- **Recording of the online webinar from 27 March** can be found here.

  A copy of the slides presented presented during the webinar can be viewed here.

  Further information in response to outstanding questions can be found here.

- **Recording of the online webinar from 17 April** can be found here.

  A copy of the slides presented presented during the webinar can be viewed here.

  Further information in response to outstanding questions can be found here.

Next steps

Over the course of this consultation we received over 1,400 submissions of feedback and would like to thank everyone who took the time to provide us with their views and suggestions on our emerging proposals for Lime Down Solar Park.

Further to the consultation closing work is now underway to review all the feedback we received so we can understand all those aspects of the proposed development you would like us to prioritise as we continue to develop our proposals.

We will consider all the comments raised in feedback together with the findings from our ongoing environmental surveys and technical assessments, as we continue to refine and shape our detailed proposals for the Project which will then form the focus for a second statutory stage of consultation anticipated as taking place early 2025.

Ahead of statutory consultation taking place next year, we produce a **Stage One Consultation Summary Report** which will include a summary of the feedback submitted to this consultation along with an overview of how your views have been taken into account as we have continued to develop our proposals.

If you would like to be notified when we publish our Consultation Summary Report please register your details here and we will contact you directly when it becomes available.

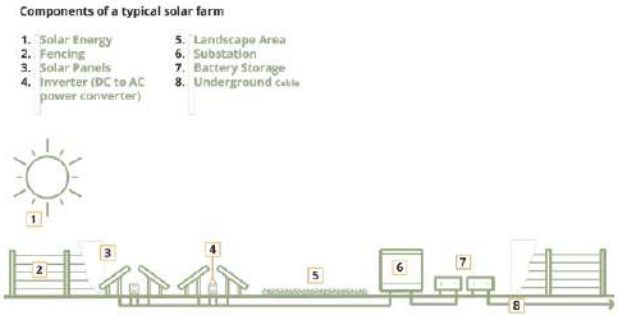
Contact Us:
Email: info@limedownsolar.co.uk
Call Freephone: 0808 175 6656
Write to: FREEPOST Lime Down Solar

The Project

The Solar Project

At this early stage in the development process, we have not yet finalised the design and layout for the scheme. This will evolve based on the findings from the environmental surveys and assessments we are conducting, alongside feedback provided through consultation.

Preliminary work is currently being undertaken to determine where we would locate infrastructure, with assessments also being carried out to identify those areas that could be set aside to create new or enhance existing habitats for biodiversity net gain, as well as buffer zones to maintain a respectful distance between infrastructure and existing homes, landscape, ecological features, and Public Rights of Way. For more information on our ongoing environmental work, please visit our *Environmental Impact Assessment* webpage.



Solar PV – additional design considerations

Solar PV technology is advancing quickly. To ensure we can incorporate the most current technology when we begin construction, our development consent application will be designed to be flexible.

When it comes to our application, we will therefore seek a consent that restricts aspects of the solar park which have potential environmental impacts including:

- Solar panel height
- Dimensions of the infrastructure i.e. onsite substations
- Location of the panels across the site

The principle components of the solar park would include:

- **Ground mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) Panels**: positioned directly on the ground to efficiently convert sunlight into electricity. While it is too early to confirm the specific solar panels that would be installed for Lime Down Solar Park, we anticipate that the panels will be a mixture of tracker panels and fixed, with a maximum height of the panels (including their supports) to be 4.5 metres.
- **PV module mounting structures**: These robust structures securely hold the solar panels in place.

  Supporting infrastructure:

  - **Inverters:** converting the direct current (DC) electricity generated by the panels into alternating current (AC). AC electricity is what powers homes and businesses.
  - **Transformers**: to increase the voltage of the electricity so it can be exported to the national grid
  - **Switchgear**: to manage the flow of electricity and direct it to where needed.
- **Energy Storage System**: on-site storage facilities – known as a Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) - would provide an important balancing service for the national grid whereby electricity generated by the solar PV panels could be stored on site at times when demand for electricity is low, then exported on to the electricity transmission system when demand peaks. It could also be used to import and store electricity from the national grid until it is needed.
- **On-site cables**: to connect the solar panels and the battery energy storage system to the inverters which in turn connect to the transformers. Higher voltage cables will be required between transformers and switchgear and from switchgear to the off-site electrical infrastructure.
- **On-site substation**: to export electricity from the solar park to the national grid, ensuring it is accessible for public use.
- **Security fencing**: A robust fence to enclose the operational areas of the site along with pole-mounted internal facing closed circuit television (CCTV) deployed around the perimeter of the operational site.
- **Site accesses:** to be used during construction and for routine maintenance, there will be designated entry points to allow safe access to different areas within the solar park.
- **New planting**: trees and vegetation would be planted around the site perimeter to enhance biodiversity and contribute to the overall landscape improvement.
- **Construction compounds**: during construction one or more temporary construction compounds will be required, as well as temporary roadways, to enable access to the land within the site boundary.

Report we submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in July 2024. Please see the EIA Scoping section at the top of this webpage for more details, including a link to view the Scoping Report documents.

we are proposing to implement to reduce, improve or enhance the impacts of the project

- The ES, along with a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) will form part of the DCO application we submit to PINS.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Detailed survey work will be carried out to understand where and what wildlife is currently found across the site so we can identify the potential impacts of our proposals on local species, as well as ways we can protect, promote and enhance wildlife habitats in our plans. These will include:

- Breeding bird surveys
- Bat surveys
- Badger surveys
- Great Crested Newt Surveys
- Water vole and otter surveys

Landscape and visual

Archaeology and Cultural heritage

Transport and access

Soils and agriculture

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Ecology and Biodiversity +

Landscape and visual −

A full Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment will be produced so we can identify any potential visual impacts associated with the development we're proposing and put in place appropriate measures to reduce them. For example, views of equipment could be screened by enhancing existing hedgerows and planting new ones.

We are also committed to going beyond the requirements and plan to undertake a Residential Visual Amenity Assessment which seeks to mitigate potential impacts on private views and amenity. Where appropriate, we will propose bespoke measures to visually reduce the potential impacts of the development for each of the properties that may be impacted.

Archaeology and Cultural heritage +

Transport and access +

Soils and agriculture +

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage +

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Ecology and Biodiversity +

Landscape and visual +

Archaeology and Cultural heritage −

We recognise the cultural and historical importance of this area of Wiltshire, and are carrying out studies to fully understand the significance of heritage assets in the surrounding area, such as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments.

We have undertaken site visits and desk-based assessment to understand the heritage value of the site, and will carry out detailed ground investigation and archaeological surveys to ensure that any assets are protected and avoided during the construction phase of the project. We will also be undertaking field walking and a geo-physical survey of the entire project area to get a better understanding of the potential for buried archaeology.

Transport and access +

Soils and agriculture +

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage +

Ecology and Biodiversity +

Landscape and visual +

Archaeology and Cultural heritage +

Transport and access −

We are evaluating traffic and access considerations, and have undertaken initial site visits to identify the existing access points into Lime Down Solar Park. We will assess the potential impact of our proposals on traffic, and produce a Construction Traffic Management Plan to outline how we will minimise impact on local traffic during construction and operation.

Soils and agriculture +

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage +

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation +

Noise and vibration +

Other environmental topics +

Ecology and Biodiversity +

Landscape and visual +

Archaeology and Cultural heritage +

Transport and access +

Soils and agriculture −

We will carry out surveys of the agricultural land within the site to identify its agricultural value, and seek to locate infrastructure on land of the lowest agricultural value. A Site Selection report included in our application for development consent will explain how the areas of land proposed for Lime Down Solar farm were identified and selected.

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage +

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation +

Noise and vibration +

Other environmental topics +

limedownsolar.co.uk/environmental-impact-assessment

Ecology and Biodiversity +

Landscape and visual +

Archaeology and Cultural heritage +

Transport and access +

Soils and agriculture +

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage −

Emerging flood risk findings from initial research we have carried out indicate that the majority of the project area is located within Flood Zone 1 which is classified as having a 'low' risk to flooding. Parts of the Lime Down sites (D and E) are located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, so we will prepare a Flood Risk Assessment in line with the requirements of National Policy Statement for Energy guidance.

Further, we have also identified land between parts of Lime Down sites (B and C) located within Flood Zones and 3.

Additionally, we will conduct a drainage assessment that describes baseline land drainage conditions and existing site runoff rates, also producing a concept strategy for managing site runoff during the operational lifetime of the development, inclusive of resilience to climate change.

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation +

Transport and access +

Soils and agriculture +

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage +

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation −

We recognise the need to deliver Lime Down Solar Park sensitively and make sure we have considered local communities in designing the Scheme. We are therefore seeking to design the project in a way which will maintain amenity and provide continued access to recreational benefits in the local area.

We are committed to keeping Public Rights of Way in place and open to the public. There may be temporary diversions during the construction period for safety reasons.

Noise and vibration +

Other environmental topics +

limedownsolar.co.uk/environmental-impact-assessment

Transport and access +

Soils and agriculture +

Hydrology, flood risk and drainage +

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation +

Noise and vibration −

We will carry out baseline noise monitoring at those residential properties closest to the site area to understand the noise levels currently experienced.

Solar developments do not tend to produce a significant amount of noise during operation. However, we will model noise which could arise from the electrical transformers across the site and the cooling equipment associated with the battery storage facility, which has potential to be a source of noise from the development. This is so we can assess any potential impact at the nearest properties and then determine appropriate mitigation to include as part of the design.

Other environmental topics +

Contact Us:

Socio-economics, tourism and recreation +

Noise and vibration +

Other environmental topics −

As part of the EIA, we will be undertaking baseline surveys, modelling and assessment of a range of other issues including, but not limited to:

- Climate Change
- Air Quality
- Human Health
- Waste
- Arboriculture
- Ground Conditions

We would welcome your views on our proposed approach and would be happy to discuss with you any environmental ideas, local initiatives or environmental information you may hold for the project area that could assist with the evolution of the project, our understanding of the baseline environment and assessment of the effects of the proposal on the environment.

For information on how to submit your feedback, please visit our webpage *How to Provide Feedback*.