

Immediate Release

UK's first industrial solar park goes live

A new era for clean energy has dawned in the UK, with the first phase of Westcott Solar Park being switched on.

Sited on the runway of a former Battle of Britain airfield, the project has been developed by property company Rockspring to provide power to the Westcott Venture Park. Several other solar farms are being developed around the country stimulated by the Feed-In Tariffs introduced last year, though a recent government decision to slash tariff levels means that this first wave may not be followed for some years to come.

The project was designed by renewable energy specialists Ownergy Plc and consented last November. Construction by German solar park contractors Solon SE started in April and the system was energised and registered on 22nd June before being connected to the grid this week. Planning approval has now been given to expand the system to a total of 1.6MW, enough to provide perhaps 15% of the electricity used on the industrial estate.

The first phase mounted on runway 13/31 comprises over 1,500 solar modules delivering power through 28 inverters, and transformed to 11,000 volts for supply to the private network which powers the estate.

“Westcott provides a great example of the potential for solar power in Britain”, said Ownergy Chairman, Philip Wolfe; “it’s an ideal use of a heritage site, and onsite usage of the electricity optimises the financial returns of the project”.

“Property businesses are increasingly aware of their carbon footprint”, said Rockspring Director, Rod Mordey; “and we are proud to be in the forefront by providing clean solar power to our tenants”. The first phase will deliver over 360,000 kWh per annum, saving 70 tonnes of carbon.



Notes for editors:

About Ownergy: Ownergy manages renewable energy projects end-to-end, from feasibility and design, procurement and management, through to delivery, system maintenance and tariff management. The service is specifically aimed at ensuring that customers maximise their returns under the Feed-In Tariffs and the Renewable Heat Incentive. See www.ownergy.co.uk.

About Rockspring: Rockspring Property Investment Managers LLP is a professional investment fiduciary specialising in the acquisition and management of commercial property throughout the UK and continental Europe on behalf of major institutional clients - either directly for single-client accounts or through the Group's series of tax-efficient, co-mingled investment funds. Rockspring is authorised and regulated by the FSA. See www.rockspringpim.com.

About Solon: SOLON SE is one of the largest solar module manufacturers in Europe and suppliers of solar system technology for large-scale roof-mounted and ground-mounted systems. The SOLON group is represented by subsidiaries in Germany, Italy, France, and the U.S. and employs around 800 people globally. SOLON's core business is the production of solar modules and photovoltaic systems, and the project planning and construction of large-scale roof-mounted systems and turnkey power plants worldwide. See www.solon.com.

Feed-In Tariffs. The Feed-In Tariffs started on 1st April 2010 and provide tariff payments for every kilowatt hour generated by qualifying systems. A recent government review slashes the tariffs for systems above 50kW, so this part of the market is likely to be closed to the UK for the foreseeable future. See www.FITariffs.co.uk.

First solar park. Several other solar parks up to 5MW are under construction in the UK. The Westcott participants have not seen news that any others are yet operational or listed on the Feed-In Tariffs register, but editors may wish to double check.

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