



BWSF EXAMINATION - WHAT'S THE LATEST?

The 2nd set of the Planning Inspectorate's written questions were published on 30 July. We are pleased to see that, once again, the Examiners have been very thorough and have taken on board the many concerns of Interested Parties (IPs) - that's all of us who registered back in February - who have sent in representations and responses to them.

The Applicant (PVDP) is the target of 147 of the 177 questions asked, with the Examining Authority (ExA) asking the developer to justify its choices, design, methodology and conclusions. 9 times ExA say that they are "minded to agree" with IPs' response including our District Councils and other key consultees. They ask PVDP to consider reductions or omissions in 7 additional panel areas. The ExA also asks again for several answers and documents that, to date, haven't been provided!

Several questions refer directly to responses from individuals or groups (either by name or by their response code in the Examination Library eg REP3-114). **This means that your responses are being read in detail by the Examiners, taken seriously and used as the basis for further questions - so, well done and keep them coming!**

This second set of Examiners' questions can be read in full [here](#).

HOW SHOULD YOU RESPOND?

The options are:

1. Reply to the questions now
2. Wait to read PVDP's replies and respond then.

For most of the questions, we advise waiting to read the Applicant answers, due to be published shortly after 22 August, and send your comments after that (deadline 12 September).

However, there are two questions directed in part to “all interested parties” and we encourage you to respond to these straight away (deadline 22 August). These questions are:

Question 2.13.8 This asks (simplified here) whether you would prefer views of the panels to views of permanent 3m high hedges (that wouldn’t be removed after 40years)! – i.e. if plans to plant hedgerows along public footpaths were excluded from the applicant’s plans and not implemented? They stress that they are not necessarily advocating this or pursuing it as a possibility.

The Examiner adds “This would of course result in un-mitigated visual effects being endured during operation but, at the decommissioning stage, the original landscape character could be restored closer to that presented, enjoyed and described in the book by Forever Fields”.

Read the full question [here](#).

Don’t feel that you have to make a choice! In our view neither choice is acceptable. Carefully considered scale, siting and design can make a development sympathetic to the landscape. One way is by omitting panels from visually sensitive and highly contoured areas (eg Evenlode Valley, rising ground above Cassington, Spring Hill, Tumbledown Hill). These areas have already been recommended for omission by all the District Councils, ICOMOS, etc due to their impact on Landscape and Visual Amenity. But please use your own words - don’t just copy this!

Question 2.9.4 This question asks for which areas do you think the need for mitigation [hedge planting etc] has been underplayed and what do you consider needs to be done for more effective mitigation? Read the question in full [here](#).

As in question 2.13.8, you may wish to point out that “mitigation” wouldn’t be required if panels were omitted from visually sensitive areas. This question is particularly relevant to those of you whose properties are very close to the BWSF site and likely to have “new vegetation” planted just outside your boundary to screen your view -though this has still **not** been fully explained or shown on a plan by the Applicant as yet (apart from the North site).

This second set of Examiners’ questions can be read in full [here](#).

Here is a list of some more key questions that the Examiners have asked the Applicant (numbers are those given in the document).

- 2.3.3 Other energy projects have been approved and are queueing for an available substation, so why the urgent need for BWSF?
- 2.5.1 Blenheim Company Structure and Trustees
- 2.5.2 Adequate Funding to proceed? ExA has concerns
- 2.5.4 Land at Bladon better left for Agricultural use?
- 2.5.5 Land at Church Hanborough better left for Agricultural use?
- 2.5.7 Permanent Acquisition-why permanent for a temporary development?
- 2.5.9 Funding. Would PVDP sell after consent?
- 2.6.12-18 Setting of listed churches and other properties
- 2.9.1 Generating excess power
- 2.10.2 Flood Modellingunreliable?
- 2.10.5 Flood mitigation adequate? eg Cassington
- 22.11.6 Fallow land. How would land quality improve by just leaving it fallow?
- 2.13.12 Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment methodology
- 2.13.15 Residential Visual Amenity Assessment. Especially important for those living closest to the BWSF site.
- 2.14.1 Cumulative noise on PRoW
- 2.15.4 Educational Facility at Bladon.

Look out for answers to these questions - due to be published shortly after 22 August and respond by 12 September

WHEN ARE THE NEXT DEADLINES?

- **22 August 2025 (Deadline 4) - Answers to Examiners' Questions are due**
- **Shortly afterwards - Applicant's Answers and other submissions will be published**
- **12 September 2025 (Deadline 5) - Responses to Applicants' answers and to other submissions are due.**

Thank you again for your continued interest, involvement and support. We are reaching another important set of milestones in the Planning Inspectorate's consideration of PVDP's application for permission to go ahead with the Botley West Solar Farm development, so please make your voice heard at every opportunity.

The Stop Botley West Campaign is entirely dependent on your generosity, both in time and donations. If you are able to contribute, please do give whatever you can - click the link below to head to the donate section on our website.

Together, we will Stop Botley West. Thank you.

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