

From: Penelope Marcus [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 August 2025 18:14
To: Botley West Solar Farm; Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Botley West Solar Farm: Responses to Questions 2.13.8 and 2.9.4

Dear Simon

My reference: 20055016

I would like to bring to the attention of the Inspectorate for the assessment of the Botley West Solar Farm application my responses to the Questions 2.13.8 and 2.9.4 that the Inspectorate has raised

1. It is astounding that the applicant states that the character of the current landscape would be 'mitigated' by the location of 3m high hedgerows blocking the views of the solar panels, and further that the permanent installation of the 3m high hedgerows would 'reinforce' the character of the landscape (Response to Rule 17 Letter [REP2-029]).
2. However, the Applicant has provided no evidence for this statement, and therefore it can only be an assertion, and must not be considered as the basis for accepting the installation of hedging.
3. It is not acceptable for the Applicant to propose for hedging that is being installed to 'mitigate' the views of the solar panels not to be removed once the decommissioning of area has taken place. The hedging would only be installed to mitigate the views, and once the panels have been removed, it has no further function.
4. The applicant has not been employed as a landscape consultant to West Oxfordshire, the Vale, or Cherwell Parish Councils, in respect of recommending and providing hedging to 'mitigate' the current landscape or to advise on 'reinforcing' the landscape after decommissioning of the proposed Solar Farm.
5. If areas of landscape would be harmed by the location of solar panels, those areas should not be included in the site for solar panels and must be excluded from the whole site. It is not acceptable that the Applicant intends to proceed with siting solar panels in those areas that would impact the landscape but to attempt to mitigate the impact.
6. The Applicant appears to be proposing the installation of somewhere between 70 and 130 miles of 3m hedging for 40 years. In the first instance the planted hedging will be small shrubs and not reach the likely height of 3m until after seven years.
7. Therefore, for up to seven years the mitigation of 3m high hedging will not be provided.
8. But the hedging will continue to grow unless we are to believe that the Applicant for the following 33 years will be pruning between 70 and 130 miles of hedging on a yearly basis to maintain the 3m height that they the mitigation will provide.
9. Most likely, the hedging will be left unattended and unpruned, in which case hedging varieties can reach up to 10 metres high after 40 years.
10. The Applicant therefore sees the hedging, which may reach 10m, and which they do not plan to have removed as 'reinforcing the character of the landscape'. This does not 'reinforce' the landscape, it completely transforms and destroys the proposed site of its existing character of long sweeping views and undulating countryside.

11. There are many reasons for opposing the Botley West Solar Farm, and powerfully is that of the permanent, irreparable damage that it would bring to the outstanding and highly valued countryside and landscape in which PVDP propose to site it.

I'd be grateful if you would kindly bring these matters to the attention of the Inspectorate.

Yours sincerely,

Penelope Marcus