

Project: EN10147

RR reference: 20051450

Subject:

Request for Access to Soil Sampling Plan Referenced in Blenheim's Submission

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I am reviewing the document titled *EN010147-001193 - Blenheim Palace – Responses to the Examining Authority's First Written Questions (ExQ1)* as part of the ongoing examination of the Botley West Solar Farm proposal.

I am writing to request access to the soil sampling plan referenced in Blenheim's response to the Examining Authority's first written questions. In their submission, Blenheim claims that they have attached a plan showing agricultural soil sampling results for the central section during 2024, which underpins their claim of degraded land with phosphorus indices of 1 or 2. However, this soil sampling plan is not included in the publicly available version of their submission. The extensive soil sampling results from over 450 sites throughout the project area and published in the PEIR (*Volume 3 Appendices 11.11 to 19.1*) would not support Dominic Hare's contention (*Open Floor Hearing 13 May 2025*) that this land produces "poor yields from poor soil".

Given the importance of these results in supporting Blenheim's argument that the land is agriculturally degraded and not Best and Most Versatile (BMV), it is crucial to review the actual data map to assess the credibility of their claim.

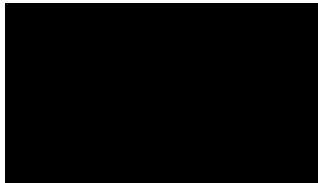
Could you please ask Blenheim to provide these data and the methodology used to obtain it?

Thank you for your assistance.

Tom Lewis

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PVDP detailed as Community Food Growing Areas

Responses to ExQ1 document is REP2-025

With reference to Food Growing in ExQ1. These were the questions.

1.13.4 Lack of information on location and how it would function

1.16.8 Area of 30ha - how was scale decided? How is delivery secured?

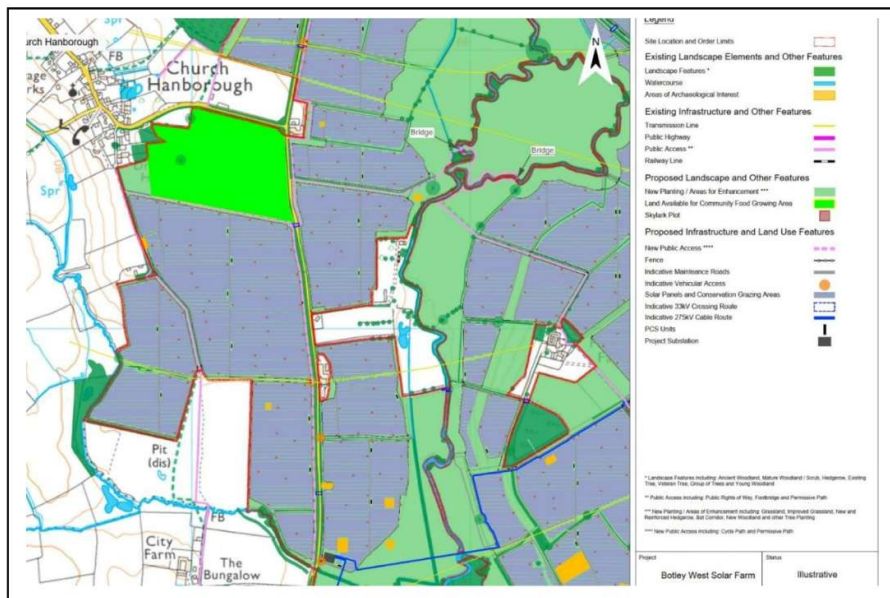
1. The Applicant states it was decided to place the areas close to settlements to reduce vehicle movements and to make access easy for villagers but if these areas are not being utilised by these villagers, then this supposed benefit is lost.
2. The Applicant's response seemingly involves their discussions with what might be described as fringe organisations with worthy aims but with little experience or knowledge of managing quite large areas of land set up so-called 'Food Forests' to supply food banks.
3. One of the organisations that the Applicant has been in discussion with appears to be a purely a commercial enterprise supplying food to Oxford Colleges. It would seem unlikely to succeed in operating what would be a market garden enterprise on this land, which after all the Applicant describes on many occasions as being of 'poor quality' and so would be difficult to guarantee success in being able to deliver a constant and predictable supply of food of quality.
4. If rent is to be charged for the use of the land used for Community Food Growing then will the Community benefit from the income?

The outcome of these proposals is likely to be that the land given over to 'Community Food Growing' will quickly become overgrown and abandoned with the unintended consequence of adding to biodiversity.

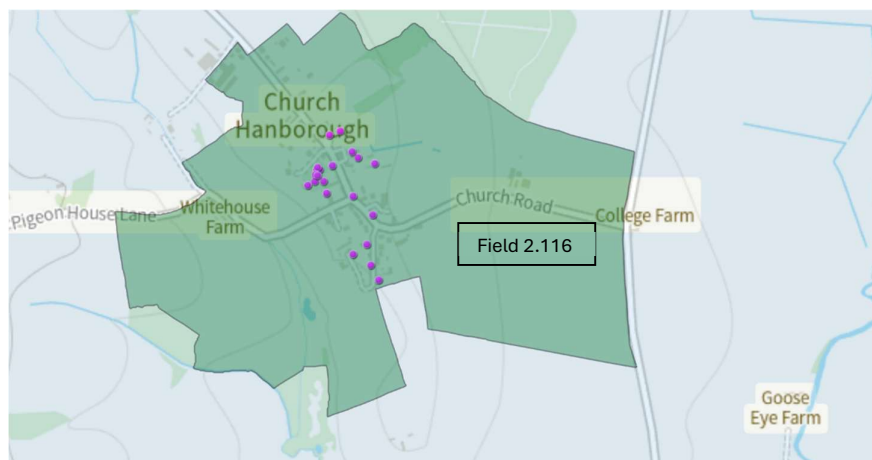
All of which poses the question of how the Community affected by this development will benefit?

One of the Community Food Growing areas is in Hanborough Parish which is in a Conservation Area. (Field No 2.116 11.96Ha)
(App-131 Appendix 7.1 Historic Environment desk based assessment Figures 2a-c)

(marked bright green on map and the Key indicates that this field (2.116) is for Community Food Growing and also for an area of “new planting for enhancement”)!)



EN010147-000447-EN010147_APP_6.4 ES - Figures 2.1a - 2.4d - Illustrative Maser Plan



Ref: [WODC Information Map of the Church Hanborough Conservation Area](#).

(Key: purple dots indicate the 20 Listed Buildings in Church Hanborough)

Conservation Area Implications

Field 2.116 lies within a designated Conservation Area so that:

- Any proposed development must **preserve or enhance** the area's character.
- Compulsory purchase would require **robust justification**, especially under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

This field is now owned by Vanburgh Trustees with absolute freehold title (Land Registry Title No ON 160997)

Land Plan Reference 8-28 is field 2.116 (124,161m²) and it would appear to be subject to a Compulsory Purchase Order BWSF Land Plan Reference 8-28 (i.e. field 2.116).

The Church Hanborough Community (CHC) have not been consulted on the meaning of Community Food Growing and are concerned that:-

1. Why does this field have to be Compulsorily purchased?
2. What say will CHC have in its ownership and organisation?
3. What will be the benefit to CHC?
4. The operators of enterprises in this Conservation Area must be made aware that they will need to obtain planning permission to erect buildings in which to store equipment, packaging and produce.

In 1.16.9 the Examiners posed the question to the Applicant will you draft agricultural license agreements with interested food growing companies prior to close of examination? If not why?

The Applicant replies that they have signed Memoranda of Understanding with Cherwell Collective, Chris Goodall and Good Food Oxfordshire to operate in the areas set aside for food growing.

Do these organisations have any rights to the land in the event of the BWSF scheme failing? To whom will their tenancy be assigned?

The Applicant's claim that Community Food Growing Areas have "moderate positive weight" because of "the number of lives it will touch" (1.16.8). How comforting!

Unlike the negative effect of over 2,000,000 solar panels on a destroyed landscape.

Tom Lewis
Church Hanborough

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22 July 2025