

27 November 2023

Dear Sir / Madam,

Botley West Solar Farm

Statutory Pre-Application Consultation: 30 November 2023 – 8 February 2024

Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 (“the 2008 Act”), Regulation 3 of the Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009 (“the APFP Regulations”), and Regulations 11 and 13 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (“the 2017 Regulations”)

This letter has been sent to you as part of a statutory consultation exercise being carried out pursuant to section 42 of the 2008 Act by Photovolt Development Partners GmbH (“PVDP”), on behalf of SolarFive Ltd (“the Applicant”), in respect of proposals for Botley West Solar Farm.

The Scheme

The Applicant intends to build a new solar energy generation station (“Botley West Solar Farm”) on three land parcels located within the administrative areas of Cherwell District Council, West Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council.

If approved, Botley West Solar Farm could generate renewable electricity using ground-mounted solar arrays to provide up to 840MW of reliable, low-cost electricity to the national grid. The location of Botley West Solar Farm extends from an area of land in the north (the Northern Site), situated between the A4260 and the Dorn River Valley near Tackley and Wootton, through a central section (the Central Site), situated broadly between Bladon and Cassington, and connecting to a section further south near to Farmoor Reservoir and north of Cumnor (the Southern Site), where Botley West Solar Farm will connect to the National Grid transmission network.

It will consist of:

- Solar PV Modules;
- Onsite cabling;
- Power Converter Stations (i.e. project substations and control buildings) and supporting equipment;
- High Voltage Transformers, including feeders, switchgear and supporting equipment;
- Fencing, security and ancillary infrastructure;
- Accesses from the highway and tracks, including temporary and permanent accesses;
- Green infrastructure (GI); and



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- Underground electricity export cables connecting the Northern, Central and Southern Sites that will connect into the National Grid Transmission Network.
- Associated infrastructure, mitigation and enhancement measures, and other ancillary works, for example, fencing, security, highway works, temporary works compounds and work sites.

Botley West Solar Farm is considered as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ("NSIP") and, to be consented, it will require a Development Consent Order ("DCO") from the Secretary of State for the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero ("DESNZ") under the 2008 Act. This is due to the amount of renewable energy that Botley West Solar Farm would generate exceeding 50 MW.

The DCO application will contain full details of the proposals for Botley West Solar Farm and will be accompanied by an Environmental Statement in accordance with the 2008 Act and the 2017 Regulations. The Applicant intends to make this application in Summer 2024.

Consultation on Botley West Solar Farm

Botley West Solar Farm is currently in the pre-application phase of the DCO application process. As part of that process, the Applicant is required to carry out consultation on the proposed DCO application before it is submitted. Your feedback as part of this consultation will be considered before the Applicant finalises its DCO application and will also be reported to the Secretary of State when the application is submitted.

We are writing to you as you have been identified as a consultee for the purpose of section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 and/or Regulation 11 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, or it has been decided it would be appropriate to consult you in any event.

This consultation includes:

- Consultation with prescribed bodies, host and neighbouring authorities (under section 42 and section 43 of the 2008 Act);
- Consultation with any persons with an interest in the land affected by Botley West (under section 42 and 44 of the 2008 Act); and
- Consultation with the local community in the vicinity of Botley West (under section 47 of the 2008 Act).
- General public consultation on Botley West Solar Farm (under section 48 of the 2008 Act).

This consultation is running from **Thursday 30 November 2023** to **Thursday 8 February 2024**.

The approach to consultation set out in this document has been discussed with the relevant host local planning authorities, as required by Section 47(2) of the Act, and regard has been had to the comments they have made. Details of how this consultation is being carried out can be found in the Statement of Community Consultation available at www.botleywest.co.uk/document_library.html.

In addition, section 48 of the 2008 Act and Regulation 13 of the 2017 Regulations require the Applicant to publicise its proposed DCO application. A formal notice publicising the proposed



application is therefore enclosed with this letter which includes a summary of the key elements of the Botley West Solar Farm proposals and provides details of the consultation.

Consultation materials

As Botley West Solar Farm is an Environmental Impact Assessment (“EIA”) development for the purposes of the 2017 Regulations, the Applicant has prepared a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (“PEIR”). This has been informed by the Scoping Opinion issued by the Planning Inspectorate and reports the results of the EIA process that have been carried out to date. The PEIR forms the basis of this consultation and also includes a non-technical summary. The purpose of the PEIR is to enable consultees to understand the likely environmental effects of Botley West Solar Farm and to help inform consultation responses. It should be noted that the EIA is an ongoing process, and the design of Botley West Solar Farm will continue to evolve during the pre-application stage.

In addition to the PEIR (to include appendices, plans and figures), the Applicant has produced a Community Consultation Leaflet and Feedback Form. These consultation documents provide information and invite feedback on the proposals for Botley West Solar Farm.

Consultation materials are available free of charge online at www.botleywest.co.uk/document_library.html and to view in hard copy at the locations listed in the enclosed section 48 notice. A USB device containing the consultation documents can also be provided free of charge upon request to the Applicant. The documents include:

- The PEIR (including appendices, plans and figures);
- A non-technical summary of the PEIR;
- Additional documents including the Community Consultation Leaflet, Feedback Form and Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC).

Hard copies of these documents are also available on request. Please note that a full printed version of the PEIR is subject to a £500 fee, while all other consultation documents can be provided free-of-charge. Details of how to request these documents and the related charges, if any, are set out in the enclosed section 48 notice.

Consultation events

The Applicant will also be holding public information events, and an online webinar, throughout the consultation period. Relevant details are provided in the enclosed section 48 notice.

How to respond to this consultation

When providing your response, please include your name and contact details (a postal or email address) and confirm the nature of your interest in Botley West Solar Farm. Completed responses may be submitted:

- (a) By emailing: info@botleywest.co.uk.
- (b) In writing to: FREEPOST BWSF.
- (c) Online at: www.botleywest.co.uk.

Responses must be received between Thursday 30 November 2023 and 23.59 on Thursday 8 February 2024.



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The Applicant will consider and have regard to all responses received during the consultation period. Responses received after this time may not be considered. Responses and representations will form the basis of a Consultation Report, which will be submitted as part of the DCO application, and therefore may become public. Personal details will be held securely and solely for purposes in connection with the statutory consultation, DCO process and further development of Botley West Solar Farm. Please see the enclosed notice for further details.

Further information

If you would like further information about this letter, the consultation or Botley West Solar Farm, please visit our website [www.botleywest.co.uk] or contact the project team by using one of the contact methods provided below:

- Email: info@botleywest.co.uk.
- Post: FREEPOST BWSF.
- Phone: 0808 175 3085.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

Peter Gerstmann
Managing Director
Photovolt Development Partners



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