**Raywood, Simon**

**From:** David Sherratt [redacted]
**Sent:** 18 July 2025 10:23
**To:** Botley West Solar Farm
**Cc:** [redacted]
**Subject:** Registration number 20053829
**Attachments:** ALCvsphosphate.pdf

You don't often get email from [redacted]

Dear Planning Inspectorate

I am responding to 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. In particular I have focused on the response by Blenheim Estate to question 1.11.11 .

Below I attach a pdf (ALC vs. Phosphate) showing why the Blenheim Estate response to the Planning Inspector is erroneous and misleading. I repeat my arguments (and add an additional sentence) below.

The low phosphate levels provided by Blenheim Estate indicate that the land indicated in red and orange (index 1&2) in the Blenheim's new map needs fertiliser (artificial or natural organic), likely because of previous poor management. The provided phosphate levels are irrelevant to the quality of the land ALC classification above (PVDP map), which indicates the potential for BMV use in productive agriculture. Furthermore, Index 2, as Lisa Warne has pointed out is 'the ideal level for general cropping'! Parenthetically, in conversations with a local farmer yesterday (whose land is not affected by the solar farm proposal), he stated that index 1 and 2 phosphate levels could be readily 'improved by addition of fertilisers (organic and/or artificial) and that these lower phosphate levels are no indication of potential high agricultural productivity, as I have stated in the attached pdf.

**The Blenheim Estate response is therefore misleading and irrelevant to the potential productivity of the land'.**

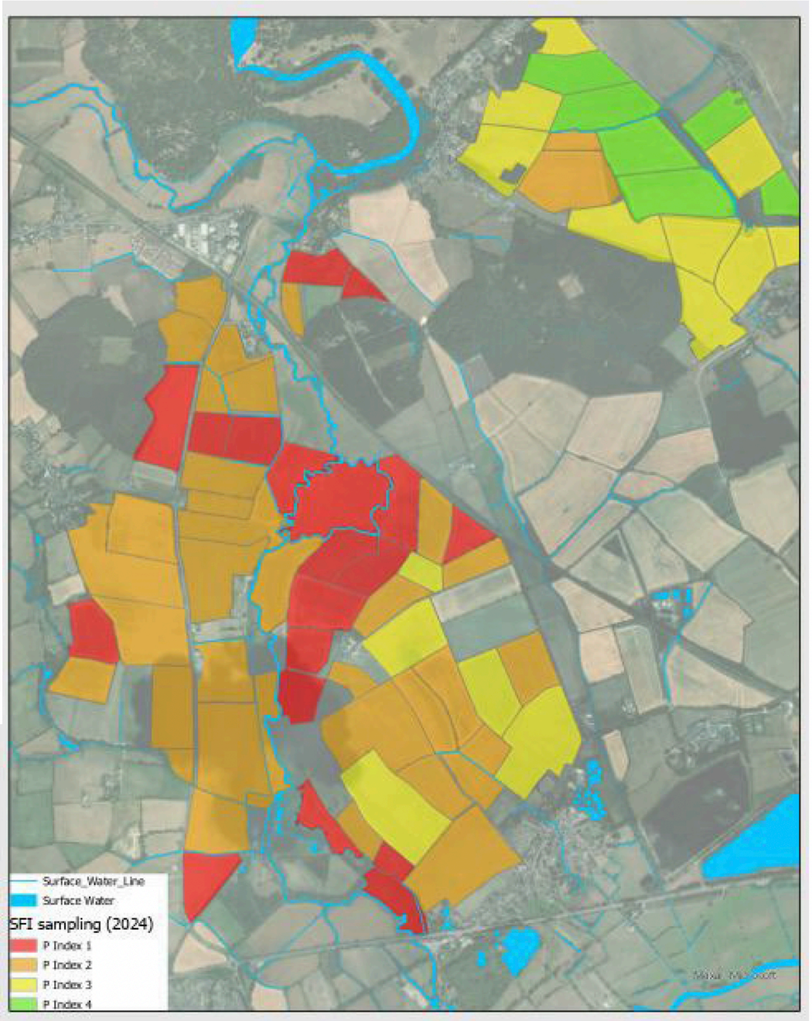
Yours sincerely,
David Sherratt

[redacted]


Athena
SWAN
Silver Award

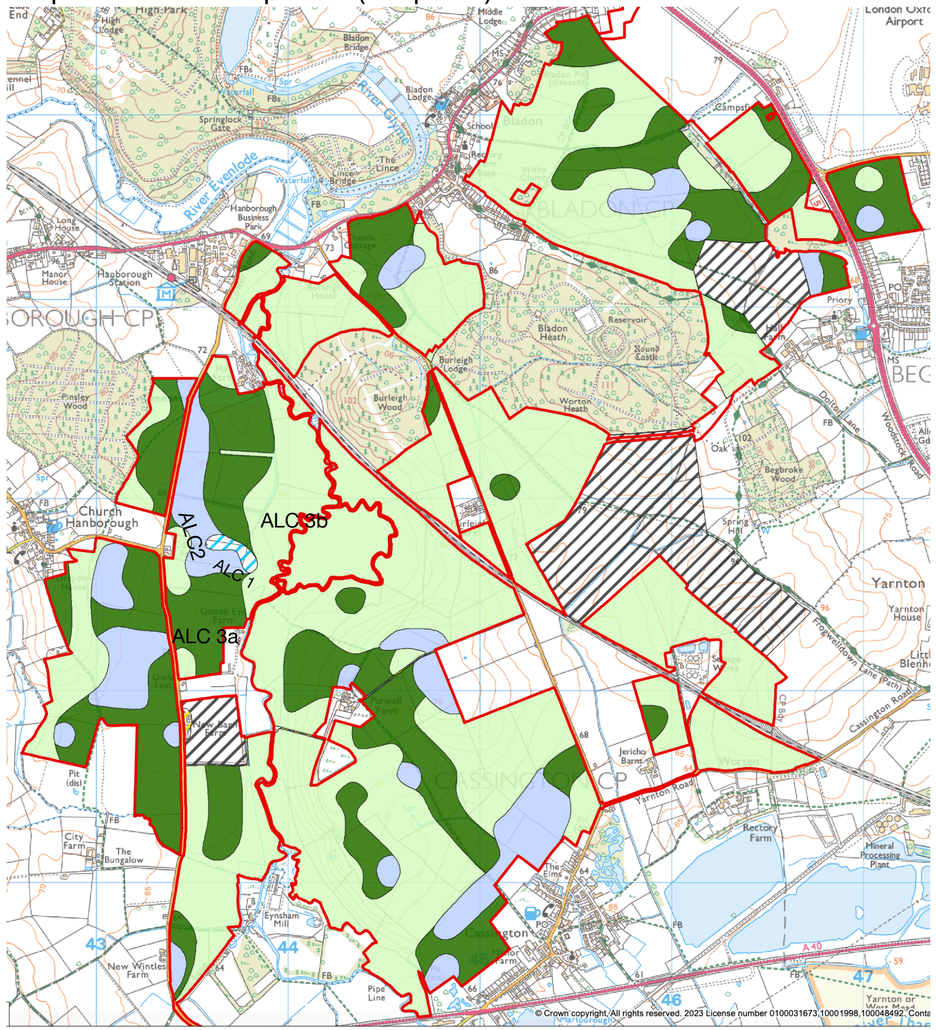
# Blenheim Estate response to the inspector's question as indicated

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1.11.11** | **Blenheim Estate** | **Agricultural Land Yield**<br><br>Noting the content of your DL1 submission, please confirm which parcels of agricultural land proposed to be included within the Proposed Development are degraded of nutritional and organic content. Please identify each parcel of affected land/soil on a plan. |
| | **Response** | Thank you.<br><br>In our RR we state, 'very significant parts of the soils promoted for this project are degraded of nutritional and organic content'.<br><br>In response to questions in 1.11.1, we attach a plan which shows agricultural soil sampling results for the central section during 2024. These plans relate to the management of the land and are used to steer what applications of artificial nutrients are added to the land for crops to grow. The poorer the indices, the more degraded the land is. Higher indices mean less artificial fertilisers and allow more viable food production. Management tools for farmers, like these, are not to be confused with ALC submissions made by the applicant as part of the application.<br><br>The plan shows large areas where soil phosphorus indices are 1 or 2 within the central section and these are the types of areas we were referring to as degraded because they require significant intervention through artificial fertilisers to grow crops.<br><br>The plan shows slightly higher indices to the north of the central section as a result of anaerobic waste and green compost being spread on the land over many years by the previous tenant farmer – this was unique to that farmer of the land as they made a conscious effort to invest heavily in improving the land with organic matter. Resting all the land during the solar project is likely to achieve similar increases which is encouraging to see.<br><br>We hope this helps and do not have equivalent datasets of the land to the north. In the north, we would expect similar results to these given both soil type and similar farming practices to the lower central section. |




Note from Sherratt: index 1 is low phosphate, while index 4 is high phosphate

# Response from Professor David Sherratt to the Blenheim Estate response to the Inspector (left panel)

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The provided phosphate levels are irrelevant to the quality of the land ALC classification above (PVDP map), which indicates the potential for BMV use in productive agriculture. ***The Blenheim Estate response is therefore misleading and irrelevant to the potential productivity of the land.***