




Securing support for new solar and storage



SECNewgate

Insight. Communications. Advocacy.

About SEC Newgate UK



We are an insights and research-driven global strategic communications and advocacy group.

We work at the nexus of business, politics, communities, markets and media to deliver positive outcomes.

We lead the field in securing consent for energy and infrastructure projects – and we continue to innovate.

We implement campaigns locally, regionally and nationally. We understand the wider context for our clients' projects.

Recent highlights

We're working on projects including:

RENEWABLES



Four of the UK's largest Solar Farms

AIRPORTS



Bringing **Gatwick Airport's Northern Runway** into **full-time use**

HYDROGEN

Helping a village prepare to **transition to hydrogen**



LOGISTICS



Europe largest distribution park

CARBON CAPTURE

A cutting-edge **carbon capture facility** reducing the climate impact of the **construction industry**



ENERGY FROM WASTE

A **green energy park** incorporating an **energy recovery facility**, **hydrogen and battery storage**, and **carbon capture**



Our UK footprint



Our community engagement team has developed a formidable specialism in delivering successful consultation programmes to support new energy and infrastructure projects.

With offices across the UK, we can truly get under the surface of local communities, advising our clients on a bespoke strategy that fits their individual circumstance.

2020 saw us win Planning Campaign of the Year at the PRCA Public Affairs Awards for our work in support of new hydrogen generation in Kent.

NSIPs across
our network

Meet some of the team

DOUGLAS JOHNSON



Douglas leads our dedicated energy and infrastructure team. He specialises in promoting new energy and

infrastructure projects, whether through the NSIP regime or local planning permissions. His experience includes devising and delivering engagement programmes for four solar NSIPs, including Longfield Solar Farm.

More broadly, his experience includes promoting new roads, gas and electricity transmission infrastructure, airport development, interconnectors, renewable energy schemes, energy from waste facilities, strategic land and stadia.

PHIL BRISCOE



Phil has worked in more than 90% of local planning authorities across the country, including advising on more than 60

energy, infrastructure and transport projects. In the energy sector, Phil has extensive experience of managing the communications for projects across wind, solar, biomass, gas and hydrogen energy alongside energy from waste.

He previously served as a Conservative councillor in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets, has been a candidate for the Greater London Assembly and has run political campaigns in 7 of the 9 English regions.

PAUL KELLY



Paul leads our specialist engagement division. Over 35 years, he has gained a broad range of expertise

from corporate communications through to public affairs and stakeholder engagement. He has worked for a large range of clients in both the public and private sectors and over this time has developed a particular expertise in energy and infrastructure. Past and current clients include EDF, ESB, Celtique Energy, the Environmental Services Association and National Grid.



Meet some of the team

BETH TARLING



Beth provides stakeholder engagement advice to clients in the property, transport and energy sectors. She has supported a

number of major infrastructure proposals through the planning process, including battery storage, energy recovery and onshore wind projects.

Based in Cumbria and heading up our Manchester office, Beth leads a specialist regional team helping organisations across the North of England to communicate and consult more effectively.

MATILDA HARTWIG



Matilda is a communications professional with more than six years of experience working with public and private sector

clients across the planning, energy, transport, and major infrastructure sectors.

Matilda brings a wealth of knowledge working on complex and issues rich projects in Australia and the UK. This has involved delivering robust communications and stakeholder engagement programs to achieve planning approvals, minimise risks through the planning and construction phases and promote project benefits.

SCOTT HARKER



Scott's focus is on delivering communications and consultation for NSIPs at the sharp end.

This includes working in support of the largest solar farm proposed currently in England, highways projects and new aviation infrastructure.

Scott also has experience of taking smaller solar projects through stakeholder engagement and public consultation under the town and country planning regime.

DREW ASPINWALL



Drew Aspinwall our teams in the South West of England and Wales. He is an expert in working in partnership

with in-house teams to deliver results for our clients.

Drew has worked on many of the major infrastructure developments and growth programmes in the region, including Hinkley Point C and a new £390 million glass-making plant in Ebbw Vale.

Our NSIP experience

We have advised on more than 20 Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, including:

Gatwick Northern Runway

Longfield Solar Farm

Sunnica Energy Farm

Hinkley Point C Nuclear Power Station

Gatwick Northern Runway

A303 Sparkford to Ilchester

Larkshall Mill Aggregate Manufacturing and Carbon Capture Facility

Knottingley Power Station

International Advanced Manufacturing Park

Using targeted digital engagement and social analytics we can help you identify what matters to residents, landowners and businesses, while allowing you to keep an ear to the ground.

Our approach to NSIPs

Being able to demonstrate adequate consultation – sufficient to satisfy the Planning Inspectorate (PINs) – is becoming ever more critical, as is the need to show regard to feedback from consultees.

We make sure that clients will meet all the consultation requirements for NSIPs. However, we also know that NSIPs don't come forward in a vacuum. We manage the political, stakeholder, community, and media context for projects.

We:

- > Adopt an insights-led approach to understanding the audiences for engagement using community and digital mapping
- > Develop detailed evidence on target audiences as part of the consultation process
- > Work with our clients from the outset to define the issues and ensure the project brand and narrative is right
- > Engage early and often with the right stakeholders. We then manage and track all contact with stakeholders to enable accurate reporting
- > Work with our clients to manage the expectations of their partners – whether those are investors, landowners or consultees
- > Consult regularly in line with best practice guidance on consultation
- > Manage all aspects of statutory consultation when the time comes
- > Produce robust Consultation Reports which demonstrate how our clients have met the requirements for consulting on NSIPs

The context for solar and storage is increasingly challenging, locally and nationally. We can help you navigate it.

Opponents to new solar farms are becoming increasingly coordinated in their campaigning. The results are visible in Liz Truss' comments on the campaign trail during the Conservative Party leadership election calling for restrictions on new solar development on agricultural land.

We lead the field in securing consent for energy and infrastructure projects, including solar and battery storage, through communications and engagement targeted at key decision-makers in local and national government – and the environment that influences them.

We are advising on four solar NSIPs. We also have a great track record securing consents for smaller solar and storage applications at a local authority level.

We apply our experience from each previous solar and storage project to the next constantly.



Audience and engagement



BUSINESS &
SUPPLIERS



CONSUMERS



EMPLOYEES



INVESTORS
& CAPITAL
MARKETS



LOCAL
COMMUNITIES



NGOS &
ACTIVISTS



POLITICIANS



REGULATORS

Digital engagement

Our team of digital comms experts can help you reach the right people with the most relevant messages, ensuring that they receive a steady stream of factual information to help you control the online narrative.

From key stakeholders through to the wider community, we work with you to map out the audiences you want to reach, recommending the most suitable digital channels, building bespoke targeting lists for paid social media and formulating a digital strategy and plan.

We work with you to turn your key messages into compelling social media content, suitable for the digital world where attention spans are low and every second counts.

Finally, we deliver your content to the target audiences on the digital channels that they use, reporting back regularly to ensure you are aware of any issues arising or particular demographics that are responding well to your content.

Research

Our specialist research team helps you navigate opinion to chart the course through complex, business-critical situations.

They design research approaches specific to each project using a wide range of qualitative and quantitative methodologies, from the traditional through to the more cutting-edge. These include in-depth interviews and focus groups, ethnography and observation, deliberative research forums and online communities, face-to-face, telephone and online surveys, and social media analytics.

Using targeted digital engagement and social analytics we can help you identify what matters to residents, landowners and businesses, while allowing you to keep an eye on the online ground.

Design and Branding

Our in-house design team helps support our work across a wide range of infrastructure projects. This work has included brand creation and development for a range of solar and energy projects, creation of digital and print support materials for public exhibitions to larger scale development hoardings, information boards and project websites. Our clients have included EDF Energy, National Grid, Cadent Gas, Longfield Solar Farm, Sunnica Solar Farm, Padero Solar and OCO Technology.

So, whether it's brand creation, leaflet design, website and social media support or exhibition materials for engaging local communities – we can help.



Case study

Longfield Solar Farm





OUTLINE

We are working with Longfield Solar Energy Farm Ltd to secure a DCO for Longfield Solar Farm. This is a proposed new solar farm co-located with battery storage in Essex.

HOW?

We have been able to apply a number of lessons from previous solar DCO work to Longfield Solar Farm. This has included advising on key issues such as scale, visual impact, loss of agricultural land, procurement, battery safety and community benefit.

We have developed and delivered a programme of multi-stage consultation on the project. This included early engagement with the landowner, local authorities and parish councils, an initial round of non-statutory consultation, development of the Statement of Community Consultation and a subsequent round of statutory consultation.

There are a number of properties closely bordering the site. We engaged with residents on an individual basis at the very outset of the project to reduce the risk of objection on launch of the non-statutory consultation.

We have also worked with the client on creating a community benefit package and communicating biodiversity enhancements being delivered as part of the Scheme. These have further helped reduce challenge to the project.

RESULT

The Scheme is currently at Examination. We continue to support the client through the process, including managing local authority and community relationships during the Examination.



Case study

Owls Hatch Solar Farm



OUTLINE

We have strong track record securing consent for new solar generation. At Herne Bay in Kent, we provided British Solar Renewables with targeted political engagement to gain planning consent for the Owls Hatch Solar Park.

HOW?

Initially, the application was recommended for refusal by officers at Canterbury City Council; we identified key members and prepared a briefing for them setting out the benefits of the project and why the reasons given for rejection were unjustified.

RESULT

When the committee deferred the application we communicated the changes made by British Solar Renewables in line with their comments to members. Following this, the committee granted planning permission for the project.

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