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**OXFORDSHIRE HOST AUTHORITIES**

**BOTLEY WEST SOLAR FARM**

**RESPONSE TO DRAFT STATEMENTS OF COMMON**

**GROUND**

**DEADLINE 1 | WEDNESDAY 04 JUNE 2025**

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- Cherwell District Council
- Vale of White Horse District Council
- West Oxfordshire District Council
- Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire Host Authorities (“OHAs”)

Botley West Solar Farm (EN01014)

## OXFORDSHIRE HOST AUTHORITIES

### RESPONSE TO DRAFT STATEMENTS OF COMMON GROUND

The Oxfordshire Host Authorities (the “OHA”) are comprised of the following host authorities who are working collaboratively to represent constituents on key issues during this Examination and assist the Examining Authority (“ExA”) with the Examination’s smooth running:

- Cherwell District Council (“CDC”)
- Value of White Horse District Council (“VWHDC”)
- West Oxfordshire District Council (“WODC”)
- Oxfordshire County Council (“OCC”)

In these submissions, the Oxfordshire Host Authorities may be referred to variously as the OHA, the Host Authorities or the Councils.

#### **Purpose of this Submission**

The purpose of this submission is to provide written confirmation of the OHA’s current position on the draft Statements on Common Ground (“SoCG”) to be submitted at Deadline 1, 4 June 2025.

The ExA will note that the OHA submitted a Joint Local Impact Report (the “LIR”) alongside this submission at Deadline 1 where OHA views on specific issues are outlined in greater detail.

#### **Response to Statements of Common Ground**

As recorded in the Preliminary meeting note the OHA informed the ExA that SoCG with the applicant were unlikely to be provided, except in a draft form, at Deadline 1.

Initial engagement on a Landscape SoCG started in Autumn 2024 with the applicant providing a draft SoCG on 9 September 2024 *to accompany our forthcoming DCO submission*. VWHDC advised on 10 September 2024, *having very quickly skimmed through the attached Statement of Common Ground: Landscape and Visual Resources, and Chapter 3 refers to Relevant Submission Documents and Plans, the EIA Chapter, and associated figures, these are all dated September 2024. Are we expecting the Statement of Common Ground to be based on these currently unseen documents? It is also difficult to comment purely on a Landscape chapter without seeing how landscape sits in relationship to other issues*

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*and EIA chapters such as Biodiversity, Heritage and Arboriculture.* No further engagement took place on this matter ahead of the DCO submission in November 2024.

On 3 December 2024, the applicant met with the OHA to discuss DCO application matters including how to progress SoCG. Following the meeting the applicant sought to propose some dates for workshops to allow discussion on common ground around Planning Policy and effect upon Green Belt, Landscape and Visual impact and Ecology. These workshops did not take place, as the OHA confirmed in January 2025 that work would prioritise a Planning Performance Agreement and submissions of Relevant Representations.

Following the Issue Specific Hearing (ISH1) on 15 May 2025, an email seeking a meeting with the OHA to discuss SoCG on Landscape matters was received 16 May 2025. The applicant stated *We shall advance our Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) document draft, prior to any meeting.* The OHA responded on 22 May 2025 with suggested dates to meet, the earliest being Wednesday 28 May 2025. A meeting is scheduled for 10 June 2025, but the OHA have not yet had sight of the document draft referred to by the applicant.

The OHA also received via email, on Friday 30 May 2025 at 19:34, draft documents SoCG for Policy, Transport, Heritage, and Noise. These have yet to reviewed in the time available.

As stated at the Preliminary Hearing, OHA confirm they will continue to work with the applicant on SoCG.