



Cassington Parish Council



25 Lilac Way, Carterton, OXON, OX18 1JH
Email: cassingtonclerk@cassington-pc.gov.uk Telephone: 07496 761398
Website: cassington-pc.gov.uk
Clerk: Mrs Tracey Cameron

Dear Sir/ Madam,

As Parish Councillors for the Village of Cassington we would like to raise serious concerns with regards to the Botley West Solar Farm and the lack of notice and consultation that has accompanied the proposal. Yet again, our residents have had a large development project dropped upon them with no notice and furthermore there has been zero consultation with the Parish Council, or indeed District Council on this massive development. Whilst we are all for emissions reductions and have instigated a village committee to look at energy saving and renewable energy at the local level this project is of an unprecedented scale in an area already densely populated and subject to rampant housing and infrastructure development. In particular we note:

- No prior consultation with Parish or District Councillors before mail dropping the Phase 1 Community Consultation Leaflet on our parishioners.
- The anonymous nature of the Leaflet drops (plain white envelope) that means some residents may have discarded them as junk mail.
- The misleading name of the development (Botley West Solar Farm) when the Middle and North sections of the development are not west of Botley. Again, this may have caused residents to discard the Leaflet before reading it.
- Completely inadequate planned consultation of the village residents which at present amounts to a single meeting in the village hall in the afternoon of a working day when the majority of residents will be unable to attend.
- The sewing together of what are three separate photovoltaic developments could be cynically seen as an effort to avoid local planning consultation (i.e., presenting the development of a size that has to go straight to the Secretary of State). We find the circumvention of local planning particularly disturbing in light of the very high level of impact on quality of life for our residents.
- We point out that in the Cassington Local Village Plan and Green Infrastructure Plan important amenities will be severely impacted by this proposed scheme. Effectively all the footpaths commonly used by the residents to the north, northeast and west of the village will be surrounded entirely or in part by solar panels. Given the proximity of the village to the A40 to its south these footpaths are all heavily used by residents of the village for walking, running and exercising dogs. This scheme will severely detract from these amenities.
- The Cassington Parish Council also raises concern with respect to the flow of water off the land to the north of the village with respect to this scheme. As already noted in the Leaflet, the village has already been subjected to flooding from the farmland to the north which is now proposed to be part of this scheme.
- The Cassington Parish Council also note that the fields that are targeted by this scheme to the north of the village are important for farmland birds and other wildlife, some of



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which are threatened (e.g. linnets and yellow hammers RSPB status RED species) and we will expect to see a thorough appraisal of the environmental impacts of this scheme on biodiversity.

In line with these concerns, we would appreciate at your earliest convenience a meeting to discuss this scheme and alternative potential plans to meet our concerns and those of the surrounding villages who will also be affected.

Kind Regards

Cassington Parish Council

Yours Sincerely

Mrs. T Cameron
Clerk/Finance Officer
Cassington Parish Council