

I am John Buckley, and I Chair Luckington and Alderton Parish Council, which is situated at the western end of the Lime Down area. These are the views of the Parish Council. I am also a graduate in Environmental Science and I served for 30-years as a senior Police Officer in a local police force. I specialised in commanding the multi-agency response to major incidents, events and specifically adverse weather incidents such as flooding. This included specialised training at the National Police Staff College and the Emergency Planning College.

The rural area around Luckington and Alderton, consist of a gentle rolling landscape and long-distant views. The huge motorised solar panels, battery storage facilities and associated substation installations are of such magnitude that they cannot effectively be hidden or camouflaged within the local landscape.

Suggestions that, in 60 years' time, this land will be returned by the developer (or their successors) to the iconic Cotswold environment of today, that has taken thousands of years to evolve, has no credibility whatsoever with either the Parish Council or the overwhelming majority our residents. The applicant's proposals have generated almost universal condemnation and resistance within our communities; this wholesale mobilisation of the local residents is unlike anything we have ever seen before.

## **1. Climate Change:**

The effects of Climate Change are easy to see, on an almost daily basis, in our local area.

It locally manifests in warmer, drier summers and wetter, more stormy winters. Increasingly, we see a continuously high-water table throughout the autumn and winter months. This brings increased surface water and river flooding, more flooded roads,

damaged carriageways, disrupted travel, inaccessible waterlogged farmland, property damage and very frequent discharges from local sewage treatment plants as they are regularly overwhelmed with flood water and discharge into the Bristol Avon tributaries.

## **2. Flooding, Drainage and Drinking Water:**

The large area which Lime Down Solar Park intends to cover is unusual. It has specific sensitivities and vulnerabilities to contamination, sub-soils disruption, surface and river flooding. The whole northern area of the scheme sits above a deep sequence of limestone aquifers, which retain and allow the transfer of subterranean water over a very wide geographic area. This aquifer is vulnerable to contamination as it contains micro - fissures which help water transfer to and through the aquifer at an accelerated rate. This development could be a direct threat to the aquifer, which supplies drinking water to the West Country.

A network of permanent streams, seasonal surface and subterranean waterways and springs facilitate water flow into the Bristol Avon. This includes the proposed development area and the areas well beyond its boundaries. The development site already suffers from significant standing water and surface water issues, the areas immediately around it suffers from a high risk of flooding, as do the various conurbations downstream. If the rate at which water falls on or moves across the development area is altered or increased, it is likely to result in increased flooding outside the development area and elsewhere downstream along the Bristol Avon. This risk off-site has not been properly assessed by the developer.

We think that the developer has consistently underestimated the risks of their proposals to the local communities and the drinking

water supply. They offer inadequate countermeasures and have sought to dismiss or ignore this foreseeable risk.

The Bristol Avon passes through our Parish and it already floods frequently, alongside extensive surface water flooding from run-off and springs, this blocks roads, affects local land and property owners and isolates our communities. We have no doubt that the Lime Down proposals will make this much worse.

### **3. Transport:**

The development area is served by a network of small, mostly single carriageway roads unable to cope with the anticipated construction, operational, replacement and decommissioning vehicles. The risks and disruption to all road users, including walkers, cyclists and horse riders will increase. There are insufficient passing places for the planned volume of large goods vehicles and abnormal loads (which we feel have been significantly underestimated). The counter-measures are inadequate and ineffective.

Lacking alternative routes, traffic risks on poor narrow roads will be increased. We feel that the developer has significantly underestimate the number of vehicle movements involved.

### **4. Community Benefits:**

Despite the obvious community impact and disruption that a project of this scale will cause, the developers appears to view this as a project that will be inflicted on, rather than developed with the local community. Nothing is offered by the Applicant in mitigation.

This is an area with many residents, significant visitor numbers and a variety of local businesses. Many of these depend on visitors for their livelihoods. If you had to choose whether to walk

or cycle amongst the open rolling Cotswold landscape, or amidst 4.5m high visually confined footpath ‘tunnels’ with no views, which would you choose? In our view, the approval of ‘Lime Down’ is likely to devastate our local communities.

## **5. Conclusion:**

In conclusion, our Parish Council feel that Lime Down is simply too big, too damaging to the local environment, the local communities, and the natural environment of this important part of the Cotswolds.

It is the wrong project, in the wrong place.

We ask the Planning Inspectorate to support the overwhelming community resistance to this proposal and recommend that the application for a Development Consent Order be refused.

*John Buckley Chair, Luckington and Alderton Parish Council 21.04.2026 OFH 1*