

CUMNOR PARISH COUNCIL

Planning Inspectorate

By email

20th October 2025

Contact:

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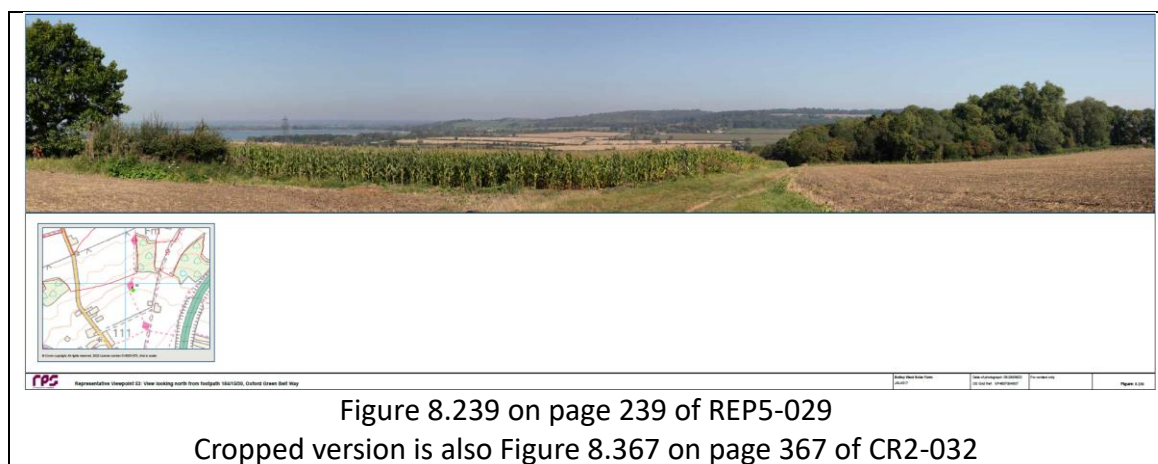
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BOTLEY WEST SOLAR FARM (BWSF) REF: EN010147

Cumnor Parish Council - Comments on submissions received at D5 for D6

1. Of the 1,418ha of land for the three solar power stations proposed by PVDP, 81ha - comprising the whole of the applicant's southern power station and the applicant's southern part of cable routes between the central and southern power stations - is located in Cumnor Parish, which in turn sits within the administrative area of the Vale of White Horse District Council (VWHDC).
2. Prior to the ExA's Accompanied Site Inspection (ASI1) and the latest unaccompanied site visit (USI6) to the Parish, and the Compulsory Acquisition Hearing (CAH1) and Issue Specific Hearing (ISH2), Cumnor Parish Council (CPC) had intended to submit a further extensive assessment of the errors and omissions in the applicant's D5 submissions to the ExA, including those in the Change Request.
3. However, given the ExA's forensic evidence led methodology, CPC now assesses that the ExA has already identified key issues with the application that so concern the Parish Council and the residents of the parish.
4. CPC therefore welcomes all the ExA's proposed changes to the draft Development Consent Order (dDCO) as set out in PD-015, the robust questions in the ExA's Rule 17 letters (PD-009, PD-010 and especially PD-017) and the EA's action points resulting from CAH1 and ISH2.
5. So, save for one further example of the applicant's inability or unwillingness to engage with the required mitigation hierarchy, CPC has decided to rely on its previous submissions, including its commentary on the applicant's previous submissions – see para 3 in REP5-076.

6. REP5-076 described CPC's assessment of the applicant's REP4-038, an assessment CPC repeats in respect of the applicant's D5 submissions, including those relating to the Change Request.
7. Turning to the applicant's engagement with the mitigation hierarchy, CPC observes that this must surely start with accurate 'baseline' information and data about aspects of the application; be it noise, landscape, ecology, PRoW, land quality, flood risk etc. etc.
8. Therefore, the applicant's image in REP5-029 (and repeated as a cropped image in the Change Request documentation at CR2-032) provides one example amongst many where inaccurate information provided to the ExA negates any subsequent assessment of harm and thence mitigation.



9. CPC notes that the applicant has used this photograph to assert the invisibility of the DCO site from Viewpoint 53 and so the need for mitigation.

Elsewhere in REP5-029 (Figure 8.236 on page 236) the applicant uses the same methodology for Viewpoint 52 on Tumbledown: this time with a photograph evidently taken under a hedge on the edge of the carriageway of the B4017.

10. For Viewpoint 53, taking the photograph 1.5m from the ground from a position behind a field of fully grown maize does not accurately represent the kinetic viewpoints at and between Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan Important Views 3 and 16 (REP1-057 and REP1-062).
11. As REP1-062 (a document both approved and positively commented on by the Neighbourhood Plan Examiner) shows on page 9 and page 23, the Important Views do show the DCO site to both the west and east of the B4017 as it descends Tumbledown towards Filchampstead.

View 3

Location: LCA8

Viewpoint: Just above Denman's Copse

Direction of view: North West

Content of View: Key panoramic view of Farmoor Valley. From a stand of mature woodland (Denman's Copse) to the north through to a south-westerly view back to Tumbledown Hill this elevated panorama looks in the foreground down across the valley, from Hill End to the north, across Farmoor Reservoir to the Thames path and Pinkhill nature reserve to the north west with distant views of West Oxfordshire, including Eynsham Hall Park and edge of the Cotswold Hills.

Additional Evidence: The north facing slopes have wide views over the Thames Vale, including Farmoor reservoir, as well as views of rising ground including wooded Wytham Hill on the horizon to the north. There are panoramic views north from the B4017 which is nearby. Cumnor NP landscape Character assessment LCA 12 Para 12.5.2



View 3 From Denman's Copse across Farmoor valley to Reservoir and Cotswold Hills.

Location: LCA8

Viewpoint: Denman's Farm

Direction of view: NNW

Content of View: Farmoor farmland including reservoir.

Additional Evidence: The north facing slopes have wide views north over the Thames Vale, including Farmoor reservoir, as well views of rising ground including wooded Wytham Hill on the horizon to the north. In its recommendation to plan, manage and protect distinctiveness, actions should be taken to 'preserve the important panoramic views to Wytham Woods to the north'.



View 16 From Denman's Farm across Farmoor valley to Reservoir.

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12. This is but one case amongst many of the evident deficiencies through both errors and omissions in the application, as the ExA will have seen for themselves during, for example, ASI1, USI1 and USI6.

13. End

Cumnor Parish Council
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