



Planning Inspectorate

Application by Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd for the Botley West Solar Farm Project

Case reference: EN010147

Examining Authority's note of unaccompanied site inspection 2 (USI2) to which the application or specified matters relates on Tuesday 25 February 2025

All members of the Examining Authority (ExA) undertook an Unaccompanied Site Inspection (USI2) between 08:45 and 15:20 on Tuesday 15 February 2025. This note is a brief record to inform the Applicant, Interested Parties and other parties of the actions taken by the ExA. Please note that for Stages 5, 6 and 7 recorded below, the ExA were accompanied and escorted by the Case Manager for the Project, Mr Simon Raywood.

The ExA used a combination of driving and walking routes to experience and record the local area, the details of which are broadly summarised below. All inspections took place from a public highway, public footpath or public place.

The weather was sunny with intermittent cloud. Visibility was good, and long range views were achievable throughout the day.

The following is a summary of the visit:

Stage 1

The ExA travelled by car to Swinford and pulled in at the entrance to the Talbot Inn. The ExA walked across the bridge and then along the canal towpath, past Eynsham Lock, for a short distance to observe the locations of proposed horizontal directional drilling compounds and Wytham Woods.

The traffic conditions of local roads were observed as well as features of landscape and drainage interest.

Stage 2

The ExA travelled by car along local roads up to and around the eastern side of Eynsham, observing the proposed construction corridor in the process. At reaching the A40, the ExA crossed onto Lower Road and parked in proximity to the Willow Cottage Nursery, taking in the western drive for Purwell Farm.

Stage 3

The ExA continued north up Lower Road to the A4095, taking note of the fields on both sides of the carriageway and briefly stopping at the premises of 'Built-in solutions', observing the proximity of the River Evenlode and the bridge going across it.

Stage 4

The ExA joined the A4095 at Hanborough, headed east to Cassington Road, and then south to Blenheim Woods, pulling into a lay-by near Burleigh Lodge. From here, the ExA proceeded on foot to explore the locality including Worton Heath and the location of proposed Horizontal Directional Drilling compounds.

Stage 5

Continuing by car, the ExA arrived in Bladon. A walking route was commenced from the church to the west, stopping at the exit/entry signs into the village. The rising landform, traffic conditions, landscape characteristics and the setting for the wall around the Blenheim Palace grounds were observed.

Stage 6

The ExA entered into Blenheim Palace, exploring the grounds, the River Glyme and the heritage assets therein. Key viewpoints within the grounds were observed as well as the historical and cultural elements of the assets' settings. Aspects of the World Heritage Site Outstanding Universal Value were taken note of during the visit.

Stage 7

After leaving Blenheim Palace, the ExA travelled down Woodstock Road (A44) towards Begbroke, stopping in Langford Lane at the end of the runway for Oxford Airport. Planes were observed landing and taking off during the visit, as well as traffic conditions at the junction on the A44.

Stage 8

Finally, the ExA continued down the A44 into Yarnton by car and followed local roads towards Worton Hall (Rutten Lane, Cassington Road). Parking near the hall, the ExA took a walking route up to the water treatment works, observing the bridged crossing of the railway line and landscape characteristics in the process. Upon leaving back through Yarnton, traffic on local roads (including those with speed bumps) was observed.