

Submission ID: S2B9578C8

Kington Langley Parish Council has previously objected to the Lime Down Solar Project and believes it registered as an interested party. KLPC noticed from reviewing the applicant's responses to submissions made by interested parties that its objection was not included. KLPC remains concerned about the Lime Down Solar Project as detailed in the attached document.

**To: Planning Inspectorate**

## **KLPC Proposed Objection to the Lime Down Solar Park Proposal**

Kington Langley Parish Council (KLPC) remains concerned about the proposed Lime Down Solar Park development and objects to it. While the PC supports the responsible development of renewable energy, this proposal is fundamentally flawed due to its location, scale, and the irreversible harm it would cause to the Cotswolds and surrounding communities.

### Primary Points of Objection

#### **1. Inappropriate Location in a Protected Landscape**

The proposed site lies within the nationally important Cotswold landscape, a region recognised for its beauty, tourism value, and heritage. Lime Down would be the first Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) solar park in this area, which would compromise the integrity of the Cotswolds.

#### **2. Excessive Scale and Disruption to Rural Communities**

The project spans 878 hectares across nine villages, affecting an estimated 50 square kilometres. This vast footprint would dominate the area and severely disrupt the settlement pattern of rural Wiltshire. The village of Norton, in particular, would be encircled by industrial infrastructure.

#### **3. Harm to Heritage Assets**

The development would engulf the historic Fosse Way, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a key walking and bridleway route. In addition, Bradfield Manor, a Grade I listed building, would suffer severely damaging visual impacts.

#### **4. Adverse Impact on the Cotswolds AONB**

The site is adjacent to the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Cotswolds National Landscape Board has raised concerns and the proposal appears to breach Section 85 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, which requires public bodies to have regard for the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty.

#### **5. Overbearing Infrastructure**

The proposed 4.5-metre-high solar panels are disproportionate and would be damagingly intrusive across the rural landscape, impacting many communities.

#### **6. Battery Energy Storage Risks**

The project includes two large Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) located between Corston and Hullavington. These pose risks of noise pollution, chemical fires, and toxic gas release. One BESS is proposed near the London to Cardiff mainline railway, creating a national infrastructure risk.

#### **7. Inadequate Access and Traffic Risks**

The proposed access routes for construction vehicles are unsuitable. Narrow country lanes

would be damaged, and rural communities disrupted. The Cotswolds National Landscape Board has already objected to the use of Junction 18 of the M4 for lorry access.

#### **8. Distance from the National Grid**

The significant land take necessary for the 20km of 400kV underground cabling is a major concern. Proximity to a suitable grid connection should be a key driver in choosing a solar farm site to minimise loss of electrical energy in transmission and to protect the environment.

#### **9. Loss of Productive Agricultural Land**

We understand your (IGP's) own surveys indicate that 30% of the site comprises Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. At a time when the UK imports over 40% of its food, sacrificing such valuable land for profit is unacceptable.

#### **10. Economic Harm to Wiltshire**

The development would offer no permanent local employment once construction is complete whilst threatening job losses in agriculture, its supply chains, and the tourism sector that is so important to our rural economy.

#### **11. Irreversible Long-Term Damage**

Following 60 years of operation, there will be little means, realistically, for long-term damage to the landscape and heritage assets to be undone, given uncertainties about future ownership, economic viability, and restoration responsibilities. The cable and its concrete structures would be particularly difficult and expensive to undo, probably prohibitively so.

#### **Conclusion**

The Lime Down Solar Park proposal is ill-conceived offering, on balance, little public or environmental benefit when weighed against purported benefits. It poses a serious and permanent threat to one of England's most important landscapes and rural communities. We strongly urge that the proposal be rejected in its entirety.