

## **Responses to ExQ2 from Judith Wardle.**

**2.2.** I wish to express regret that there are no questions to the Applicant requesting more detail about the impact on Human Health, in view of the fact that the Applicant has given such vague assessments on this topic. It appears that they have not sought any professional assistance, whether at international or local level: OCC has an excellent Director of Public Health, Dr [REDACTED] who could have been consulted.

**2.3.6.** In my role with the West Oxon. group of the Ramblers Association, I will be interested to see the answer to the question asked by the ExA about why the Applicant is offering only minimum buffers to “rivers, water courses, ancient woodlands etc.” Larger buffers would be of benefit to walkers and other people accessing the countryside.

**2.7.12.** Ramblers throughout the county will appreciate it if the applicant agrees to the request to “maintain in an electronic form suitable for inspection by members of the public a register of those requirements contained in Part 1 of this Schedule that provide for further approvals to be given by the approving authority.” If the application were to be approved, members of the public would be left with the need to keep track of whether further approvals are being given.

**2.9.4.** As an interested party, West Oxon. Ramblers are concerned that the applicant is, in many respects, “underplaying the effects arising from the proposed project”. Our concern is particularly about the underplaying of the negative effects on people using Public Rights of Way – and overstating the effects of mitigation proposed. Therefore, we would like to see further proposals for mitigation – proposals backed by scientific data regarding effectiveness – or offers to remove areas from the project that would suffer the worst of these negative effects.

**2.10.8.** We are pleased to see the question as to whether “haul” roads will continue to be used during the operational phase. The “road” we are particularly concerned about is the track that the OS Map identifies as “Dornford Lane” – the applicant actually ignores the fact that this route is an ancient drovers’ road (about 1,000 years old) – they only refer to it as a national cycle route. While the route has indeed been recently designated as a national cycle route, omitting the reference to its historical name skates over the question of what damage could be done by modern vehicles to the ancient underlying structure of the Right of Way.

**2.13.8.** The answer to part 4 of this question, from users of Public Rights of Way, has to be that since the Applicant’s own photomontages show that hedges, once fully grown, would not provide ANY mitigation – just present them with an alternative oppressive landscape – the choice is like something out of Kafka. Indeed, the Applicant has not proved that in 40 years’ time, there would be any improvement in soil quality (more likely - from observed decrement at smaller solar farms locally - negative BNG). Therefore, local residents (and interested parties through the county, and people from further afield who use local PRoW) can only say that they are unable to make a choice.

**2.14.1.** West Oxon. Ramblers – and the wider county group – are pleased to see the ExA’s recognition that walkers would be likely to encounter several areas of solar panels in the course of any particular walk – walks put on by Oxon Ramblers range from 4 to 15 miles. Therefore, on most walks that cross the area concerned, participants would experience not only the noise from individual areas of solar panels (and battery storage units), but several such impacts successively – and in all probability there would be a cumulative negative effect.

**Replying as Chair and Footpath Secretary for the West Oxon branch of Oxon Ramblers**