

Overall Presentation for 8th Oct 25 – Land and Land Rights

There is a major fault line running through this application, which is at the heart of Land Ownership and Land rights.

Following the receipt of A World Heritage Site Award, Blenheim made a commitment to UNESCO, in 2006 and 2017 to honour the Estate's Heritage, to preserve its setting recognising "there are no physical boundaries", to protect the "high quality environment from such developments as solar farms," and UNESCO were reminded that for 300 years, management of the wider estate has "acted as a means of both supporting the historic core and protecting it."

But today we witness the overthrow of these commitments to UNESCO.

So, which is it to be ?

Fulfilling the commitments made to UNESCO upon receipt of a cherished World Heritage Site status or, implementing the new definition of the extent of the Estate and its surrounds, and the new definition of the quality of land, and rejecting, I quote, **"protecting the high quality environment from such developments as solar farms** (which) could detrimentally influence the character of the **adjoining rural areas."** ?

This unique World Heritage Site overlayed with a Solar Farm does not mix. Something must give. It's one or the other.

The uncomfortable truth is that the UK Gvmt is a member state of UNESCO and sits on the Executive Board thus accepting and indeed enacting UNESCO's agreements, rules and aims within the UK and upholding agreements between UK World Heritage Sites and UNESCO.

So, ultimately The State's clear position is – if they back this project as a signatory Nation they ditch UNESCO and any commitment to preserving our National History and Heritage.

I note the undertaking to protecting the "high quality environment". Part of the developers argument is that most of the land is low quality and only fit for solar panel use which will allow the land to rest and regain its "high quality environment." Again, which is today's truth – UNESCO's

high quality environment or, the developers low quality land which unsurprisingly favours solar panels ?

But there's a problem if the solar farm goes ahead.

Because there is also the matter of ownership of, and responsibility to, the Estate Land and its surrounds and the ability of third parties to own / lease or acquire any amount of it.

I am still unsure which of the following is accurate. At deadline 3 (REP 3 -065) it is stated " The developer will be granted leases of land " (owned by the Blenheim parties pursuant to the option. The land will not be acquired through the exercise of CPO powers".)

However, in PVDP's book of reference, nearly every piece of Blenheim land is listed as being subject to "permanent acquisition."

What I am now about to say lies at the heart of the Blenheim Estate and any proposed development . This is the matter of Land and Land Rights.

On the South Face of the Column of Victory in the grounds of Blenheim Palace we read this :

The ACTS of PARLIAMENT inscribed on this Pillar, Shall stand as long as the BRITISH Name and Language last.

So, there it is. Set in stone. There is no ambiguity. No debate, The intention, the continuing legality and the forever enforcement of the Queen Anne Act of 1705 is clearly established.

The Act details the Villages, Manors and areas of land included in The creation of the new Blenheim Estate LEASED OUT OF CROWN LAND.

All this was referenced in Blenheim's 2017 pledge to UNESCO who accepted the undertakings to preserve the Estate and its surrounds. I quote again "for 300 years, management of the wider estate has acted as a means of both supporting the historic core and protecting it."

And, as signatory to UNESCO's rules and regulations, the British Gvmt is committed to upholding the Blenheim / UNESCO agreement of 2017 – the protection of the entire Blenheim Estate and its surrounds.

I put it to you that the 1705 Act is what the British Constitution is to the United Kingdom – a foundation acknowledged in Law and acted on over the Centuries, establishing and guiding the governance and existence of both bodies.

So, I ask, how can the applicant go against all that has protected and still protects the Blenheim Estate from, and I remind you of the quote, “such developments as solar farms ?”

Heritage in the Northern sector

So, that’s the wider picture – Now highlighting the Northern Sector. The applicants response (Q2.6.19. Aug 2025) is to affirm “the Applicant has committed to avoiding impacts on all areas of significant archaeological remains through the design of the Project.”

I disagree. My September submission to the Inspector details the extent of the Roman Town at Sansoms Platt in the Northern Sector..

Blenheim’s own Ground Radar map shows more of the Roman Town lies unprotected alongside field 1.11 and Dornford Lane than is currently protected as a National Monument.

Despite consistently calling the Roman Town at Sansoms Platt “ a possible small settlement with a villa” Ground Radar, Satellite Imagery and Trenching shows an extensive Town on the main Cirencester to St Albans Trade route and a days march from Bicester Fort meaning overnight stays for troops, their chariots, weapons of war and horses and traders with their supplies.

Protected Archaeological Sites have the protection of an undisturbed setting around them and yet in Field 1.11 we find proposed solar panels immediately surrounding a small section of the field in the top right hand corner where Roman buildings have been discovered – no protected surrounds or setting here ; and the plans to run cabling along Dornford Lane means digging straight through a known area of the Roman Town.

Trial trenching has been undertaken in field 1.11 which has indeed discovered more of the Town. I suggest trial trenching in a huge field is akin to, at night, holding a candle in the doorway of an unlit aircraft hanger to determine its size – it’s a beginning – the aircraft hanger has been established now better investigations are required.

Indeed Historians, Archaeologists, OCC, Historic England and writers on this historic area all agree – more investigation is needed around this significant trading town area including Hordley House, Dornford Farm and Cottage, The Oxford School of Drama, Sansoms Cottage and Dornford Lane also known as The Drovers road or Green Lane.

The Northern Sector is a big area which, inconveniently for the developer is situated around a protected Historic Monument and its surrounds and setting, which, it is being discovered, extend right across the sector and should be subject to its full protection which UNESCO were assured of in the 2017 Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site Revised Management Plan.

Protecting the surrounds of this whole Monument area, as more of the Town is discovered, means the Northern Sector along with its cable runs must be taken out of the developers plans.

And so we come full circle. Back to Heritage, Land Ownership and commitments made to protect the Blenheim Estate from “such developments as Solar Farms.”

Thank you.