

Mrs Caroline Moore, former Sherston resident of 18 years

Submission to the ExA, PINS Tues 30 June 2026, Swindon

Approaching junction 17 on the M4, there is a sign “River Avon”.

For eighteen wonderful years that told us that we were almost home, where the narrow road meanders through six miles of as yet unspoilt south Cotswolds countryside to Sherston.

Back home, the Sherston Avon bisected our garden. Our haven of tranquillity interrupted only by the screech of kingfishers passing the kitchen window daily, ducks and moorhens and their young broods, herons, egrets, bats, muntjac, stoats, water voles and even the odd visit from a pair of otters. All wildlife thrived by the river – talk about biodiversity.

In mid-March 2024, that life changed when this innocent looking flyer dropped on the mat. At first glance it looked like another ad for retirement housing and nearly went straight into the recycling. I noticed it referred to a public meeting in Sherston just over a week later. Reading on, looking at the map, we grasped the size and industrial nature of Lime Down Solar proposal and what it would mean to the communities it engulfed. It was vast! Nothing like this had ever been built in the U.K. A far cry from the solar panels by the M4.

Joining up with others who also ‘got it’ straightaway, the Stop Lime Down Steering Group was formed that weekend, and all ‘worked’ tirelessly around our day jobs on getting up to speed on this issue we knew little about. It consumed every waking moment and ate away at our souls.

Nearly a year later we realised how it was affecting our mental health.

We knew spending 3 ½ years of our precious decade of our [REDACTED] living beside an enormous construction site, watching the destruction of a landscape we loved, would be devastating to our health. Even if the land recovered over the following fifteen years, our most active years would have passed by then.

With broken hearts, we made the painful decision to preserve our mental health and leave that magical spot by the river, the village, the people and the wildlife we loved, the house we had worked so hard to afford, the garden I was going to tend for as long as I lived. Everything precious that we had worked our socks off for.

But we were luckier than so many friends in other affected areas. Sherston's on the edge of LDS, we still had the opportunity to sell, even if not quite as we would have liked, whereas other areas didn't even have that choice. We had to decide quickly. Had we been 15 years younger or older, we'd never have left. The next 15 years are the most important years we have left, still fit and healthy early sixties. We felt so bad leaving.

We realise we're hardly impacted compared to others here, but there are many like us, whose voices should be heard.

This is how communities die, as people lose hope, move away and the social fabric begins to unravel.

We've moved, why have I taken a day off work to be here today then?

Although it's no longer in our back yard, we remain committed to oppose a project we believe to be about money rather than renewable energy.

We absolutely need renewable energy if we are to tackle climate change. That is not in dispute.

We all should draw down from solar panels on **our** houses, supermarket freezers powered by solar panels in **their** car parks, same for all industrial premises and brownfield sites rather than on previously unspoilt rural land.

This fight, which none of us wanted, is and always has been, a horribly unequal battle. IGP is owned by a group with worldwide infrastructure assets in excess of \$200 billion, equivalent roughly to the GDP of Qatar. Against resources of that scale, volunteer groups relying on donated time and expertise can never compete on equal terms.

We've been told by the applicant and by DESNEZ that our feedback is welcome.

That the fears and objections of local communities will be taken into consideration.

But we have seen little evidence of this.

When we've asked detailed questions, we've been met with silence or been referred to microscopic references buried deep within mountains of highly technical documentation.

Essential details on issues such as the location and size of the cable, and the visual impact of the solar panels have been conspicuous by their absence.

Serious concerns about the impact on the historic setting of Malmesbury, flood risk affecting local communities and the potential consequences of fires involving the BESS, let alone the impact on businesses of loss of tourism to this part of the South Cotswolds, appear to us to have received scant attention.

No benefits to locals. This area is already rich in biodiversity and we already fundraised for our village hall roof without paying this hefty penalty

Technology is advancing at extraordinary speed. Solar panels might be obsolete before this is completed

How will we all cope then knowing the toll on our mental health and everything we've lost, was for obsolete industrial infrastructure ruining what was once some of England's finest countryside? What will the next generations think of us if we don't fight to stop this?

Because once landscapes like this are lost, who puts them back?
Once they're gone, they're gone.

This is what we left:

Ducklings, double kingfishers from the kitchen as you were washing up!



Get in touch

All project information, including a consultation leaflet, can be found by scanning the QR code or visiting our website at www.limedownsolar.co.uk

If you have any questions about our proposals or our community consultation, please get in touch using the communication lines below:

You can contact our team by:



info@limedownsolar.co.uk



Freephone line: 0808 175 6656



FREEPOST Lime Down Solar



www.limedownsolar.co.uk



Return Address
St James House
Vicar Lane
Sheffield
S1 2EX



Lime Down

Solar Park



Stage One Consultation

Thursday 14 March – Friday 26 April 2024

Island Green Power is introducing plans for Lime Down Solar Park, a solar park with battery energy storage development located in North Wiltshire that could deliver 500 megawatts of clean energy to the national grid.

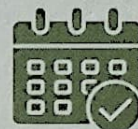
You are invited to take part and provide your feedback on the project during our first stage of community consultation: 14 March – 26 April 2024.

Have Your Say

We want to hear your feedback on our proposals to help us update and refine our design as the project progresses.

You can provide feedback by filling out a feedback form at one of our events, via our freepost address or through our website. You can also provide written feedback through our communication channels provided. The deadline to submit feedback is 26 April 2024.

Peel back
for map



Community Information Events

Friday 22 March - 15:30pm – 19:30pm - Sherston Village Hall,
High Street, Sherston, Malmesbury, SN16 0LQ

Saturday 23 March - 11:00am – 15:00pm - Hullavington Village Hall,
Hill Hayes Lane, Hullavington, Chippenham, SN14 6EB

Monday 25 March - 13:30pm – 17:30pm - Grittleton Village Hall,
The Street, Grittleton, Chippenham, SN14 6AW

Wednesday 27 March - 17:30pm – 19:00pm - Virtual webinar (Zoom) –
details on how to join can be found at www.limedownsolar.co.uk

Tuesday 09 April - 15:30pm – 19:30pm - Goss Croft Hall,
Startley Road, Upper Seagry, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 5HD

Wednesday 10 April - 15:30pm – 19:30pm - Corsham Town Council
Hall, Town Hall, 65 High St, Corsham, SN13 0EZ

Thursday 11 April - 14:00pm – 18:00pm - Shaw Village Hall,
The Beeches, Shaw, Melksham, SN12 8EW

Wednesday 17 April - 17:30pm – 19:00pm - Virtual webinar (Zoom) –
details on how to join can be found at www.limedownsolar.co.uk

Stage One Consultation - Indicative Masterplan

