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Solar

Hive Energy gets green light for subsidy-free 40MW solar park



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The site on which Hive Energy has permission to build a 40MW solar farm

Renewable energy developer plans to complete Woodlington Farm project in Hampshire in summer 2018

Hive Energy has announced plans to develop a 40MW subsidy-free solar park in Hampshire after securing planning permission from the local council.

The renewable energy developer announced yesterday that Test Valley Borough Council has given the green light for the project to go ahead at Woodlington Farm near Romsey, with construction expected to finish next summer.

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The site surrounds Hive Energy's global headquarters and is expected to provide enough power to meet the needs of 9,100 average households using an on-site grid connection via energy supplier SSE.

According to Hive, it is estimated the solar park will save around 16,500 tonnes of carbon emissions a year, as well as enabling the firm's R&D team to pilot and test their latest solar and storage technologies at the site.

Hive has also committed to producing a biodiversity management plan for the 25-year lifespan of the solar park, which will include the development of conservation areas, space for sheep grazing and the planting of new trees and hedgerows to encourage birds, bats, and insects. Moreover, the firm said the nearby River Blackwater would also benefit from pesticides no longer being used at the site.

Hive Energy CEO, Giles Redpath, said the firm's latest project would help to make a "a significant contribution" towards meeting national renewable energy targets as well as boosting security of power supply.

"The project will also deliver positive social benefits for local people and support the development of innovative energy saving technology," he said.

Founded in 2010, Hive Energy is the owner and operator of 18MW of UK solar sites and 30 commercial roof systems. The firm also previously developed the 49MW Southwick Estate Solar Park near Portsmouth, which was the UK's largest grid connected PV [when it was built in 2015](#).

Developers are increasingly confident that they can develop some prospective solar farms without recourse to subsidy. However, industry insiders remain concerned that a clearer route to market is still required to mobilise significant new investment in the sector.



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