

Planning

HEAD OF SERVICE: Adrian Duffield



Planning Inspectorate
By email

4 June 2025

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OUR REF: P24/V2680/DCO

BOTLEY WEST SOLAR FARM (BWSF) REF: EN010147

VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL

RESPONSE TO ISSUE SPECIFIC HEARING 1, ACTION POINT 17

1. The Examining Authority (ExA) has requested a response from Host Authorities to issues covered at the Issues Specific Hearing 1 held on 15 May 2025.

2. Action point 17 [**EV5-010**] requires:

All Councils to provide a written response clarifying what input, if any, they had in the information the Applicant used to prepare the Environmental Statement. Were the Councils consulted upon and/ or agreed to the baseline, background data and the methodology that underpins the ES. This is for all relevant ES chapters.

3. The Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC) responds as follows.

4. The applicant initially engaged with VWHDC 15 November 2022 seeking opinion on candidate viewpoint selection within the ZTV and particularly those locations that are within Vale of White Horse. It was stated the precise location of representative viewpoints would be verified during site investigation and *at this stage I seek any comments you may have regarding the viewpoints or confirmation that the extent of coverage is sufficient to inform the assessment.*

5. VWHDC responded to confirm *They seem to pick up most of those highlighted by the Cumnor Parish Neighbourhood Plan, Important Views Report. The Important Viewpoint Reports highlights under viewpoint 23 that views are available from the Singing Way path through Wytham Woods. Although the footpaths in the woods are not Public Rights of Way, it is free to walk in the woods if a Permit is gained and therefore views from this area should be picked up. There are opportunities for additional views which I am sure you will pick up on site while walking the footpaths, such as other locations along the*

Oxford Greenbelt Way, the connecting footpaths from the Eynsham Road up the higher ground to the south, including the footpath which runs between Denman's Copse and Saddle Copse. There are also likely to be views from the footpath which links from beside the A420 south of Nobles Lane west to the Oxford Greenbelt Way. Also views from the footpath to the west of the Cumnor Road which links to the west of Cumnor Village.

6. Further engagement on viewpoints took place in December 2022 about potential footpath locations and concerns were raised by VWHDC with regards to views from footpaths within the site needing to reflect the range of views obtainable from these paths, the response from RPS included *'For the assessment of visual effects we have to adopt an approach that is reasonable and proportional to the scale and nature of the development. In selecting viewpoint locations, we will identify the most sensitive receptors, that includes walkers using local Public Rights of Way and access land that are likely to have the potential to be significant. Receptor groups will be covered in the text particularly for a description along a route. We cannot take a photograph from every available view from a footpath or road. ...A representative example of a close view from footpaths within and adjacent to the site boundary would be included, however where PRow cross the proposal site it has to be accepted that the magnitude of change could be high for high sensitivity receptors and is likely to be significant.'*
7. In January 2023 advice was given to the applicant on the Hierarchy of Landscape Character Assessment to inform LVIA including signposting to the Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan Landscape Character Assessment.
8. VWHDC also provided commentary to the Inspectorate's Scoping Opinion request received 15 June 2023. The response was submitted on 13 July 2023. It highlighted concern on the landscape and visual resources section of the Scoping Report and how relevant methodology in Guidance Documents such as GLVIA 3, Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations and Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals was to be applied.
9. The Council's scoping response gave examples for the applicant to address such as *"There is no detail of what type of visualisation is proposed, the expected quantity and their suggested locations"* and *"The assessment process will follow the approach set out in GLVIA3, with regard to identification of resource and receptor sensitivity (susceptibility and value), impact magnitude and evaluation of significance of effects but it does not state if they will be using Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations to establish the baseline value of the landscape, although this document is listed in the relevant methodology guidance documents."*

10. Overall, it was considered little detail had been provided as part of the Scoping Report and there was a need for additional information post Scoping to agree the detail of the Methodology of the EIA including LVIA Methodology, ZTV creation, viewpoint locations, representative receptors, visualisation (locations, types, and methodology) and sites to be considered during the cumulative impact assessment.
11. Further advice was given to the applicant in the S42 formal consultation in a response dated 6 February 2024 following a review of the Preliminary Environmental Information Report and a copy of this response is appended.
12. The response confirmed *Numerous issues were raised on landscape matters in our consultation response to Scoping and some of these concerns are still present or are not clarified in the PEIR and will therefore need to be addressed when producing the EIA. The methodology section of the PEIR refers to the relevant Methodology in the Guidance Documents such as GLVIA 3, Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations and Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals. However, there is still limited detail on how some of these Guidance Documents are applied to the Botley West proposal.*
13. It was also noted that in Table 8.5: Summary of scoping responses and Consultation on Representative Viewpoints in the PIER that there is no inclusion of the VWHDC or Oxfordshire County Council responses to the Scoping. Furthermore, the Scoping Report referenced 55 Viewpoints, and this number has remained unchanged for the PIER and the EIA.
14. For the historic environment, the response advised *it is not clear if the Cumnor Conservation Area Appraisal 2011 has been referred to, which does include some locally interesting buildings within the designated area that should be included for assessment.*
15. In response to the landscape assessment concerns the applicant sought to meet with Host Authorities and a meeting was set up for the 30 August 2024. In email correspondence dated 28 August 2024, the applicant offered *please could you let me know what information would be helpful for you to have had sight of and was advised was expecting the meeting to give feedback on the various Council's landscape comments, and how or if they are going to be addressed in the EIA.*
16. The meeting was cancelled, 20 minutes before the start time, by the applicant stating *this meeting has come around a little too quick for the team here.*
17. Further communication was then received regarding a draft statement of common ground for landscape matters, Photomontage Methodology and Assessment Methodology on 9 September 2024 and the applicant was advised on 10 September 2024 *As previously requested, creating a table of*

the consultees landscape comments and your commentary and responses of how they are being actioned (similar to a planning application amendment), would help us see how comments are to be addressed and will help form issues for the SoCG. This will then allow the meeting to focus on your update and then issues that need more discussion or clarification, rather than trying to address every consultation response point.

18. The postponed meeting took place on 30 September 2024, and feedback was given to the applicant with regards to the issues raised in Scoping and PIER which VWHDC did not think had been adequately addressed in information provided before the meeting. This included concerns about viewpoints, the way viewpoints were presented, little detail provided in the Photomontage Methodology, and that ZTV has only been supplied for the solar panels and not for the built form. Concerns about the supplied Assessment Methodology were also discussed including proposed levels of Moderate or less not being considered significant and how effects should not be looked in isolation such as along a footpath route. Concerns were expressed about the levels of effects being reported in comparison to the definition of Moderate in the Table 8.21: of the Definitions of Significance of Effects Matrix, in that Moderate Effects equalled proposed changes that would be noticeable out of scale or at odds with either the character of the area or with the existing view.
19. Additional information was then provided to Host Authorities after the meeting on 16 and 22 October 2024, with a Viewpoint Consultation Table, Viewpoints agreed with Historic England and a ZTV which plotted the expected built form as well as the solar panels.
20. VWHDC had no further detailed engagement with the applicant on landscape matters ahead of the DCO submission.
21. The VWHDC Relevant Representation ('RR') [**RR-1086**] therefore stated *VWHDC raised concerns through pre-application responses, particularly in relation to evidence and technical reviews that underpin the various topics in the environmental statement highlighting the importance of ensuring they are sufficiently robust to enable an accurate assessment of the relevant impacts. An initial review of the submitted application documents would appear to show that not all points raised have been addressed.*
22. In respect of other ES topic areas, VWHDC can confirm engagement took place in August 2024 to cover Ecology matters.
23. VWHDC trusts the above is helpful to the ExA in addressing Action Point 17.

Planning

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Ref: P23/V2666/3PC

6 February 2024

Dear Peter Gerstmann

STATUTORY CONSULTATION UNDER SECTION 42 OF THE PLANNING ACT 2008.

At: Botley West Solar Farm

Introduction

This is the response of the Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC) to the Statutory Consultation and notification pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 to the NSIP project for the Botley West Solar Farm, a large solar farm to the west of Oxford within the districts of West Oxfordshire, Cherwell and Vale of White Horse.

The proposed development is for a utility scale solar farm development with associated infrastructure and mitigation measures including:

- A new primary substation at a location to be defined to the west of Botley
- Power Inverters
- Cabling
- Fencing and security measures
- Temporary construction compounds
- Environmental enhancements
- New public rights of way
- Biodiversity net gain

Photovolt Development Partners (the applicant) entered into pre-application discussions with Oxfordshire County Council, West Oxfordshire, Cherwell and VWHDC in 2023 to seek the advice of the Local Planning Authority (LPAs) and input

from internal consultees over key issues. This has been a collaborative process between the LPAs and the applicant.

In compiling this response, VWHDC has had regard to the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), Non-Technical Summary of the PEIR and the Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC).

For clarity, the following comments relate only to those development proposals within the administrative boundary of Vale of White Horse District Council and are based on the proposal as currently submitted.

Comments on proposal

VWHDC raise no objection in principle to solar farm development but cannot support the proposal for the following reasons:

The case for Very Special Circumstances to develop land in the Oxford Green Belt with inappropriate development has yet to be satisfactorily demonstrated.

There is concern on the loss of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land within the Vale.

There is significant concern the scale of the proposal will lead to harmful landscape impacts that outweigh any benefits of the proposed development.

The proposal currently provides little benefit to the local community.

Comments on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)

The PEIR leads on from the EIA Scoping process that was undertaken for the development in July 2023. The scope of the EIA was agreed by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) on 24 July 2023.

General observation

All chapters need to be updated to account for the recent updated National Policy Statements (published 22 November 2023) and the National Planning Policy Framework (20 December 2023).

Non-technical summary

VWHDC has no comments to make on this.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 2 – existing baseline

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 3 – Consent and consultation process

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 4 – approach to environmental assessment

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VWHDC supports the scope and extent of the PEIR and subsequent EIA.

Chapter 5 – Need, National Planning Policy, and Alternatives Considered

VWHDC consider this chapter lacks information on what alternative sites have been assessed and explored.

VWHDC agree Green Belt very special circumstances can be assessed in the separate Planning Supporting Statement to accompany the application.

Chapter 6 – Project Description

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 7 – Historic Environment

VWHDC agree with the scope and extent of the PEIR so far in respect of built heritage and is satisfied that the chapter has identified known designated heritage assets within a reasonable radius of the application site.

The PEIR suggests no non-designated heritage assets of local interest have been identified by VWHDC (Section 7.5.3), but it is not clear if the Cumnor Conservation Area Appraisal 2011 has been referred to, which does include some locally interesting buildings within the designated area that should be included for assessment. The document can be accessed via the VWHDC website and should be included in an updated ES.

It is agreed there would be no direct impacts to designated heritage assets (built heritage only, excluding archaeology). The landscape character changes as evidenced by the ZTV indicates that there is likely to be an impact to heritage assets and the way they are understood and experienced within their setting, given the topography of the site and its open, rural character. Refinement of the final scheme, specifically the scale, design, and location of the substation, will influence the scale of impacts and relevant mitigation needed. Whilst direct physical impacts are not anticipated, the overall level of impact will still need to be assessed in the context of a refined final scheme.

Chapter 8 – Landscape and Visual Resources

Numerous issues were raised on landscape matters in our consultation response to Scoping and some of these concerns are still present or are not clarified in the PEIR and will therefore need to be addressed when producing the EIA.

The methodology section of the PEIR refers to the relevant Methodology in the Guidance Documents such as GLVIA 3, Technical Guidance Note 02/21, Assessing Landscape Value Outside National Designations and Technical Guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals. However, there is still limited detail on how some of these Guidance Documents are applied to the Botley West proposal.

Whilst the following comments regarding landscape are predominately focused on the Vale of the White Horse District Council area, they will also be applicable to the whole assessment of the proposal.

The Cumnor Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan, Landscape Character Assessment, December 2018 is also not referenced in the report, especially regarding the Landscape Character Section. Reference to the Cumnor Parish Neighbourhood Plan Important View Report (CNPIVR), February 2021 is limited and the viewpoints in this report need to be included in the EIA.

Visual receptors, Viewpoints and Visualisations

Technical guidance Note 06/19 Visual Representation of Development Proposals classifies EIA as a Category A report where the appropriate visualisation types would be either Type 2 3D wireline/ model: Type 3 photomontage/ photo wire: or Type 4 photomontage/ photo wire (survey/scale verifiable). It is not clear what Type of visualisation is proposed for the EIA. Due to the scale and public interest of the project, VWHDC would expect all viewpoint plans to be annotated with key features and have Photo wires to highlight the areas of the proposed solar arrays (but not necessarily full modelling of the arrays) so areas and extent of the proposal can be easily understood by all. The Visualisations should be photomontages. A map extract to indicate the location of the view is also useful and recommended by guidance.

Some of the Viewpoint Photography is currently poor in quality and over dark, making it harder to see landscape features, they would benefit from the photographs being retaken.

Some of the viewpoints and visualisations do not cover the whole extents of the view of the solar farm from that viewpoint for example VP48.

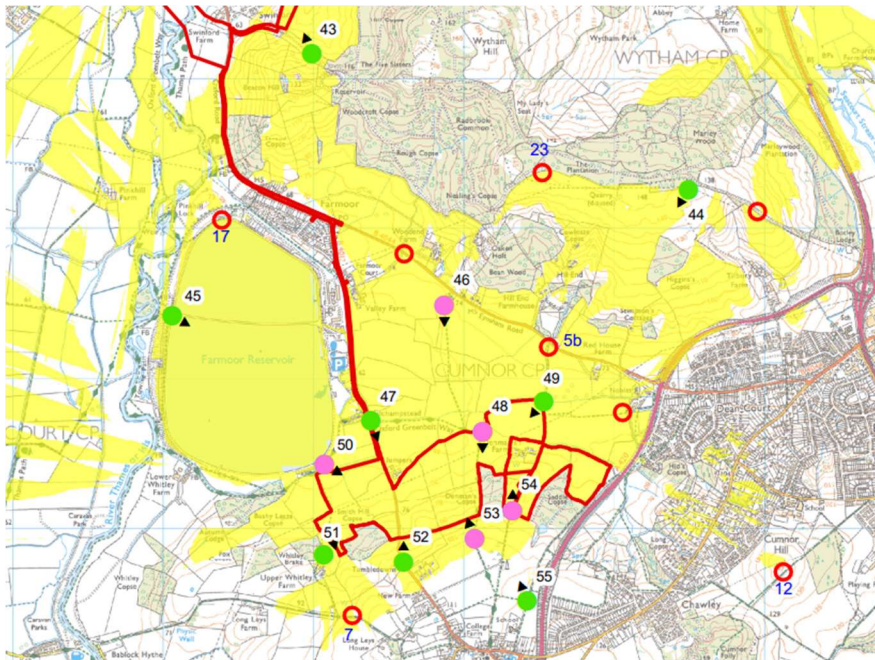
Clarification of representative viewpoints is required, as it is usual to have both summer and winter views, so the worst case is illustrated. Only year 15 summer assessment is mentioned but winter 15 year should also be provided.

It is difficult to pick up the extra features in the visualisations such as the proposed 156 number Power Converter stations and the 4 to 6 number HV transformer secondary substation. Clarity is required on whether these elements form part of the Visualisation modelling.

The sharpness of the visualisation is poor with pixelization. It is accepted however that this may be an issue with PDF formatting of documents.

The range of viewpoints are still limited, such as views from the road users of Eynsham Road, the wider footpath network such as to the north and east of the site and the residential properties especially those along both Eynsham Road and Cumnor Road. GLVIA expects the identification of the people within the area who will be affected by the changes in views and visual amenity including residents many of the views from the footpaths could also be used to represent views for the residents.

There are several places where views have not been taken, including those highlighted in the Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan such as Viewpoint 5b, 12, 23, 7, 12 and 17. These are highlighted on the plan extract below along with additional Prow, roads, and the Wytham permitted path network. Additional viewpoints are requested from these locations. Once the Substation ZVT is undertaken there may also be additional viewpoints that need to be included.



The EIA needs to ensure that it is using the representative viewpoints and visualisations to explain the impact of the scheme on the landscape and receptors such as roads, Prow routes etc rather than just spot points.

It is noted that Hill End, an Environmental Outdoor Education Centre that has been running for over 100 years, is not covered as a potential receptor to the scheme. Hill End has numerous locations on its site which have clear views to the south and should be covered by the assessment.

Zones of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)

There is limited information given with regards to ZTV methodology. A bare earth ZTV should also be provided, together with a clear explanation and methodology of how the ZTV has been modelled and created.

The ZTV is calculated using the panel height of 2.5m. This does not represent the full scheme, the proposed 156 number Power Converter Stations and the 4 to 8 number HV transformer secondary substations should also be included within ZTV modelling.

Both the Project substation and the proposed NGET with their associated infrastructure should also be included in ZTV modelling. They should have their own ZTV to help understand which views will be impacted by these features, which are proposed to be 12 to 15m high. Additional viewpoints may be required to take account of ZVT of the substations. Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan viewpoints 12, 23, 24, 7 and 17 are all likely to have views of the Substation.

Mitigation/ Illustrative Masterplan

Section 8.7 covers mitigation measures intended to be adopted as part of the project including Primary mitigation such as modifications to the location or design of the development. However, the layout of the scheme does not indicate that there has been much modification to the design of the scheme to minimise impacts in response to receptors and constraints. For example, small areas of solar panels within the

southwestern area of the site either side of the footpath and adjacent to the ancient woodland are retained rather than a broader look at the project at a landscape and project scale to see if it would be more appropriate not to include these small areas of solar. Again, small areas of solar arrays are formed once servicing constraints are added south of Denman's Farm. It may be more appropriate due to the proximity to the Prow and the residential property not to have these small areas under solar panels.



Furthermore, the scale of the mitigation is not at the similar scale of the proposed solar farm to help mitigate the impacts. Only small-scale landscaping interventions are proposed, such as the planting of a hedgerow to screen views of the solar panels, but this not at a scale to break up the mass of the panels in other views, such as linking areas of ancient woodlands.

The Illustrative Masterplan of the site should be reviewed to seek to break up the mass of development across slopes and link areas of ancient woodland blocks.

The impact of mitigation on views also needs to be carefully considered in the assessment. Many available views are large scale over the wider landscape. Screening a view so solar panels or other development cannot be seen also has the potential significant impact that the large landscape scale view is no longer obtainable. This potential impact of mitigation should be covered in the assessment of views.

It is noted that section 8.9.2.1 refers to landscape management being required for a period of five years following the completion of the project. 15 years is often the assessment timescale used for vegetation to mature and have a meaningful impact and this needs to be included for the management and monitoring of the site. The lifespan of the development would be more appropriate for a management plan.

Methodology / Assessment

VWHDC have concerns about the Methodology and Assessment of the Landscape Character and Visual Impacts of the scheme.

It is considered the PEIR underplays both the Landscape and Visual Effects of the proposal, especially regarding the Magnitude of impact criteria.

The following examples predominately cover the Operation Phase, but these themes are also relevant for Construction and Decommissioning.

The underlying Methodology of the assessment. Section 8.1.8.10 states “For the purpose of this assessment, any effects with a significance level of Moderate or less are not considered to be significant in terms of the EIA Regulations.” However, assessment is not as simple as this statement. When the assessment results in multiple negative effects, cumulatively this would result in a significant impact. Each assessment of an effect should not be looked in isolation and discarded as not significant, they should be looked at holistically.

This principle of multiple negative effects is acknowledged in the report but not pulled through and applied to the assessment of the project as a whole. Section 8.9.1.70 “These effects are not judged to be significant. However, where Moderate significance of effect has been identified at multiple points along the same PRow, sequentially these Moderate adverse effects could be considered significant.”

This proposed solar farm has a timescale of approximately 40 years, which should be considered permanent. Section 8.8.6.2 states that the Project is considered fully reversible, and this has an influence on the assessment values. VWHDC has concerns to how this is being applied to the assessment of effects. i.e., 8.9.1.64 “*The magnitude of impact, for those parts of the PRow where views are available, would be Medium. Resulting in a Moderate adverse significance of effect. Considering users’ High sensitivity, reversibility of the solar farm and proposed mitigation, albeit not yet established. This effect is judged to be not significant.*”

A recent appeal decision regarding solar development in the Greenbelt covers this issue and 40 years was judged not to be “temporary”. APP/A1910/W/23/3317818 Little Heath Lane, Little Heath, Berkhamstead

At present the level of detail of the submitted landscape information is not detailed enough to cover the scale of the area of the application or to understand how assessments have been made. VWHDC therefore expect that much more detail will be present in the EIA.

The project has 4 areas of development: the Northern, Central and Southern Section and the associated substations but the Character Assessment is not detailed enough at present in how they assess these. i.e., 8.9.1.61 “*The Project would be located within LCA 4: Eastern Parks and Valleys; LCA 11: Eynsham Vale; LCA LM19: Whiteley Copse to Chawley Corallian Limestone Ridge with Woodland and LCA LM20: Farmoor to Botley Corallian Limestone Ridge with Woodland. It would change the character of a relatively large area of these LCAs. The development of a large-scale solar farm within generally well contained farmland would cause a Low magnitude of impact upon the LCA as a whole, with any change in character confined to the Project Site of Medium to High sensitivity and result in Minor adverse significance of effect, which is not significant.*” This raises concern about methodology as landscape effects should be assessed against the relevant part of the character area, the extent likely to be affected either directly or indirectly, this is often based on the extent of the area from which the development is potentially visible rather than the whole entirety of the character area. Localised harm to an area of a LCA does not mean it is not significant harm.

The Landscape assessment does not seem to acknowledge the role the site plays within the wider Character Area, such as the loss of openness of introducing built form on to the site and how it would be perceived from a number of directions and distances.

There is also concern about the assessment of views, for example Representative Viewpoint 48: View looking south from footpath 184/15/30, Oxford Green Belt Way, section 8.9.1.119. This footpath will pass through an area of solar panels, with areas of panels to the west, south and west. However, this is assessed as having a Low magnitude of impact at completion, which results in a Moderate adverse significance of effect at completion, which would not be significant. This is an example to indicate our concern about the assessments submitted in the PIER especially if it is pulled through in a similar form to the EIA.

This is a large-scale project over multiple areas and the EIA needs to acknowledge this and cover these impacts in sufficient detail for all the areas so the journey from baseline to the assessment of effect can be clearly understood for all areas of the project.

Chapter 9 – Ecology and nature Conservation

VWHDC is generally satisfied with the approach and scope of assessment to the ecological and biodiversity implications of the proposed scheme to be taken forward to the subsequent EIA.

It is noted that some ecological surveys were still ongoing at the time of writing the PEIR, as such these comments should be viewed as preliminary and may be subject to change depending on the results of forthcoming surveys.

Depending on the timeline for the formal submission of the proposal, updated ecological surveys may be required to ensure that information complies with CIEEM guidance on the age of ecological information.

It is important that any forthcoming Environmental Statement (ES) ensures that the full extent of works area is subject to ecological assessment. Figures appear to have omitted land close to Swinford, south of the river Thames, which may be subject to enabling works.

The PEIR assesses impacts on statutory and locally designated sites but appears to have not considered the potential for some indirect impacts which may undermine the conservation objectives or special interest of Wytham Woods Site Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Farmoor Reservoir Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Both the SSSI and LWS have notable invertebrate interest and there is a body of evidence to suggest that large arrays of solar PV panels can, through the reflection of polarised light, attract insects (particularly those dependent on water for their lifecycle) and result in reduced fecundity and increased mortality. Specific to the LWS, there are concerns that arrays of solar PV panels can confuse waterbirds, mistaking them for areas of water. Increases in mortality or energy expenditure could have the potential to harm the identified ecological interest of the LWS. These potential impacts should be explored in the EIA.

VWHDC also have concerns with the proposed approach to skylark mitigation. Conventional knowledge suggests that skylark plots are only successful when provided on unenclosed sites of 5ha or more. The provision of skylark plots closely surrounded by tall solar PV panels will mean that success is unlikely. It would likely be more appropriate to secure offsite compensation through including additional land and managing these areas for the benefit of skylarks.

Great Crested Newts (GCN) have been recorded in a pond within Saddle Copse, c.90m away from the proposed development site. Whilst VWHDC is satisfied that significant population level impacts are unlikely to occur, it remains a distinct possibility that a derogation licence may be required to make works lawful closer to the pond. The applicant is advised to reach out to the Nature Space partnership to see if the NSIP can be covered under the district level licence for GCN which is in operation in Vale of White Horse district.

The updated biodiversity net gain assessment should make use of the recently published statutory metric, which will be used for BNG purposes from January 2024 onwards.

Chapter 10 – Hydrology and Flood Risk

VWHDC agree with the scope and extent of the PEIR and subsequent EIA.

Chapter 11 – Ground Conditions

VWHDC agree with the scope and extent of the PEIR and subsequent EIA.

Chapter 12 – Traffic and Transport

VWHDC defer to comments from Oxfordshire County Council as local Highway Authority for this Chapter.

Chapter 13 – Noise and Vibration

VWHDC agree with the scope and extent of the PEIR and subsequent EIA.

Chapter 14 – Climate Change

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 15 – Socioeconomics

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 16 – Human Health

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 17 – Agricultural Land and public rights of way

VWHDC agree with the scope and extent of the PEIR and subsequent EIA.

Chapter 18 – Waste and Resources

VWHDC has no comments to make on this chapter.

Chapter 19 – Cumulative Effects and inter-relationships

VWHDC disagrees with the summary finding that there is no cumulative impact on landscape and visual resources and considers cumulative effects relating to landscape and visual resources need to be reviewed in the light of adjoining solar farm proposals within the Vale.

There are potential sequential Cumulative Impacts with other existing and proposed solar development in the Oxford Green Belt, especially those sites that the Oxford Green Belt Way passes. The scheme itself produces sequential Cumulative Impacts to local receptors such as local road users and the Prow network and that should also be covered under the EIA assessment. The application is effectively 4 projects, the Northern, Central and Southern Areas of Solar Panels and the associated project and proposed NGET substations, and this needs to be covered in the assessment.

Red House Farm, Botley is now a live application and should be moved into Tier 1 Projects. P23/V2624/FUL.

Chapter 20 – Summary of Significant Effects

VWHDC are in broad agreement with the preliminary summary of Significant Effects, subject to addressing comments made on Historic Environment, Landscape and Visual Resources and Ecology and Nature Conservation.

Comments on SoCC

The applicant engaged with the LPAs regarding the SoCC as part of the pre-application process. The scope of the SoCC was adapted to accommodate the comments made by VWHDC.

VWHDC supports the scope and extent of the SoCC.

Likely requirements for Development Consent Order

In respect of requirements (akin to planning conditions) to be included on any draft Development Consent Order (DCO) VWHDC request requirements on the following matters:

1. Time limit for commencement
2. Approved Plans
3. Detailed Design approval
4. Phasing
5. Landscaping details
6. Landscape implementation and management
7. Vehicular access
8. Construction traffic management plan
9. Construction Hours
10. Community Employment Plan
11. Archaeological watching brief
12. Implementation of archaeological works
13. Construction environmental management plan
14. Tree protection
15. Visibility splays
16. Sustainable drainage scheme

17. Archaeology protection
18. Flood risk
19. Wildlife protection measures
20. External lighting
21. Enclosure details
22. Temporary permission
23. Removal of unused panels and equipment
24. Decommissioning method statement

VWHDC will also require a Community Benefit Agreement (CBA) to secure funds to support the community local to the project as well as to provide financial support to deliver the Council's Climate Action Plan agenda. The rate sought will be £500 per MW per year.

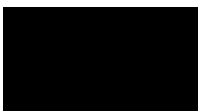
Further detail on wording of requirements, S106 legal agreement and the CBA is to be negotiated by the LPAs and with the developer ahead of the application submission.

Summary and Recommendations

This letter forms the Vale of White Horse District Council's response to your statutory consultation and notification pursuant to Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008.

VWHDC is in broad agreement with the methodologies and assessments set out and detailed in the Preliminary Environmental Information for its areas of interest, subject to resolution on comments in this letter.

Yours sincerely,



Stuart Walker
Major Application Team Leader