



WEST OXFORDSHIRE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Botley West Solar Farm Parish Council Briefing

7 December 2023

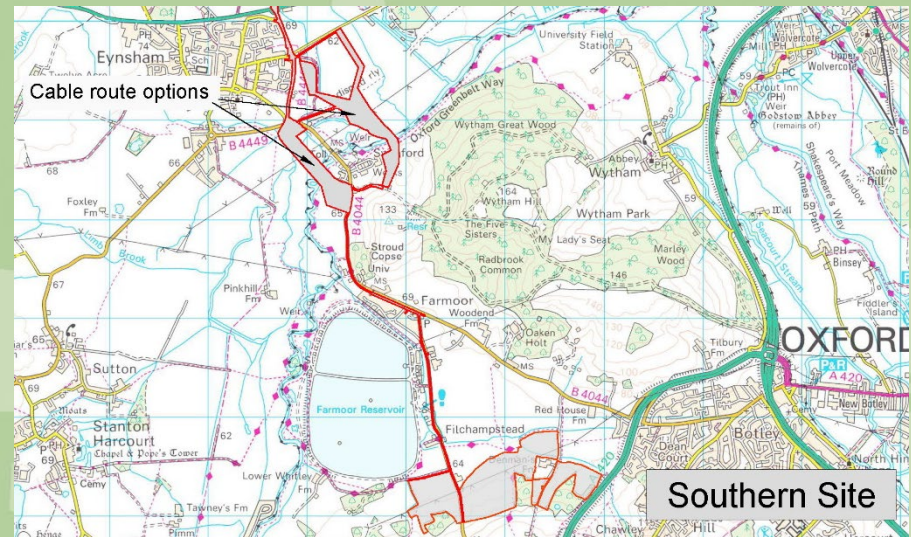
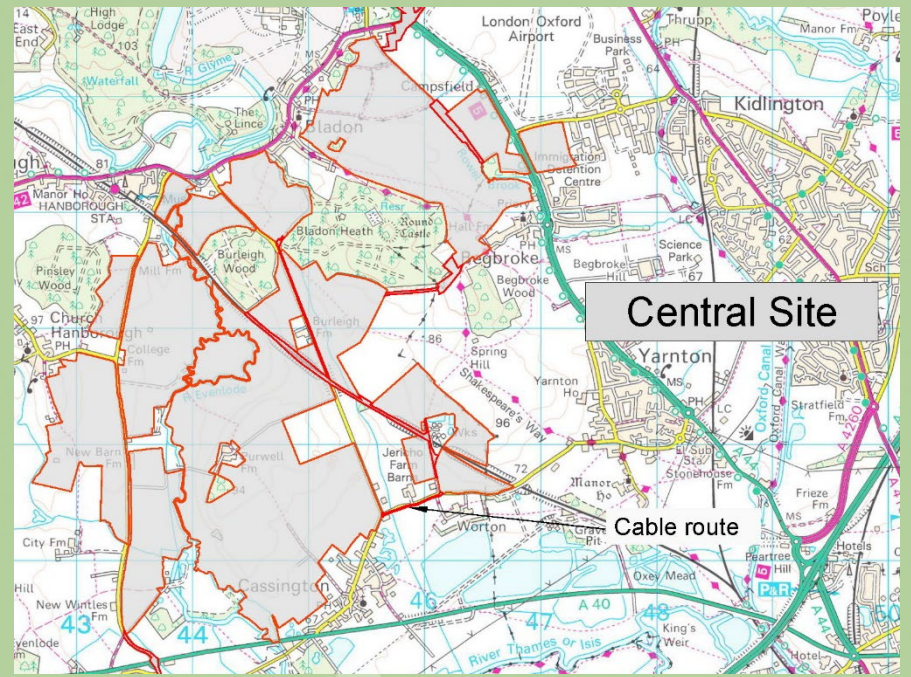
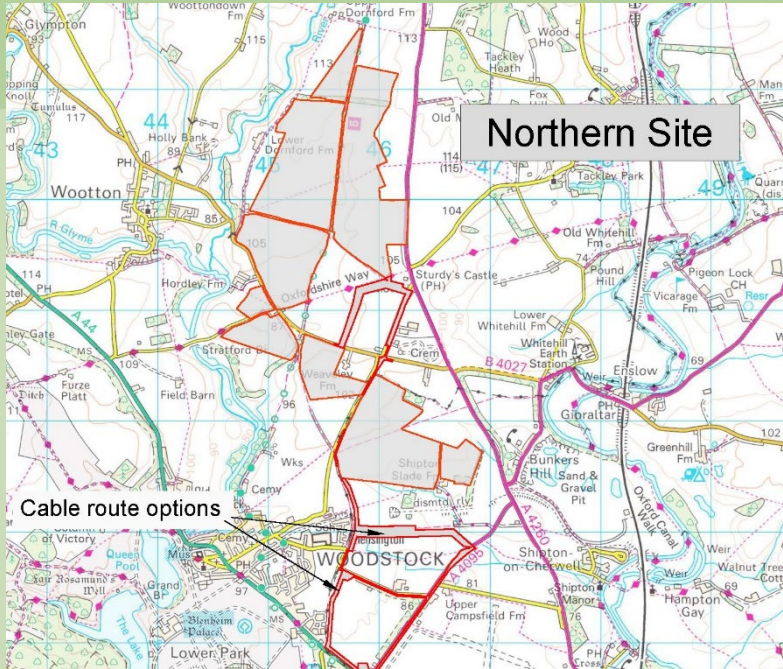
Purpose of briefing - Introduction

To continue dialogue with Parish Councils, to be clear on importance of engaging with current consultation and to explain the significance of each stage in the Development Consent Order (DCO) process

Recap of Proposal

- *Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) are proposing a new solar farm to the west of Oxford*
- *Proposals for a site area of approx. 1,300ha (1,000ha of panels) capable of generating 840MW of power to the national grid*
- *Proposal defined as Nationally Important Infrastructure Project – Decision to be made through Development Consent Order (DCO) process*

Development Location



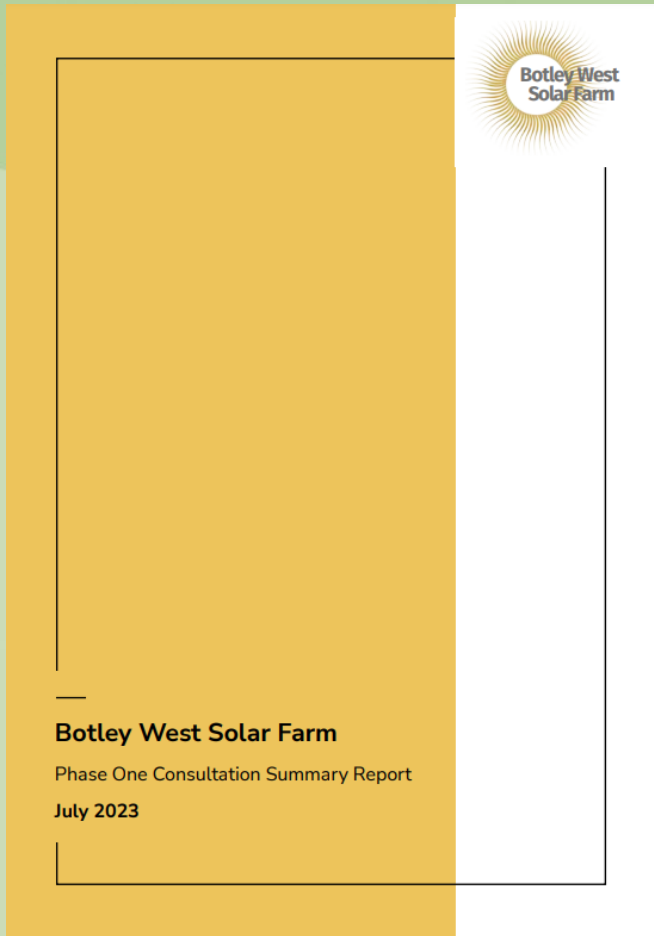


The DCO Process

Six Stages

- 1) *Pre-application – We are here!*
- 2) *Acceptance*
- 3) *Pre-examination*
- 4) *Examination*
- 5) *Recommendation*
- 6) *Post decision*

Phase I Consultation – December 2022



Significant public interest in proposals

Majority of respondents are strongly opposed to the proposals on number of Grounds;

- Landscape and visual impacts
- Local Ecology and Biodiversity
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage
- Traffic, Access and Construction
- Land use and Agriculture
- Hydrology and Flood Risk
- Recreation and Amenity
- Site Selection and Alternatives
- Community Impact

Story so far – PINS Scoping Opinion

 The Planning Inspectorate
Yr Arolygiaeth Gynllunio

SCOPING OPINION:

Proposed Botley West Solar Farm

Case Reference: EN010145

Adopted by the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State) pursuant to Regulation 10 of The Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017

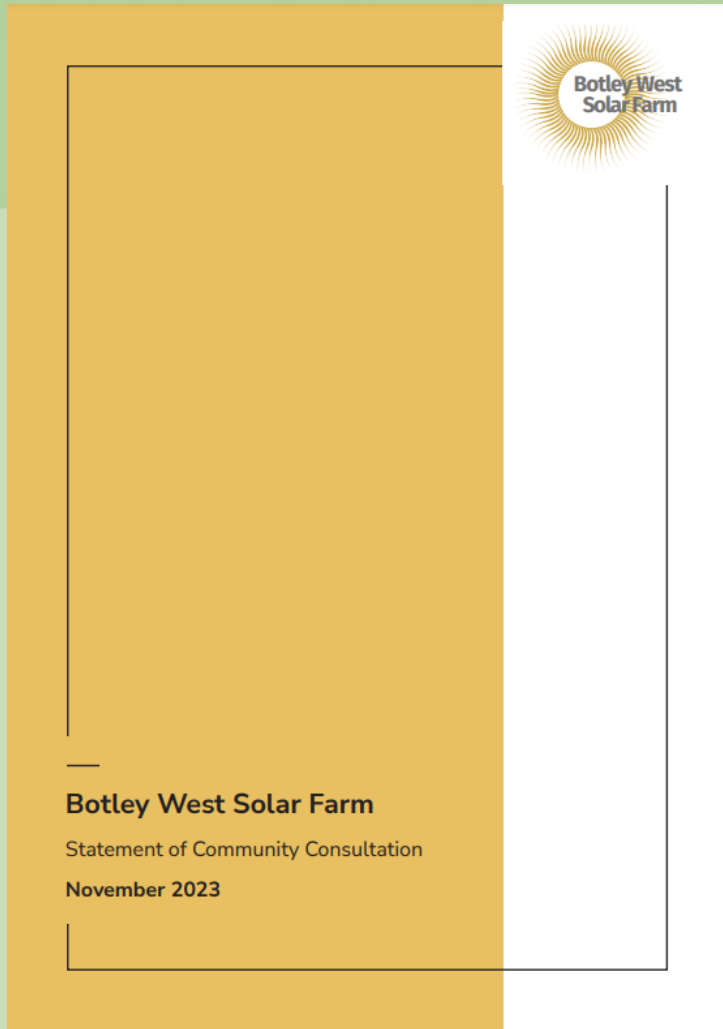
24 July 2023

The Planning Inspectorate issued a Scoping Opinion on 24 July 2023.

The Scoping Opinion sets out the matters that should be covered in the developer's Environmental Statement

The view of the Planning Inspectorate is that the Environmental Statement should cover a comprehensive range of social, environmental and economic impacts.

Focused Statutory Consultation

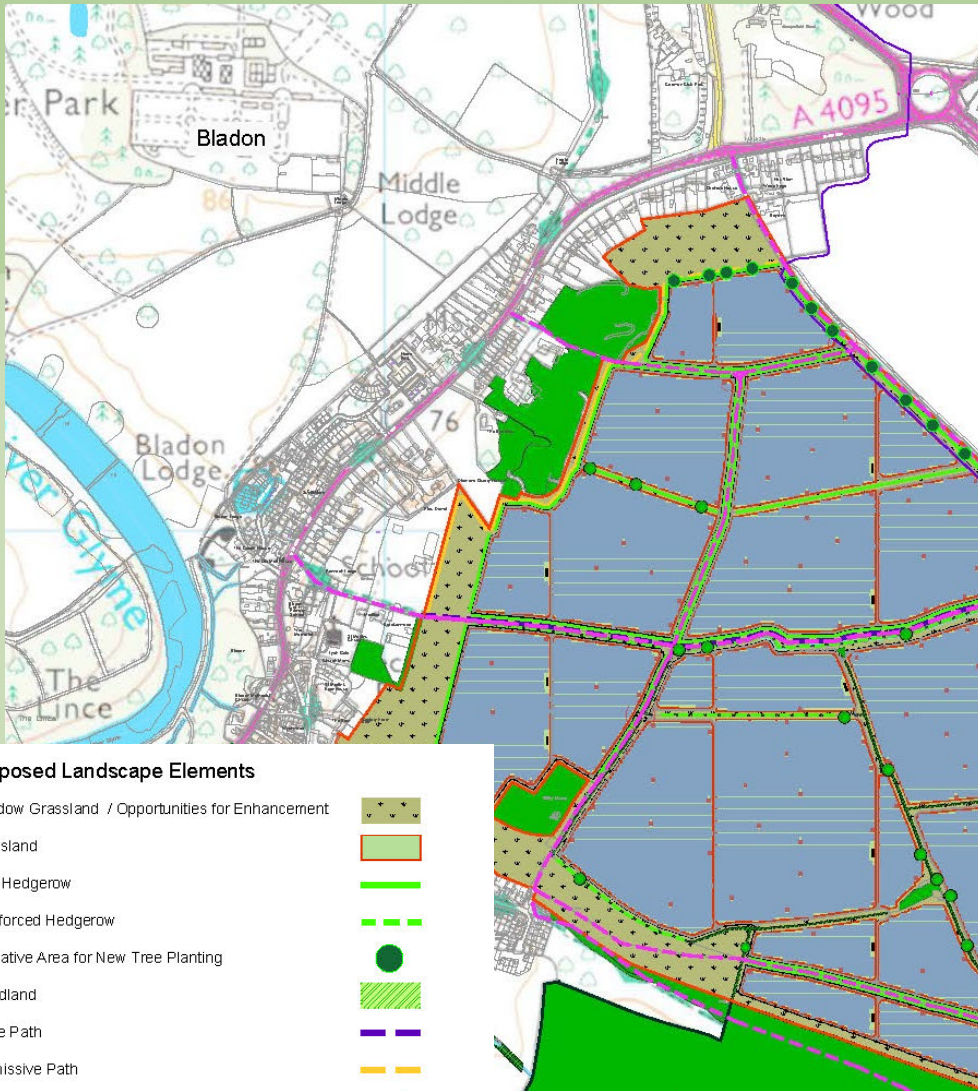


Developer has published **Statement of Community Consultation** setting out how, when, where and with whom they will consult on their proposals

10 week consultation focused primarily on **Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)** 30 November 2023 – 8 February 2024

How the developer conducts this consultation is very important – They will be judged by PINS on the **Adequacy of Consultation** when they submit their application

Focused Statutory Consultation



Site Location remains largely the same – Merton land removed

More detail on extent of development and location of infrastructure

Detail of proposed mitigations and environmental enhancements



Focused Statutory Consultation

Developer is seeking comments on :

- Updated proposals, including the site layout and cable routes.
- The information presented in the Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).
- Proposed environmental enhancement measures, such as biodiversity net gain and new recreational connectivity across the site.
- Proposed mitigation measures to minimise or avoid the potential impacts on the environment and local communities.

Focused Statutory Consultation

Responses to consultation should be directed to the developer through the formal consultation channels

https://botleywest.co.uk/Have_Your_Say.html

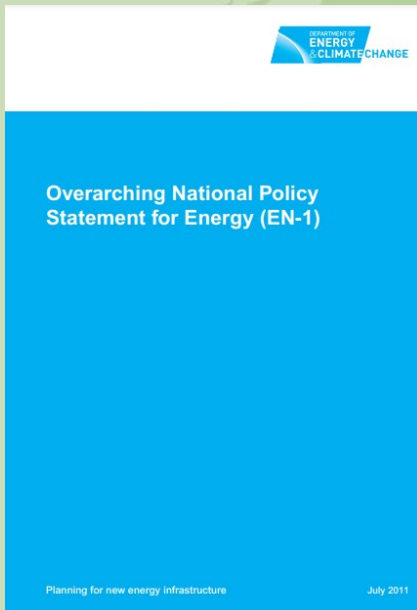
District Council will submit a representation which will be agreed at Development Control Committee in February 2024

May seek specialist advice to respond to elements of the consultation

Tick box	Topic area
	Local ecology For example, please suggest opportunities to improve ecology and biodiversity across the site, and / or provide us with details of existing flora and fauna you would like us to consider.
	Landscape and visual For example, please indicate any local public viewpoints particularly important to you or opportunities for improved public access you would like us to consider.
	Archaeology For example, our proposed mitigations to reduce the impact to areas of archaeological interest and our initial studies.
	Cultural Heritage For example, our mitigation measures in relation to the project site area's proximity to the Blenheim Estate as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
	Traffic, access and construction For example, please indicate local routes or areas you think we need to consider when planning our construction works.
	Land use and agriculture For example, please provide any suggestions for how you think we can best use and manage the land during the operation of the solar farm.
	Hydrology and flood risk For example, please let us know of any specific flood issues to consider in the area.
	Recreation and amenity For example, please let us know of any areas of the site that are currently well used for recreation, and / or any further opportunities to improve public access across the site area. This could include new footpaths or cycle routes – please see our concept plans for details.
	Climate change and energy need For example, the carbon footprint of the project and the need for large-scale solar projects.
	Socioeconomics For example, employment, supply chain, and education opportunities.
	Glint and Glare For example, our proposed screening and mitigation plans and the ongoing dialogue with Oxford Airport.
	Other (please detail) Please list any other key topics that you would like our team to consider:

Relevant considerations for response

- Developer must produce a consultation report explaining how they have had regard to any consultation responses.
- Respondents should highlight locally specific issues that are relevant to the proposal – particularly if likely to result in significant positive or negative impacts



- A decision will be made within the framework provided by National Policy Statements – These set out a range of impacts that are relevant to decision making including;
 - Landscape and visual impacts
 - Land use including Green Belt impacts
 - Historic Environment



Further engagement – Beyond Pre-application

There are a number of documents that will be submitted as part of the DCO process. The current consultation isn't the last chance to express views on the development proposal.

- **Acceptance Stage** – WODC to submit adequacy of consultation representation
- **Pre-Examination** – To become an Interested Party, people can submit a 'Relevant Representation' – This is a summary of a person's views on the application – Interested parties may take part in the Examination
- **Examination** – WODC invited to submit a Local Impact Report – A key document in the decision making process - giving details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the area.



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