



June 2021

Dear Sir / Madam,

**ScottishPower Renewables Public Information for the Pollards Solar Farm Proposal - Online Public Information Event: 7<sup>th</sup> June – 18<sup>th</sup> June 2021**

ScottishPower Renewables (SPR) is writing to you to inform you of an upcoming Solar Farm proposal, Pollards Solar Farm and the opportunity to provide feedback on the scheme through an online Public Information Event (PIE). This notice provides details on the proposal and advises how you can further engage in the consultation process.

**Who are SPR?**

SPR is part of the ScottishPower group of companies operating in the UK under the Iberdrola Group, one of the world's largest integrated utility companies and a world leader in wind energy. ScottishPower now only produces 100% green electricity – focusing on wind energy, solar energy, smart grids and driving the change to a cleaner, electric future. The company is investing over £6million every working day to make this happen and is committed to speeding up the transition to cleaner electric transport, improving air quality and over time, driving down bills to deliver a better future, quicker for everyone.

ScottishPower has become the first major UK utility to completely switch from fossil fuels to renewables after selling its remaining gas and hydro power stations to Drax in 2018. It has also closed all of its coal fired power stations. As a result, the company is now freed up to invest more in UK renewable sources, such as solar, wind, tidal and wave energy. ScottishPower plans to invest £5.2billion by 2022 which will double the company's renewable capacity.

**The Development**

The Pollards Solar Farm will have a capacity up to 49.9 MegaWatts (MW) with the potential to generate enough electricity to supply the equivalent of over 13,000 UK homes. The Site, located within the administrative boundary of Wealden District Council (WDC), and to the west of the village of The Dicker.

Access into the site will be via a dedicated access from Wick Street.

The solar development will consist of PV arrays along with associated cabling and inverters / transformers; a substation compound; access and maintenance tracks. The scheme design has included provision for internal areas of ecological enhancement works to be undertaken, as well as the retention of the Public Rights of Way throughout the site.

**Community Benefits**

With established sites in England, SPR has a history of working positively with communities within the region. We are keen to create employment opportunities during the construction and operation of our developments that can be delivered locally to benefit those who live near our sites.

SPR will share benefits of the proposal with the local communities and are currently discussing the extent of which the Pollards Solar Development, once operational, will benefit the area.

**Progress to Date**

SPR have engaged with WDC through their pre-application process. Subsequently, an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Request (planning reference: AMB/WD/2021/6501/SO) was submitted to WDC on 14th January 2021 to determine the requirement for any formal Planning Application to be accompanied by an Environmental Statement (ES). WDC responded with their Screening Opinion on 4th Feb 2021 determining the project is an EIA development and that an ES should accompany a formal Planning Application. On 29<sup>th</sup> March 2021, SPR submitted a Scoping Report to the Council, to agree the scope of the ES. SPR received the Scoping Responses on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

A number of environmental surveys and technical assessment have been undertaken across the site to date. These assessments will inform the final design and layout of the scheme and are being undertaken in consultation with stakeholders.

#### **Consultation Details**

SPR have discussed the scheme with several of the local Parish Councils. The next steps will be to engage with local residents.

Unfortunately, due to Government guidelines, and advice relating to COVID-19, a face-to-face public exhibition will not be held for the scheme. It is however important that local residents are given the opportunity to review the scheme and to provide feedback.

SPR will be holding a PIE from 7th June to 18th June 2021 to introduce the proposed development and provide an opportunity for public feedback through a project email address (below).

The following information will be made available on the website to view and download from 12:00 7th June 2021:

- an introduction to the proposed development, including; information on the work undertaken to date, the iterative design process and the planning and environmental impact assessment process;
- a map showing the areas where the proposed scheme may potentially be visible from (known as the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, or ZTV);
- a summary of the surveys and studies completed for each technical topic and an outline of the scope of the assessment for each;
- an explanation of the benefits of the proposed development;
- a section with answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs); and
- an online feedback form to allow you to submit queries or comments regarding the proposed development.

We will also provide further information about the proposed development through our website which will be updated as the project progresses and will highlight any notable changes. The valuable feedback received to date has helped up inform the current design and continued feedback is essential to help us confirm the best site design that balances the need for the development alongside the social and environmental considerations.

Going forward, SPR will provide further information about the proposed development through the SPR website as the project develops and full details of the scheme will also be published on the WDC Planning Portal once the application has been registered. At that point, there will be a statutory consultation process, wherein residents views can be provided direction to WDC.

We will welcome any comments, questions or feedback on the scheme at this time. However, should you wish to discuss the scheme or have any queries please do get in touch with us.

#### **Email:**

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#### **Post:**

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