

Cumnor Parish Council – Response to BotleyWest ‘Phase One Community Consultation’

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| Date Reviewed: | 05/12/2022 |
| Version: | V1 |
| Application Reference: | BotleyWest solar power station |
| Application Type: | Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) |
| Proposal: | 840MW solar power station covering 1400 hectares (3500 acres) |
| Address: | Land in VWHDC, WODC and Cherwell District Council, including proposed substation, solar panels and other infrastructure occupying an unstated area across Oxford Green Belt Landscape Character Assessment Area LM 19 in Cumnor Parish |

1. Information Available to Cumnor Parish Council

- 1.1. Cumnor Parish Council (CPC) has examined the BotleyWest website and read the ‘Botley West Phase One Community Consultation Leaflet’ distributed across the Parish and elsewhere.
- 1.2. Parish Councillors attended the BotleyWest PR webinars on 2nd and 3rd November.
- 1.3. Parish Councillors attended the BotleyWest PR event held in Cumnor Village Hall on 30th November.

2. Cumnor Parish Council’s Observations on the Process thus far

- 2.1. Although CPC is willingly responding to this ‘Phase One Community Consultation’ it has a low degree of confidence in the process, as no details have been provided thus far as to how consultation responses will be collated, analysed, publicised or used to modify the proposals.
- 2.2. CPC also notes that there are significant gaps in the information it is being asked to respond to. As just two examples among many, none of the publicity materials described in 1. above:
 - 2.2.1. enumerate the total area (hectares or acres) of the proposal for this Parish and the area for the proposed National Grid ‘substation’, or
 - 2.2.2. show the other two solar power stations proposed in the Parish, so allowing an assessment of potential cumulative impacts.

3. Cumnor Parish Council’s Consultation Response

Given the constraints set out in 1. and 2. above, and on the basis of the partial information available to it at this time, Cumnor Parish Council:

- 3.1. Objects to the developer attempting to circumvent a planning application in this Parish being decided on the basis of the Vale of White Horse District Council's Planning Policies and this Parish Council's made Neighbourhood Plan, by declaring instead that what are, in reality, three separate power stations to be just one.
- 3.2. Objects to the power station proposed for Cumnor Parish on the grounds that were it not described as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project it would contravene the Vale of White Horse District Council's Local Plan Core Policy 41 (Renewable Energy), Core Policy 13 (the Oxford Green Belt), Core Policy 44 (Landscape), and Development Policy 23 (Impact of Development on Amenity).
- 3.3. Objects to the power station proposed for Cumnor Parish on the grounds that were it not described as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project it would contravene Cumnor Neighbourhood Plan design and built character policies DBC 1, DBC 2, DBC 4, DBC 6 and DBC 7; flood risk policy RNE 2, and footpath and bridleway policy TI 3.

4. Next Steps

Cumnor Parish Council looks forward to the developer rapidly addressing the points raised in 2. and 3. above so that a meaningful, open and transparent evidence led process rooted in local democratic processes at Parish, District and County level can take place.

Cumnor Parish Council

5th December 2022