

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	16 <sup>th</sup> October 2014
<b>Application Number</b>	14/06864/FUL
<b>Site Address</b>	Land to the west of Bake Farm Buildings Salisbury Road Coombe Bissett Salisbury SP5 4JT
<b>Proposal</b>	The erection of solar photovoltaic panels and associated works and infrastructure, including switchgear, inverter stations, access tracks, security fencing, security cameras, grid connection, together with temporary construction access, compound and unloading area
<b>Applicant</b>	Coombe Bissett PV Park Ltd
<b>Town/Parish Council</b>	BRITFORD
<b>Ward</b>	DOWNTON AND EBBLE VALLEY
<b>Grid Ref</b>	411789 127820
<b>Type of application</b>	Full Planning
<b>Case Officer</b>	Andrew Bidwell

### Reason for the application being considered by Committee

The Ward Member has called in the application due to the significant level of local interest in the proposal.

#### 1. Purpose of Report

To recommend that the application be approved subject to conditions.

#### 2. Report Summary

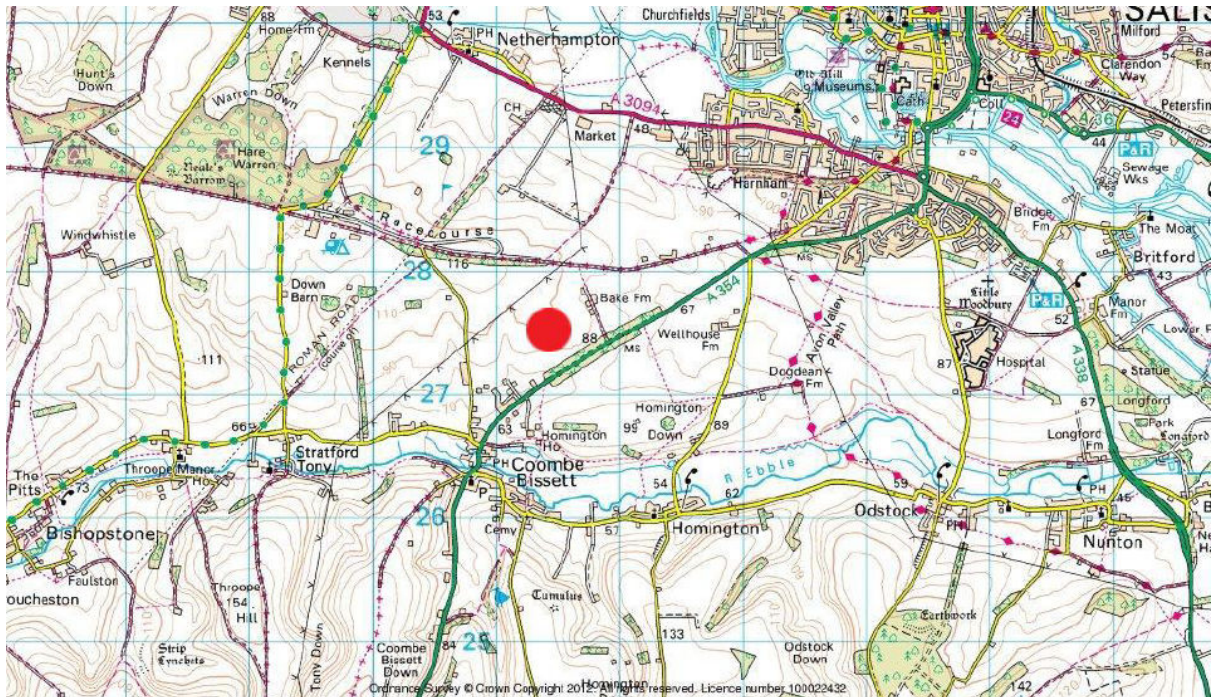
This report sets out the details of the proposal for a 40.2 hectare development of pole mounted Solar panels. The proposal will affect grade 3 agricultural land to the immediate west of Bake Farm adjacent to the boundary with the Cranborne Chase & West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

#### 3. Site Description

The proposed development site is located on existing farmlands in Coombe Bissett. The site is mostly surrounded by arable fields. There is a relatively large residential dwelling to the south west of the site boundary and further areas of residential properties near the site located between Drove Close and Salisbury Road with the nearest located approximately 260m from the south western boundary of the site.

All access will be from the Shaftsbury Road via the existing entrance to the Farm. The topography is such that the proposed site slopes to the south/southeast, with the proposed solar farm within fields below the ridge line on a slope ranging from approximately 95-120 metres AOD.

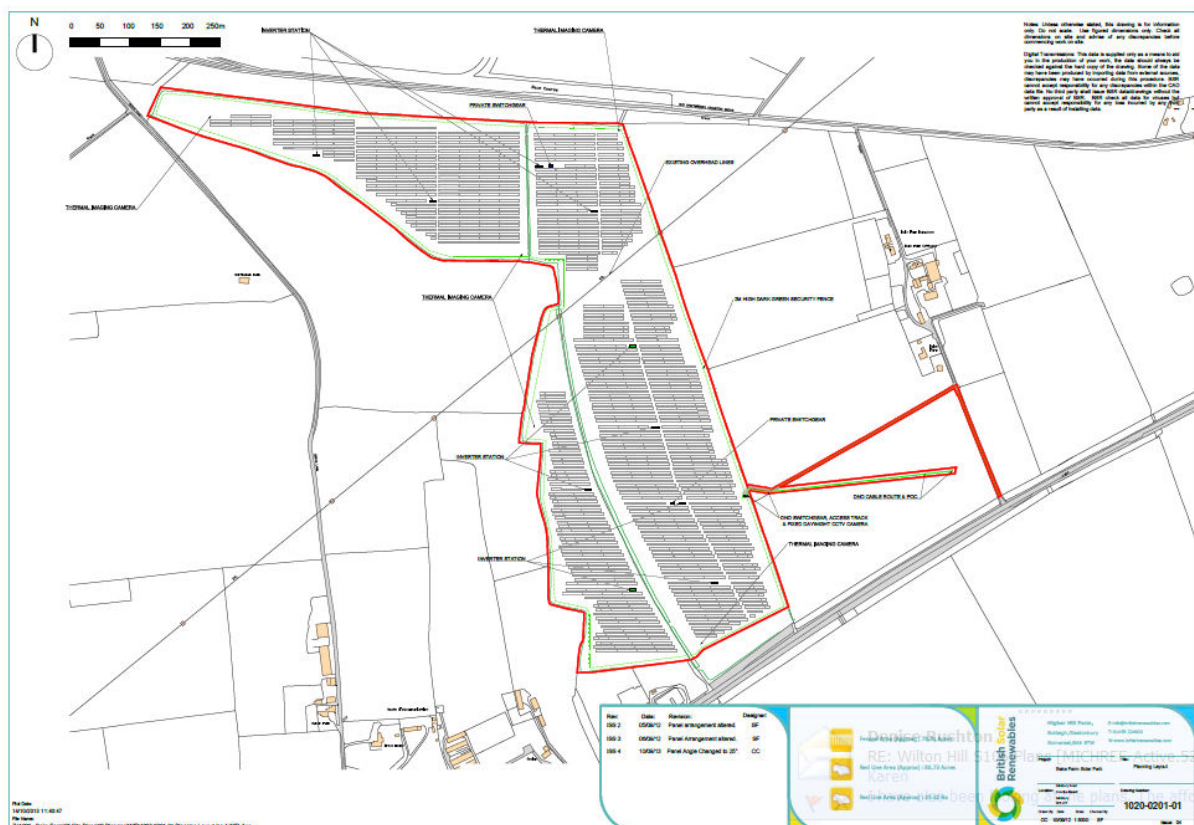
## Site Location Plan



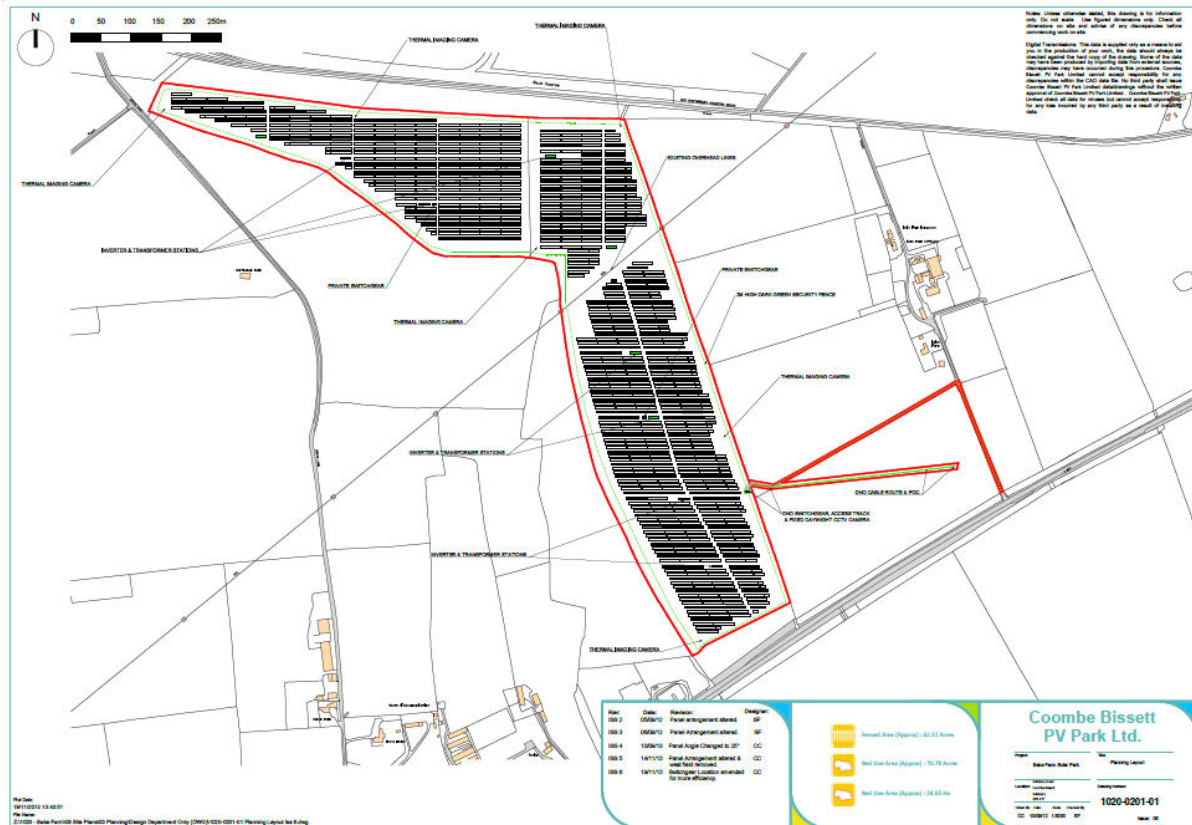
### 4. Planning History / Background

The applicant has gone to extensive lengths to consult interested parties and amend the proposals in light of the comments received from local residents, the AONB partnership and from the Parish Council.

To date there have been three significant iterations to the site layout. The first layout was drawn up for public consultation in October 2013 and is illustrated below



Following a public consultation event, this was then amended for the November 2013 planning submission 13/06336/FUL, so that the entire south western field was omitted and the solar farm reduced in size. This was in order to increase the separation distance between the nearest properties (Old Foundry Cottages) and the proposed solar farm, increasing this from 30 metres to 100 metres. The site layout submitted for planning submission 13/06336/FUL is illustrated below



Following further consultation responses received during the progression of the original planning application 13/06336/FUL, the applicant reconsidered the site layout to determine whether a further revised proposal could be set even further back from Foundry Cottages, and whether panels could be removed from the central southern part of the site which was prominent in some views from some parts of the AONB owing to slope and orientation. Consultation was undertaken with the landowner, planning officer and the planning advisor to the AONB partnership and a revised site layout was drawn up to achieve these objectives. The landscaping proposals were also revised so as to enhance the landscaping strips between the fields to assist in breaking up the massing of the solar farm. The revised layout now under consideration is illustrated below







- *an environmental role by contributing to protecting and enhancing the natural, built and historic environment, improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.*

NPPF para 93 affirms that *'Planning plays a key role in helping shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions . . . and supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development'*. Para. 96 advises that:

*'In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:*

- *comply with adopted Local Plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable . . .'*

Para 97 of the NPPF states:

*'To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources. They should:*

- *have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low carbon sources;*

NPPF para. 98 advises that local planning authorities *'should not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy'*; and that local planning authorities should *'approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable'*.

### **Adopted South Wiltshire Core strategy; Including**

Core Policy 22- Green infrastructure and habitat networks

Policy C19 protection of the 'best and most versatile agricultural land

### **Saved policies – Salisbury District Local Plan; Including**

Policy G1 – General Principles for Development seeks to promote sustainability by fostering an overall pattern of development that reduces the need to travel, promotes the vitality and viability of local communities, and conserves the environment.

Policy G2 – General Criteria for Development sets out detailed criteria which all applications are expected to conform with.

Policy PS8 – Renewable Energy, which states:

*Proposals for renewable energy projects will be permitted provided that;*

*(i) within the New Forest, the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Sites of Special Scientific Interest and other designated areas of nature conservation or archaeological importance, such development will only be permitted where there will be no unacceptable adverse impact on these designated areas;*

*(ii) the development will not result in an unacceptable intrusion on the landscape; and*

*(iii) there is no unacceptable adverse effect on the amenities of local residents from noise, electrical disturbance or other environmental effects arising from the development.*

## **7. Consultations**

### **Parish Council**

The Parish council cannot support this application – the reasons for this are set out in full in Appendix 1.

### **Wiltshire Council Highways**

No overall objections but, note that there have been former proposals on this site and that this latest proposal is similar in terms of the use of the existing farm access served by the A354. It is the construction period that generates a significant number of additional vehicle movements and has the potential to impact on the local highway network. It is therefore recommended that a condition is applied to any permission granted to ensure that the impact of construction vehicles has been considered in detail.

### **Wiltshire Council Ecology**

Support subject to conditions.

### **Wiltshire Council Archaeology**

No objections subject to conditions requiring a written programme of archaeological investigation, prior to commencement.

### **English Heritage:**

Do not wish to raise an objection to this application.

Note, however, that land within proposed site has been assessed as potentially including significant archaeological deposits and we therefore anticipate that the applicants will continue to engage with the WCC Archaeology Service on any further work that may be required.

### **Environment Agency**

Surface Water Management. Whilst the agency accept the principle that volumes of surface water will not be significantly increased by the development, there is the potential for drainage patterns and concentrations to be adversely impacted especially during the construction phase. For this reason, conditions in and important informatives (see condition) are required on any permission granted. Otherwise, no objection to the proposed development.

### **Wessex Water**

No objections

### **CPRE**

Objects to the application

### **Natural England**

No specific objections are raised - Natural England has offered standing advice covering, statutory nature conservation sites, protected Landscapes, soils and land quality, biodiversity enhancements, protected species.

**AONB** / summary of comments (for full comments see Appendix 2):

Having assessed the submitted documentation the AONB is clear that whilst close views could probably be mitigated by the landscape mitigation proposals, longer distance views from within the AONB and toward the AONB cannot. The slope of the ground means that the proposed hedgerows would not adequately screen or break up the extent of the proposed development such that it would not have a significant and harming influence on the views. The AONB does, therefore, maintain its objection to the proposal as submitted.

However, the AONB offers **advice** that if the proposal were limited to fields one and two then the impact on the views would probably be significantly reduced to an extent that the AONB would probably then not be maintaining its objection. Furthermore, the AONB notes that the land holding extends a considerable distance eastwards and suggests that if areas other than fields one and two would be needed to make the scheme viable then fields on that side of the Bake Farm buildings would be less likely to have adverse impacts on the AONB than the fields four and three do.

## 8. Publicity

The application has been advertised including by site notice and neighbour consultations. *To date*, 16 letters have been received comprised of 7 in support and 9 objecting to the proposal. These are summarised as follows;

Support;

- Proposal is good for the environment and public health
- Proposal is consistent with international, national and local policy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.
- Site would be virtually silent in operation with no noise detectable to local residents
- This is a very well considered proposal that will benefit the local community and alternative energy supplies
- Completely agree with the proposal
- Site will not be very visible
- Energy produced by the Sun must be a way forward

Object;

- Site will be visible from many vantage points from within and outside the AONB
- Siting is unsuitable for the development
- Proposal will use prime agricultural land and make it industrial for 25 years
- Impact on neighbours will be too great
- Should not be located within the AONB
- Proposal will defile a landscape of great landscape beauty
- Development not appropriate in the area
- Proposal will be visible from high area above the Chalk Valley
- Will amount to an industrial facility



## 9. Planning Considerations

General background / Need for renewable energy production;

The underlying concern of many of the policies reviewed in this chapter is the need to contain global climate change by reducing the emission of greenhouse gases, particularly carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), that contribute to global warming. A major source of greenhouse gas emissions is the combustion of fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas.

The extensive use of fossil fuels that accompanied the industrialisation of the world's economy has released large volumes of CO<sub>2</sub> back into the atmosphere. The accumulation of greenhouse gases in the upper atmosphere reduces the planet's ability to reflect solar radiation back into space, resulting in a gradual increase in mean global air temperature.

The Government response to this challenge is to reduce fossil fuel use, partly by using energy more efficiently and partly by finding alternatives. The common theme of government policy is the need to develop renewable sources of energy – forms of energy that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, including solar.

Through the Kyoto Protocol, the UK agreed a legally binding target to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases by 12.5% below 1990 levels in the period 2008-2012. In furtherance of this, the UK government has also set a domestic goal to reduce emissions to 20% below 1990 levels by 2020.

The EU Emissions Trading System (EU ETS) forms the cornerstone of UK action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the power sector. Since 2005, the EU ETS has set a cap on emissions from the large industrial sectors such as electricity generation. This reducing cap is expected to deliver reductions from these sectors of 21% on 2005 levels by 2020.

The 2009 Renewable Energy Directive sets a target for the UK to achieve 15% of its total energy consumption, including transport, from renewable sources by 2020. In 2012, 4.1% of total UK energy consumption (including transport), was met from renewable sources.

### Principle of Development;

This application site is in a 'countryside' location because of its positioning outside of existing Housing Policy Boundaries. However, for the following reasons the application is considered to be consistent with policy:

- by producing electricity the development is inherently of benefit to the economy;
- as the chapters within the Environmental statement (ES) confirm, there would be no harm to the environment as a result of the development; and,
- a countryside location is necessary in order to generate electricity on this scale.

For these reasons it is considered that the proposal is not unacceptable in principle a.

## Scale and Design

The applicants Design and Access Statement sets out the design rationale for this proposal. The statement clearly describes the details of the scheme which is included in the following text:

The proposed development would be located within a site with an overall area of approximately 40.2 hectares (99.36 acres), contained within existing field boundaries. The footprint of the development would, however, only account for a small proportion of this area given the limited surface area of the solar panels and their mounting framework, and the small footprint of the associated inverter stations, switchgear, fencing and access track.

The site would therefore remain mostly undeveloped, with grass allowed to grow between the rows of solar panels and between the boundary fence and hedgerows.

The solar panels are inclined to 22 degrees with the lowest part of the panel approximately 0.8 metres above ground and the highest point up to 2.4 metres above ground.

These solar panels are mounted on a framework which would be arranged in rows facing south to maximise sunlight exposure. The framework is mounted on galvanised steel posts secured into the ground by steel piles

Inverter Stations: in order to convert the direct current (DC) electricity generated by the solar panels to alternating current (AC) electricity suitable for distribution into the local electrical distribution network, small inverter stations are positioned at strategic locations throughout the solar farm.

The inverter stations are 11.98 metres long x 2.92 metres wide and between 2.90 and 2.98 metres high. For this scheme seven inverter stations are required. A plan and elevation of the proposed inverter stations is provided in application drawing *Inverter station detail* (drawing number 1020-0207-13). The scale of these buildings is dictated by the electrical equipment within them.

Switch Gear: two independent sets of switchgear are required. A single switchgear building would be required for the Local Electricity Distribution Network Operator (DNO). This would comprise a GRP building measuring 6 metres long x 3 metres wide and 3.277 metres high, set on a concrete base.

One private switchgear cabin would be required for the solar farm operator, with this to contain electrical metering equipment and switchgear. This will measure 5.58 metres long by 3.036 metres wide by 3.11 metres high and would also sit on a concrete base.

The scale of these buildings/cabins is dictated by the electrical equipment within them.

Electrical cabling: this will be required to connect the solar panel modules to the inverter stations, and to connect the inverter stations with the switchgear. This cabling will be underground, but will also run between the fields which make up the proposed site, necessitating a small area of existing hedgerow (approximately 2 metres) to be cleared.

Perimeter fencing would be erected around the site. The fencing would have a height of 2.028 metres and each panel section would be set between posts to achieve a width of 3.020 metres. At the entrance to the site a double gate of the same height with a width of 4 metres will be erected.

The scale of this element of the development has been determined to maximise site security whilst also minimising the potential visual intrusion of the fencing.

CCTV Security cameras: adjacent to the perimeter fencing would be thermal imaging cameras erected on 6 metre high galvanised steel poles at seven locations along the fence line, plus a further fixed day/night CCTV camera would be provided at the site access.

The scale and amount of the CCTV cameras is determined by the requirement to provide full boundary (fence line) coverage for security purposes, and has been kept to the minimum number of cameras required. Due to the infra-red technology employed no lighting is required for the cameras to operate.

Grid connection: the proposed grid connection will comprise an electrical cable running within an underground trench between the proposed DNO switchgear building and an existing electricity line. The cable would be approximately 1.26 metres deep within a trench approximately 0.3 metres wide and would run south from the DNO switchgear building alongside the existing farm access track to an existing electricity line site on wood poles close to the A354/Bake Farm access junction.

Temporary construction elements: a temporary compound, access track and unloading area would be required during construction and decommissioning. This construction access would be built between the existing Bake Farm/A354 access westwards to the central southern boundary of the proposed solar farm, and would be approximately 390 metres long.

An unloading area would be located adjacent to the existing farm access, and a construction compound would be to the west adjoining the central portion of the proposed solar farm.

Solar Panels: the panels would be mounted on a framework which would be arranged in rows facing south to maximise sunlight exposure. Each row would vary in length depending on topography and the requirement to fit within existing field boundaries without overshadowing from the boundary vegetation, with an overall regular geometric layout achieved. There would be a separation of 4-5 metres between each row, also to prevent overshadowing.

Landscaping Issues: Chapter 6 of the Environmental Statement comprises a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment which analyses the proposed development in its context. Key findings of this assessment include that with the proposed mitigation in place the landscape in the study area is able to accommodate this development without causing unacceptable harm to landscape and visual resources.

In addition, the proposal is fully reversible and will result in some beneficial landscape effects due to strengthening of the existing landscape framework and new planting contributing to long-term landscape enhancement at the end of the lifespan of the development.



The proposed mitigation will comprise the following measures;  
The proposed scheme includes inherent mitigation, in that the application site has been located in the least visible part of the farm landholding and existing hedges and field patterns are retained.

In addition Chapter 6 of the ES has concluded that secondary landscape mitigation measures should be provided, and these details are repeated below for ease of reference, see also figure 6.18 at appendix 6.1 to the ES.

#### Mitigating the adverse effect on the visual amenity of users of the Public Right of Way (PRoW) running along the eastern edge

The hedgerow along the west side of the drive which leads up to Bake Farm will be managed at a winter cut height of 2.0 – 2.5 m which will block views of the array without significantly affecting the character route.

A native hedge will be established along the section north of Bake Farm to screen the array (typically mature within 5-7 years after planting). This will establish a similar character to the PRoW as the section south of Bake Farm. The hedge shall comprise two rows of 40-80 cm transplants set 0.5 m apart at 0.5 m centres. Transplant species shall be 30% field maple, 20% hawthorn, 15% beech 10% blackthorn, 10% hazel, 5% guelder rose, 5% wayfaring tree, 3% holly, 2% privet. One honeysuckle is to be planted approximately every 10 m.

A similar composition hedge will be established around the western and northern boundaries of Bake Farm and Bake Farm Bungalows. This hedge will include planting of selected standards and up to 2.5 m high feathered specimens at an average of 1 per 8 linear metres. Species to include field maple, Norway maple, holly and Scots pine.

The DNO substation and access will be located off the track/PRoW and it is proposed to screen the compound with *Prunus lusitanica* which will form an evergreen hedge. While this is not native it will be seen in the context of the adjacent gardens.

The internal hedges within the array will be reinforced with new planting to close any gaps and managed at a slightly greater height which will break up the mass of the array as perceived from oblique views to the east.

#### Mitigating the adverse effect on the visual amenity of residents and visitors of Bake Farm and Bake Farm Bungalows

As described above, a hedge will be established around the western and northern boundaries of Bake Farm and Bake Farm Bungalows and will include planting of selected standards at an average of 1 per 8 linear metres. The internal hedges within the array will be reinforced with new planting to close any gaps and managed at a slightly greater height which will break up the mass of the array as perceived from oblique views to the east.

#### Ensuring that the proposed development remains screened should the tree cover along Old Shaftesbury Drove decline over the operational life of the solar park

A native hedge will be planted along the northern boundary, just outside the security fence. The hedge shall comprise a single row of 40-80 cm transplants set at 0.5 m centres. Transplant species shall be 25% field maple, 10% hawthorn, 30% beech 10% blackthorn, 10% hazel, 5% guelder rose, 5% wayfaring tree, 3% holly, 2% privet. One honeysuckle is to be planted approximately every 10 m.

### Reducing the visual impact of the array to views from the south, particularly from Coombe Bissett

The existing hedgerows along the southwest and southern boundaries of the site will be managed to a height of 4-6 m and the gaps filled with new native planting. A new hedge will be planted along the southern central section of the solar park where there is currently no boundary. The hedge shall comprise three rows of native species set 0.5 m apart at 0.5 m centres. 75% of the plants will be supplied as transplants in the range 40-80 cm high and 20% as feathered plants 1.25 – 1.5 m high and 5% as 2.0 to 2.5 m high feathered stock. The species mix shall be 10% field maple, 40% hazel, 25% hawthorn, 10% blackthorn, 5% guelder rose, 5% wayfaring tree, 3% holly, 2% privet. One honeysuckle is to be planted approximately every 10 m.

The species chosen have the ability to form a tall thick hedge without the need for frequent management. Occasional topping and coppicing may be required to maintain a dense twig structure and prevent the hedge becoming so tall that it casts too much shade on the panels.

The internal hedges within the array will be reinforced with new planting to close any gaps and managed at a slightly greater height to will break up the mass of the array as perceived from oblique views to the east.

### Mitigation of the visual impact to views from the Salisbury Road, residential properties and users of PRow to the east

The proposed tree and hedge planting along the eastern boundary to screen the array from the PRow and Bake Farm Bungalows will reduce the extent of array visible to a significant degree from the short section of the Salisbury Road where it is visible. The internal hedges within the array will also be reinforced with new planting to close any gaps and managed at a slightly greater height.

### Mitigation to effects on landscape character and the AONB

The proposed measures to reduce visual impact will also minimise the effect on the character of the landscape surrounding the site, but the effect is unlikely to be so significant that it alters the baseline assessment.

Clearly the AONB maintains an objection to the proposal. However, the applicants have provided a response to the objections which is set out in full in Appendix 2

The landscape officer has been consulted and no concerns have been raised in this behalf. As such there is no objection to the proposal on landscape grounds.

### Impact on residential amenity;

The layout of the solar panels has also been influenced by the objective of retaining existing boundary vegetation / hedgerows wherever possible, and an adequate separation distance from nearby residential properties.

In terms of residential properties, an adequate separation distance has been maintained. The closest houses are those situated within Coombe Bissett to the south west of the solar farm, on the northern side of the A354 Salisbury Road. These comprise a small group of houses which includes Old Foundry Cottages to the south of the proposed solar farm. These have a separation distance of approximately 526 metres when measured from the red line proposed site boundary to the closest elevation of the nearest house.

Other nearby properties are at Bake Farm (Bake Farm Bungalows, Bake Farm Cottages and Bake Farm) approximately 50 metres to the east of the boundary of the proposed solar farm; and others located along Drove Lane approximately 559 metres to the west.

This separation, when combined with the existing and proposed planting, has been developed to ensure that there would be no significant adverse impact upon residential amenity.

## **Archaeology Issues**

The application was accompanied by an EIA which included a chapter on Cultural Heritage and Archaeology (Chapter 8). I consider that this chapter has provided a proportionate assessment of the archaeological remains which are known to be present within the site and the impact of the proposed development upon them. I also concur with the proposal that the majority of the mitigation will be by design, with a watching brief being undertaken if the potential archaeological features identified cannot be avoided in the cable runs. The watching brief should also consider any landscaping, access routes, compounds and other infrastructure which may have an impact on archaeological remains. I would also expect any mitigation options to take into consideration the ground conditions when the works are carried out.

National Planning Policy Framework policy 128 states that '*Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.*' This site does have the potential to contain heritage assets and I consider that the chapter submitted with this application, along with the geophysical survey, fulfils this requirement. I do not consider that further field evaluation is necessary at this stage, for the reasons outlined in the chapter.

The NPPF also says: *141. Local planning authorities should make information about the significance of the historic environment gathered as part of plan-making or development management publicly accessible. They should also require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.'*

In order to ensure that the mitigation is undertaken, I would recommend that an archaeological condition is applied to any permission.

Therefore in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and the earlier PPS5 (2010) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990) the following recommendations are made:



## **Ecology Issues**

The applicants state “The application site comprises arable agricultural land which has low ecological value due to this use. Once the solar farm is constructed a wildflower seed mix can be sewn around the field margins between the perimeter fence and the hedgerow (where sheep would not graze) providing a species rich diverse wildflower meadow, which would have a positive overall net biodiversity effect. Likewise existing hedgerows and trees on the site would be maintained and strengthened for landscape reasons and a less rich grass seed mix would be used within the site boundary where sheep grazing would take place. Overall, the proposals would give rise to an overall net benefit to biodiversity and GI meaning that the scheme is compliant with Core Policy 22”.

The council’s ecology officer has advised that the ecological implications of the revised scheme are broadly similar to the previous one, although the planting of additional hedgerows on the north and south boundaries will be of benefit ecologically. Previous comments received in relation to hedgerows, bats, reptiles, badgers and brown hares which were not entirely favourable still stand and the ecological assessment is considered to underplay the risks to specialist farmland birds – the species which are likely to be most significantly affected by this scheme. However the ecology officer considers that the measures which can be secured by condition under the Landscape Environmental Management Plan (LEMP) could potentially lead to an overall neutral impact from the scheme. It is important that the perimeter fence is located at least 4-5m from the hedgerows (as stated in the EIA) to allow sufficient area for species rich grassland to establish to support birds and other species.

As set out at 7 above, the councils ecology officer does not object to the proposal. As such the combination of the measures set out in the EIA and the LEMP are considered to render the application acceptable from an ecology point of view.

## **Land quality /agricultural land grade issues**

Policy C19 seeks to protect the ‘best and most versatile agricultural land’ from development, including land graded 1, 2 and 3a under the Agricultural Land Classification, and seeks to direct development where possible to sites under a lower grade. As noted above, the site is under Grade 3 however, the following factors should be borne in mind:

- the proposed development would enable some grazing to continue;
- the installed array is temporary and its effects are reversible;
- the majority of agricultural land in Wiltshire is under Grade 3 of the Agricultural Land Classification, meaning that in local terms it is not of special value;
- where Grade 4 land exists in Wiltshire it is typically in the base of river valleys. These are not favourable locations for solar energy as they are typically at risk of flooding and of greater ecological value, and rarely offer large expansive areas that are practicable for large solar farms; and,
- where Grade 5 land exists in Wiltshire it tends to relate to the steep scarp slopes of the county’s characteristic downland. These are not favourable locations for solar development because they are physically difficult to develop and more visually prominent. Within South Wiltshire the majority of Grade 5 agricultural land is within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB.

Overall, this application is consistent with relevant SDLP provisions relating to the natural environment.

### **Highways / Access issues**

Access to the Bake Farm solar farm is required primarily for the purposes of construction and decommissioning, when the majority of additional vehicle movements would arise. Although access would also be required during the operational stage, this would be limited to relatively few, infrequent movements for maintenance and cleaning purposes.

#### Transport movements

A maximum of up to 120 construction workers are anticipated to be required on site at any one time. During construction, the workforce will travel to and from the site on a daily basis. The use of mini-buses, public transport (where possible) and car sharing will be encouraged and planned to reduce the number of vehicular movements. Parking for site workers will be provided on site.

Approximately 278 HGVs are anticipated to deliver photovoltaic/associated equipment to the site and to remove waste arising over the 18 week period, resulting in an estimated peak of up to 4 vehicle deliveries per day. The majority of routing is anticipated to have origin/destination trips to/from the north and associated trunk road network (i.e. A354).

#### Junction visibility

The existing access onto the A354 has been considered in mind of the above traffic movements and Paul Basham Associates, Transport Planning and Engineering Consultants have undertaken an on-site assessment of the existing arrangements in establishing their appropriateness in accommodating these movements.

The council's highways officers having considered the application in detail have raised no objections to the proposal on highway safety grounds. Therefore, subject to conditions requested by the highways officer, and to the implementation of the measures set out in the Transport Assessment and the EIA, there are no objections to the scheme from a highways transportation point of view.

**In answer to the third party comments received:** (also refer Appendix 3)

#### *Community Benefit*

Whilst not a material consideration for the application as neither the principle of the undertaking nor the details contained within it have been proposed in order to directly mitigate/remedy a specific planning objection to this proposal, and as such, the requirement for this community benefit is not considered to be compliant with the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010 (as amended) and cannot be required under planning law, the applicants have provided an update with respect to the Community Benefit offer from British Solar Renewables (BSR) to Coombe Bissett PC. This will be in the form of a financial contribution of £1,000 per installed Mega Watt. The proposed installed capacity of the solar farm is 14.3MW, so that would equate to £14,300 per annum for 20 years; equivalent in total to £286,000.

At the time of producing this report officers are aware that no legal agreement is in place to secure the above, but, it is clear that the applicant fully intends to meet these commitments subject to the parish council's response to the offer. In any event, whilst officers have encouraged such benefits through negotiations, this community benefit is a matter between the PC and the developers. As such for the reasons set out above there is no justification for the council to enter into a section 106 agreement in this behalf.

## **10. Conclusion**

At international, European and national levels, the recognition of the need to bring forward new renewable energy generation capacity is clear. Solar energy is acknowledged to be a technically mature, viable and deliverable form of renewable generation capacity. National policy thus supports renewable energy development in the form of solar farms, provided that the local environmental, economic and social effects can be addressed satisfactorily.

The proposed development is compliant with sustainability policy principles because the development is inherently sustainable because it promotes renewable energy in a manner that will give rise to direct environmental benefits, as well as direct and indirect social and economic benefits.

Whilst there are however aspects of this proposal that require further improvement these can be satisfactorily covered by conditions in the usual way - for example in regard to ecology.

On balance the proposal is considered to be well designed with an appropriate level of mitigation that should ensure the overall impact is not unacceptably detrimental. The amended scheme illustrates a layout and scale that will not unreasonably harm residential amenity of the properties nearest the site and the surrounding area.

The proposed improvements to layout and the hedge planting between panels and landscaping generally will assist in establishing a characteristic that it is considered will not appear excessive in terms of overall massing. This in turn will significantly improve the visual appearance of the scheme when viewed from the wider area and particularly the surrounding countryside adjacent to the AONB.

The detail of this latest evolved proposal, including the full EIA, the overall aims and objectives of the relevant planning policy, the mitigation proposed and the community benefit that would arise from the scheme, is considered sufficient to tip the balance in favour of the proposal in this case. The proposal is therefore considered to be acceptable from a Town & Country Planning point of view.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the application is delegated to the Area Planning Manager (South) to **APPROVE with the conditions set out below:**

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

**REASON:** To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.



2. No development shall commence on site (including any works of demolition), until a Construction Method Statement, which shall include the following:

- the parking of vehicles of site operatives and visitors;
- loading and unloading of plant and materials;
- storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development;
- the erection and maintenance of security hoarding including decorative displays and facilities for public viewing, where appropriate;
- wheel washing facilities;
- measures to control the emission of dust and dirt during construction;
- a scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from demolition and construction works;
- and measures for the protection of the natural environment.
- Hours of construction, including deliveries;

has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the construction period. The development shall not be carried out otherwise than in accordance with the approved construction method statement without the prior written permission of the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To minimise detrimental effects to the neighbouring amenities, the amenities of the area in general, detriment to the natural environment through the risks of pollution and dangers to highway safety, during the construction phase.

3. No development shall commence within the area indicated (proposed development site) until:

- A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and
- The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.

**Further Recommendations:** The work should be conducted by a professionally recognised archaeological contractor in accordance with a written scheme of investigation agreed by this office and there may therefore be a financial implication for the applicant. However, if the mitigation by design can be agreed in advance of construction and avoids any significant impact, then those costs may be avoided.

4. No development shall commence until a scheme to limit surface water flows from the development during the construction and operational phases has been submitted to, and agreed in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented and maintained in accordance with the details of the approved scheme.

REASON: To ensure that flood risk is not increased.

5. Before construction works commence, a Construction Environment Management Plan will be submitted for Local planning Authority approval which will include but not be limited to providing details of the following:

- A plan showing the position of all features which will be protected during the construction phase
- Measures to avoid spills of oils and other chemicals
- Measures to avoid construction waste
- Measures to protect trees and hedgerows during construction
- Procedures to avoid harm and disturbance to nesting birds
- Procedures to avoid harm and disturbance to badgers
- Procedures to avoid harm to reptiles where risks are considered to be moderate / high

REASON: To prevent pollution and harm during construction.

6. Before construction works commence a Landscape and Ecology Management Plan will be submitted to the Local Planning Authority for approval which will cover the first ten years after construction and then be reviewed and rolled forward until the end of the scheme. As a minimum, this will set out:

- A plan showing current baseline condition of every 100m length of hedge in terms of height, width and position of gaps
- Objectives of grassland, hedgerow and tree management
- Details of proposed hedgerow and tree planting and grassland seeding
- Regime of grassland, hedgerow and tree management to meet objectives
- Details of design and locations of 10 bat boxes and 10 bird boxes
- Safeguards that will be taken to avoid soil erosion and compaction
- 

The works will be undertaken in accordance with the approved Landscape and Ecology Management Plan, and the planning layout drawing 1020-0201-01 Rev ISS 6

REASON: In the interest of landscape ecology

7. A survey of habitat condition measured against the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan will be undertaken by a professional ecologist during the period June to August and submitted for Local Planning Authority approval in the first, third and fifth years after the site first becomes operational. Where monitoring identifies non-compliance, remedial measures will be identified, implemented and reported through a subsequent agreed procedure.

REASON: In the interest of landscape ecology

8. Removal of hedgerows and ground preparation will be undertaken during the period 1<sup>st</sup> September to 28<sup>th</sup> February. If done outside this period, any such works will be preceded by a survey by a professional ecologist and only undertaken in accordance with the ecologist's written advice.

REASON: In the interest of landscape ecology

9. Other than during the construction phase, and in the event of an emergency, the application site shall remain unlit at all times.

REASON: In the interest of the amenity of the surrounding area and the wider countryside

10. All soft landscaping comprised in the approved details of landscaping shall be carried out in the first planting and seeding season following the first occupation of the building(s) or the completion of the development whichever is the sooner; All shrubs, trees and hedge planting shall be maintained free from weeds and shall be protected from damage by vermin and stock. Any trees or plants which, within a period of five years, die, are removed, or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless otherwise agreed in writing by the local planning authority. All hard landscaping shall also be carried out in accordance with the approved details prior to the occupation of any part of the development or in accordance with a programme to be agreed in writing with the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: To ensure a satisfactory landscaped setting for the development and the protection of existing important landscape features.

11. The development hereby approved shall be carried out in accordance the following list of documents and plan

Planning Design and Access Statement dated July 2014, received 16/07/14

Flood Risk Assessment dated October 2013, received 16/07/14

Environmental Impact Assessment Documents;

Bake Farm solar (photovoltaic) farm Environmental Statement: Non-Technical Summary July 2014, received 11/07/14

Bake Farm solar (photovoltaic) farm Environmental Statement Volume One: Main Statement July 2014 – Chapters 1 to 8 and appendices, Received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0200-05 Location Plan, dated 02/10/13, received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0201-20 Proposed compound Layout, dated 11/07/14, received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0201-01 Planning Layout, dated 19/06/14, received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0208-71 SSE 33KV DNO Switchgear, Elevations and layout, dated 05/06/14 received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0208-50 Private 5 Panel Switchgear, dated 10/06/14, received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0208-10 SEE DNO Access Road Section, dated 11/07/14, received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0207-13 Inverter Station Detail Gamesa, dated 19/06/14, received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0206-09 System 3.0 Mounting detail, dated 05/06/14, and received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0205-01 Security Fencing Detail – 22 Degrees Panel Angle, dated 05/06/14, received 11/07/14

Plan ref No: 1020-0204-00 Site CCTV Detail, dated 05/06/14, received 11/07/14

REASON: In the interest of clarity as to the approved documents details and plans

## **INFORMATIVE**

In seeking to discharge any surface water drainage condition, the following should be considered:

- In the absence of any specific guidance on how to assess run-off from solar developments, a range of methods and scenarios to calculate run-off rates (and thus, attenuation volumes) should be investigated. The introduction of impermeable areas within the development should be minimized wherever possible. All access tracks should be permeable.
- Attenuation volumes should be agreed based on the above investigation and take into account site specific circumstances.
- Any drainage scheme should be supported by percolation tests on site.
- Management of the land, including grass seeding and planting (in line with proposals set out in the FRA) should be considered and confirmed.
- Measures to offer betterment on existing surface water rates and volumes to reduce flood risk elsewhere should be considered given the scale of the development.

## **Pollution Prevention during Construction**

### **INFORMATIVE**

Safeguards should be implemented during the construction phase to minimise the risks of pollution from the development. Such safeguards should cover:

- the use of plant and machinery
- oils/chemicals and materials
- the use and routing of heavy plant and vehicles
- the location and form of work and storage areas and compounds
- the control and removal of spoil and wastes

All works must be undertaken in accordance with the Environment Agency's Pollution Prevention Guidelines which can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/pollution-prevention-guidance-ppg>

In the event of a pollution incident, the site operator must contact the Environment Agency immediately by calling 0800 80 70 60.

## **Access Tracks Construction**

## **INFORMATIVE**

Use of road planings (tarmac scalpings) for track construction requires a Use of Waste in Construction exemption (U1) under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010. It allows the use of suitable wastes for small scale construction but does not allow treatment of wastes to be carried out unless covered by a different exemption. For more guidance including permitted types of waste and tonnage please visit:

<https://www.gov.uk/waste-exemptions-using-waste>

## **INFORMATIVE**

The developer must note that there is an application to record a right of way immediately adjacent to the western boundary; this line must not be encroached upon.

For further information see

[http://php.wiltshire.gov.uk/row/getrow.php?reference\\_number=2004/44](http://php.wiltshire.gov.uk/row/getrow.php?reference_number=2004/44). The site would be accessed along footpath BRIT14; this appears to be well surfaced so it should not be an issue.

## Appendix 1 – Coombe Bissett Parish Council



# COOMBE BISSETT PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk

Applegarth  
Shutts Lane  
Coombe Bissett  
Salisbury  
Wiltshire  
SP5 4LU

Telephone: 01722 718850  
E-mail: [parishclerk@coombebissett.com](mailto:parishclerk@coombebissett.com)

31 October 2013

Victoria Prescott,  
Planning Project Manager  
British Solar Renewables  
Higher Hill Farm  
Butleigh  
Glastonbury  
Somerset  
BA6 8TW

Dear Ms Prescott,

Thank you for your photo montages and the information you have sent Councillor Chelu which has been shared with Parish Council members. With regard to your recent proposal to install a Solar Farm on the Bake Farm site, on behalf of Coombe Bissett Parish Council I wish to inform you of our concerns and uncertainties.

The impact of the construction on Foundry Cottages which is in the parish of Coombe Bissett, immediately adjacent to the site is immense. There will be a loss of amenity, view and probably value.

There will be visual intrusion in the landscape of the areas from Coombe Bissett Village Hall and the Nature Reserve, in particular and also from walkers on the Old Blandford Road. Both these panoramic views are observed frequently and regularly. The Parish Council may support a modified proposal which would lessen the visual intrusion. Please refer to annotated plan and photograph: areas A and B are acceptable but areas C, (the area running uphill from close to Foundry Cottages), D and E are contentious, as they can be seen the most from various vantage points.

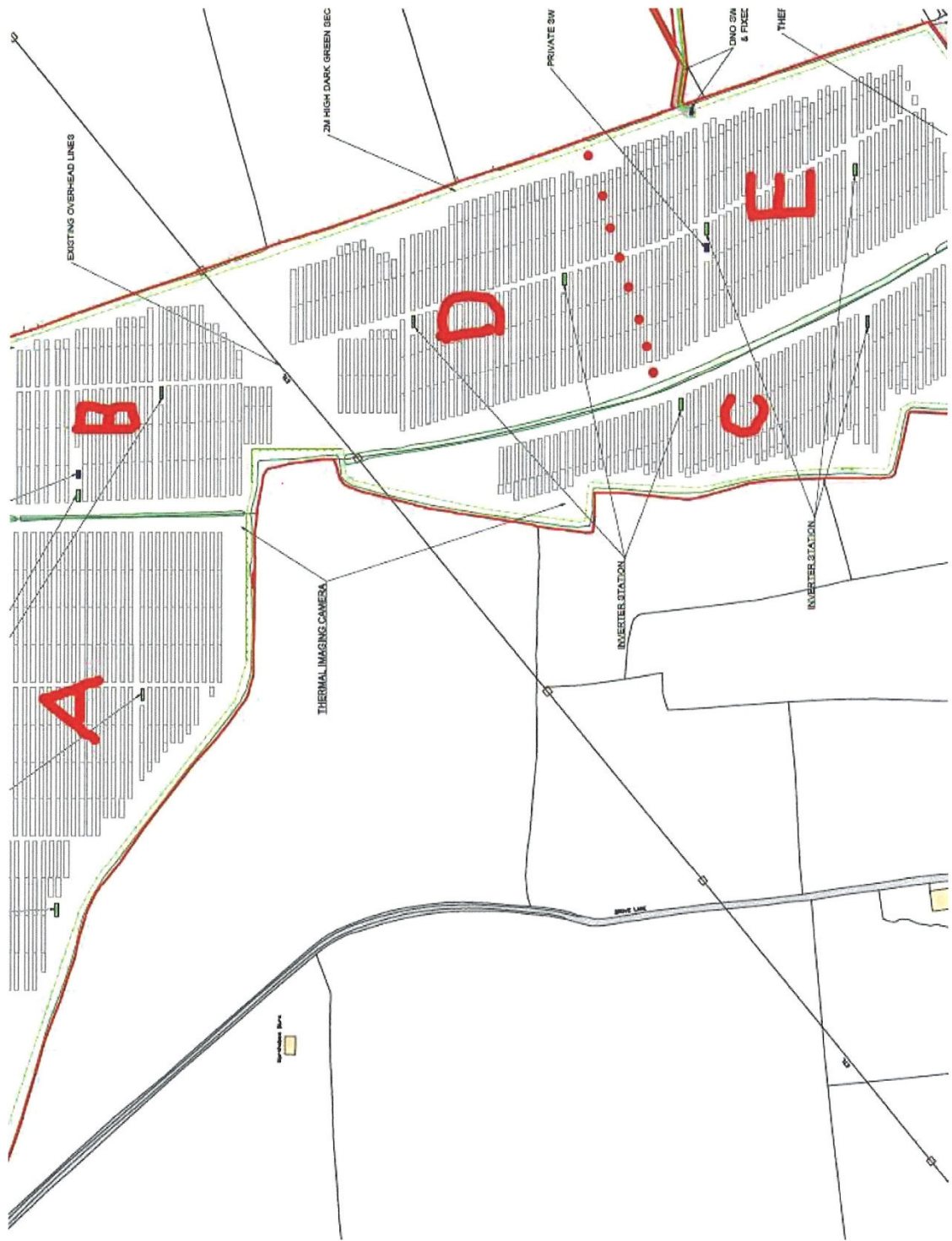
From information the Parish Council has been given, the scheme will require an 11/33kv connection together with associated metering/protection to cater for a 12 MW load. The installation of this equipment plus at least 8 (4m x 4m) substations and 50000 panel units will require a major construction project to be undertaken and will involve a large number of vehicles having daily access to the site leading off the A354. Clarification also needs to be given on a detailed site specification plan indicating all the onsite procedures for both normal working and emergencies. The Council would also would ask if British

Solar Renewables are to build this installation and when completed who will operate it and maintain it, together with on site security over the 25 year period.

This proposal is too big for the setting. It is on the edge of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and close to Salisbury, which is after all a medieval, rural city.

Yours sincerely,

Deborah James (Mrs.)



## Appendix 2 – AONB Comments

Thank you for consulting the AONB on this application. The CD containing the application data arrived from the applicants on the 26<sup>th</sup> August.

The Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB has been established under the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act to conserve and enhance the outstanding natural beauty of this area which straddles three County, one Unitary and five District councils. It is clear from the Act, subsequent government sponsored reports, and the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 that natural beauty includes wildlife, scientific, and cultural heritage. It is also recognised that in relation to their landscape characteristics and quality, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are equally important aspects of the nation's heritage and environmental capital. The AONB Management Plan is a statutory document that is approved by the Secretary of State and is adopted by the constituent councils. The AONB and its Management Plan are material considerations in planning.

The National Planning Policy Framework states (paragraph 109) that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Furthermore it should be recognised that the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' does not automatically apply within AONBs, as confirmed by paragraph 14 footnote 9, due to other policies relating to AONBs elsewhere within the Framework. It also states (paragraph 115) that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs, which have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in these areas.

The site is high on the valley side and adjoins the Ebbles Chalk River Valley landscape character area. Greater details of the landscape, buildings and settlement characteristics can be found in the [Landscape Character Assessment 2003](#). That document should be available in your office, and it can be viewed in [FULL](#) on our web site [www.ccwwdaonb.org.uk](http://www.ccwwdaonb.org.uk) It is within the Ebbles Broad Chalk River Valley Slopes Landscape Character Area of the Salisbury District Landscape Character Assessment 2008.

The AONB policy is sympathetic towards renewable energy generation so long as it is appropriate to the location and siting, of a nature and scale that integrates with the landscape character, is neither visually intrusive to the AONB or its setting, nor impairs significant views to or from it, and is not harmful to wildlife.

I note that the revised application relocates the southern part of the earlier application to the eastern side, between the northern section of the original application and the buildings at Bake Farm. The area covered is in the order of 40.2 hectares with the purpose of producing 14.3 mega watts of electricity. This is all on green field land and this is clearly a change of use to renewable energy generation. The proposal is simply one for a power station in the countryside as the scale of the proposal is significantly more than would serve the needs of the farmstead. The application should, therefore, be assessed as a major change of use to a rural power generation facility.

I note that the planning documents in and arising from the ES do not relate to the current version of the emerging Wiltshire Core Strategy. Nevertheless it is clear that Core Policy 42 requires the applicants to demonstrate how a proposal takes into

account interests such as the AONB. It is far from obvious that the characteristics of the AONB have been taken into account. Furthermore, there is no reference to the policies that indicate proposals should demonstrate how they have taken account of the AONB Management Plan. Indeed, I have not found any reference to the AONB Management Plan as being a material consideration in any of the planning elements in the submitted material.

I note that the current land use is arable agriculture and the only reference I have been able to find to the agricultural land classification is that it is Grade 3. As I am confident you will appreciate, it could mean that as arable land that could be Grade 3A which means that it would fall into the category of best and most versatile land. The implications of that are that the land would be more appropriately kept in agricultural and arable use.

The information provided suggests there will be a number of buildings on the site and that some of them will be grouped together while others will be scattered across it. They are likely to range in height from 2.9 to 3.28 metres. They will not, therefore, be insignificant. I note there is an undertaking to colour them green to aid integration into the scene. Similarly there is an undertaking that the security fencing, which would be just over 2 metres high, would also be of a green wire mesh construction. The AONB is, however, **concerned** that the security cameras would be on 6 metre high poles of galvanised steel. If a scheme is to progress then these poles should also be coloured green to aid integration into the scene. The PV panel height is indicated to be 2.4 metres, again, on galvanised posts which would be driven 1 – 2 metres into the ground.

The amended site lies approximately between 95 and 120 AOD. There is, therefore, a degree of slope across the site. The western end adjoins the AONB boundary. The northern site boundary is close to the Old Drove with the racecourse further to the north. Essentially the development is on an area of land that is a continuation eastwards of the landscape of the AONB. There are no critical or defining factors that indicate the character or the quality of the landscape has fundamentally changed either side of the AONB boundary. A viewer would not be able to distinguish a sharp and fundamental change in the landscape character as it progresses from the west in the direction of Salisbury.

The location of field four, the field that adjoins the AONB, and the upper parts of field three are particularly obvious in views from a number of locations to the south and south west in the AONB. The proposed development would significantly change the character of the area and harm views from the AONB of the ridge, both within and outside of the AONB boundary. As those views are of a development facing southward it means that the development would be fully illuminated for most of the daytime and hence obvious in the scene. In addition issues of glint and glare do need to be taken into consideration along with the colour of the panels and supporting arrangements.

The submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment misquotes the size of the AONB and refers to the 2009 - 2014 AONB Management Plan rather than the recently adopted 2014 – 2019 AONB Management Plan. Nevertheless the policies and objectives in relation to renewable energy are substantially the same. Of

particular relevance to this application is the need for local planning authorities to have regard for the landscape and visual impact of development adjacent to or in close proximity of the AONB's boundary.

From consideration of a variety of viewpoints and investigation of the site the LVIA concludes that there are a number of mitigation operations that are necessary to enable the proposed scheme to be acceptable. Whilst welcoming proposals to improve the scheme of development the AONB is of the opinion that the landscape and visual impacts of the proposed development have been under-estimated. In particular the visibility and harm to the views within the AONB associated particularly with fields four and three of the development. The topography plan figure 6.2 clearly demonstrates the higher and hence more exposed parts of the proposal being on the western side.

Whilst the viewpoint photographs are interesting there does not appear to be any information on the camera used or the lens, so that photographs should be used as aide memoire following from a site visit rather than as presentation illustrations to a planning authority. The photographs do, nevertheless, demonstrate that longer distance views are probably more important than the close up ones where screening behind existing or reinforced hedges could be achieved. The ridgeline nature of the development, as perceived from a number of positions, is also shown in the viewpoint photographs.

The photo-montages are helpful in some respects, nevertheless the confusion between the viewpoint numbers of the viewpoints plan, the viewpoint photographs, and the viewpoint photo-montages is confusing. For example the photo-montage indicated as viewpoint 17 appears to be 19 in other respects and similarly photo-montage 16 is 18 in other respects. Nevertheless, the photomontages of these viewpoints and others show the very considerable horizontal effect of the proposed development spread across a substantial part of the view. Furthermore, such a change brought about by the development would not change seasonally in the way that seasonal use of fields changes. The photo-montages also demonstrate that whilst the proposed mitigation planting might have benefits for close views those from a distance are not significantly ameliorated.

There seems to be some confusion again in viewpoint 4 and viewpoint 5 because photo-montage 5 helpfully shows the immediate impact of the proposed development with the security fencing. The benefit of the green fence and the green post and green ends to the buildings contrasts with the shiny frames and shiny supports of the PV panels. The white barge board to the building shows how incongruous white is in the landscape and the white barge board and the edges and posts of the panels should also be treated with a shade of green to aid integration if the proposal is to be considered for approval.

The AONB notes that there is no cumulative assessment of this development, even though the guidance on landscape and visual impact assessment indicates that this should cover all forms of development and not just development of a similar character.

The construction time scale in paragraph 3.26 fails to include the landscape work. Clearly this is particularly important and, if the scheme is to go ahead, the AONB **strongly recommends** that the landscape work should be implemented before any other development progresses.



The importance of the hedgerow trees and hedges is emphasised in the LVIA. These features should be protected by root protection zones as set out in BS5837 (2012) if they are to be adequately protected.

The AONB notes that a flood risk assessment has been carried out but that it did not involve 'site soil investigations'. It does not appear to consider the focusing of rain water runoff from the panels and the consequent need for swales. These features occur in other PV proposals that the AONB has been invited to comment upon. Furthermore such features should be considered in the LVIA and landscape mitigation proposals.

Having assessed the submitted documentation the AONB is clear that whilst close views could probably be mitigated by the landscape mitigation proposals, longer distance views from within the AONB and toward the AONB cannot. The slope of the ground means that the proposed hedgerows would not adequately screen or break up the extent of the propose development such that it would not have a significant and harming influence on the views. The AONB does, therefore, maintain its **objection** to the proposal as submitted.

However, the AONB offers the **advice** that if the proposal were limited to fields one and two then the impact on the views would probably be significantly reduced to an extent that the AONB would probably then not be maintaining its objection. Furthermore, the AONB notes that the land holding extends a considerable distance eastwards and suggests that if areas other than fields one and two would be needed

to make the scheme viable then fields on that side of the Bake Farm buildings would be less likely to have adverse impacts on the AONB than the fields four and three do.

I hope these comments are helpful to you and I would, of course, be happy to comment on any further information you may receive.

Yours sincerely

RICHARD BURDEN

Richard Burden BSc DipCons MSc FLI PPLI

Landscape and Planning Advisor (part-time Monday to

Wednesday) For and on behalf of the CCWWD AONB Partnership

[richardburden@cranbornechase.org.uk](mailto:richardburden@cranbornechase.org.uk)

## Appendix 3 - Applicants additional information Technical response to comments received: AONB

2658/Bake Farm

Technical response to AONB objection

---

**TECHNICAL RESPONSE TO PLANNING CONSULTATION COMMENT BY Mr R Burden (for and on behalf of the CCWWD AONB Partnership), 10th September 2014.**

**Ref:14/06864/FUL - *The erection of solar photovoltaic panels and associated works and infrastructure, including switchgear, inverter stations, access tracks, security fencing, security cameras, grid connection, together with temporary construction access, compound and unloading area Land to the west of Bake Farm Buildings Salisbury Road Coombe Bissett Salisbury SP5 4JT***

We write in response to comments received on the above application from Mr R Burden for and on behalf of the CCWWD AONB Partnership, dated 10<sup>th</sup> September 2014. A number of the comments refer to matters already addressed within the submitted ES and other planning documents. This response therefore focusses on remaining matters of detail and on interpretation of the submitted information.

1. Mr Burden notes the absence of reference in the submitted information to Core Policy 42, which states in reference to AONB's:

*"Proposals for standalone renewable energy schemes will be supported subject to satisfactory resolution of all site specific constraints. In particular, proposals will need to demonstrate how impacts on the following factors have been satisfactorily assessed and taken into account..."*

2. There is no difference of interpretation between the applicant and Mr Burden on the role and purpose of the AONB, which is to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the designated Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs area. The AONB has been thoroughly considered in the preparation of this application in terms of both Development Plan policy and as a material consideration.
3. This application has, moreover, been informed by and prepared to respond to comments from the CCWWD AONB Partnership on a previous planning application for ground mounted solar at Bake Farm. Whilst not specifically referencing the above policy, therefore, the new application provides a systematic and substantial design response to the issues raised by the AONB in relation to the previous application.

- 
4. The proposed solar park occupies the flatter land on the crest of the hill and avoids the more prominent lower slopes. This location minimises the visual impact to people viewing it from the higher ground on the opposite side of the valley to the south.
  5. Large ground mounted solar arrays are now relatively familiar features in the landscape and it is possible to have a well-informed understanding of their visual impact and how they affect landscape character. Based on this experience, we reiterate the point made in the ES that, viewed from medium to long distance from the south (typically over 1 km), solar arrays appear as a block of colour filling a field rather than as an alien assemblage of individual structures. This is because the panels overlap and the light absorbing nature of glass has a recessive blurring effect. Neither the detail nor the industrial nature of an array is apparent at these distances and, as such, solar arrays are not significantly out of character with the patchwork of fields of an arable landscape. To illustrate this point we attach **Appendix 1** which provides a series of photographs of four completed solar park.
  6. The most significant sensitive views are from a fairly limited set of locations in the Coombe Bissett area. These locations are either lower than or at a similar elevation to the application site, which means that the extent of the visible arrays is compressed into a narrow line. As a result the proposed mitigation will be more effective than it would were the area of exposed views to be more open and lower. Typically people's view of the array will be at distances greater than 1.3 km and, at such distances, the arrays will appear as a recessive block of colour as demonstrated in Appendix 1. We recommend that those officers who wish to verify the predicted level of visual impact and the effect on landscape character visit the solar parks identified in Appendix 1.
  7. A change in colouration of the fields as perceived from the Coombe Bissett area will not have a significant effect on the visual amenity and enjoyment of the countryside of people looking out of the AONB either from their dwelling, the community facilities, nature reserve or public footpaths.
  8. Mr Burden refers to the visual impact of the buildings to house the inverters. The majority of the housing unit will be screened by the panels within which it sits; only the upper metre of the inverter will be visible. This extent of visibility would be prominent on flat sites where the inverter rises above the panels, but on a gently sloping site such as this, the higher section of the housing will be seen against a backdrop of panels and, at Bake Farm, against the backdrop of trees on the skyline.

---

At the typical viewing distances of over 1.3 km, the 1 metre area of building rising above the row will be difficult to discern. The photographs of operational solar parks in Appendix 1 illustrate this point. In the Westover example they are just visible as white units within the extent of the panels, but they are, in fact, more visible than at the proposed development because of the elevated viewpoint and the use of white inverters. It is accepted that units and camera columns painted a dull green colour will be more recessive, and the applicant is happy to agree to an appropriate planning condition to this effect.

9. Mr Burden queries the focal length of the camera and asserts that photographs should be used as an aide memoire following from a site visit rather than as presentation illustrations to a planning authority. This is incorrect. Whilst such images are no substitute for visiting the viewpoint locations, the photographs are made in accordance with industry guidance<sup>1</sup> and, as such, are intended to inform consideration of a planning application. The accuracy of presentation relates to the digital cropping and zooming process and not focal length. To illustrate this detail, **Appendix 2** demonstrates that it is the degree to which the digital image is enlarged, cropped and printed that determines whether it is similar to the human eye.
10. Mr Burden refers to glint and glare. To experience reflections the viewer has to be at the same level as or higher than the panels, which run between 87 m AOD and 106 m AOD. Because the angle of reflection is the same as the angle of incidence, light cannot be reflected downwards; it only reflects back up off the panel or frame. Even a slight angle of reflection will push the reflected light far higher than a viewer looking towards the site at over 1.3 km distance on the far side of the valley. People within the landscape to the south of the panels do not experience reflection because the sun is high in the sky and the reflection is back into the sky. Reflections are only experienced by people to the west and east of the array when the angle of sun is very low, early in the morning and early in the evening. Such reflections can only be experienced for around 20 minutes and only on clear sunny mornings and evenings. The intensity of the light also diminishes over distance as it becomes diffused by vapour and particulate matter in the air. In view of the above, viewers of the site within the AONB will not experience light reflected from the panels.

---

<sup>1</sup> Landscape Institute Advice Note 01/11



11. Mr Burden observes that:

*“There are no critical or defining factors that indicate the character or the quality of the landscape has fundamentally changed either side of the AONB boundary”.*

The ES identifies that the site is located in the Special Landscape Area which forms the setting of the AONB along the edges. As such, the proximity of the site to the AONB is a material planning consideration that has been thoroughly investigated. The site is not, however, within the AONB (possibly due to the effect of a high voltage transmission line that tracks across the slope, which creates a fundamental difference in character) and any planning application must be considered against the relevant policy framework and the established AONB boundary. Accordingly, the scheme has been designed to avoid impacts on the setting of the AONB, and the ES has provided evidence that no changes that would compromise the setting of the AONB will occur. As such, the application scheme represents a satisfactory resolution of all site specific constraints specific to the setting of the AONB.

12. Mr Burden states that:

*“The location of field four, the field that adjoins the AONB, and the upper parts of field three are particularly obvious in views from a number of locations to the south and south west in the AONB. The proposed development would significantly change the character of the area and harm views from the AONB of the ridge, both within and outside of the AONB boundary. As those views are of a development facing southward it means that the development would be fully illuminated for most of the daytime and hence obvious in the scene.*

It is evident that Field 4 slopes very gently south towards the AONB, with the main fall to the east. As a result the field appears only as a thin sliver in the view, intermittently obscured by a substantial hedge along the southern boundary. In our opinion panels within this field will not be particularly prominent in the views from the AONB. We agree that the panels in lower part of Field 3 will be the most visible but primarily from viewpoints either at a similar elevation to the solar park or higher, typically above 100 m AOD. This limits visibility to views from the nature reserve above Coombe Bisset and Old Blandford Road.

We refer once again to Appendix 1 which demonstrates that at these distances (over 2 km) the solar park will appear as a dull blue/grey colouration in the landscape. The panels do not appear ‘illuminated’ but have a dullness due to their light absorbing properties and the effect of this in the landscape can only be



appreciated by viewing operational solar parks. The panels cannot reflect light down into the valley (see point 10, above) and so any reflected effects or 'illumination' can only be perceived by views higher than the solar park and at these distances the diffusing of the light within the atmosphere will be insignificant. It is true that the freshly galvanised frames can initially appear bright but, like galvanised towers of electricity transmission lines which are not perceived as being bright shiny objects in the landscape, after a year of weathering the galvanisation develops a dull grey coat as oxidation takes place. Notwithstanding this, from middle distance and long distance views from the south the frames are hidden from view under the panels.

If it is accepted that at distances of over 1 km the panels will only be perceived as a colouration within existing field boundaries and not as an electrical installation, then to an uninformed viewer they will have a minimal adverse effect on the character and quality of a landscape which is not designated as AONB, and will not have a significant adverse impact on the setting of the AONB.

13. The AONB notes that there is no cumulative assessment of the proposed solar park with other types of development. Cumulative effects assessment is required by GLVIA<sup>2</sup> and it is acknowledged that reference to non-solar PV development was omitted from the LVIA. GLVIA notes, however, that such assessment needs to be reasonable and proportionate to the nature of the project under consideration, and that the emphasis should be on 'likely significant effects' rather than a comprehensive cataloguing of all effects that might occur. The applicant is not aware of any schemes (proposed or registered) with which the proposed solar park would be capable of generating a likely significant cumulative effect, but will undertake cumulative effects assessment if the AONB will provide details of any such schemes.
14. A revised LVIA chapter figure package is attached with corrections made to the viewpoint numbers highlighted by Mr Burden.

---

<sup>2</sup> Guidelines for Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment, 3rd edition

## Appendix 6.1

Figures for Chapter 6  
Part 3 of 3  
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

June 2014

Rev A 19 Sept 2014





VIEWPOINT No 4 EXISTING

0117 923 0455

<p><b>VIEWPOINT: 4</b>          DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 11:03          GRID REF: SU 11709 27933          BEARING: 316° NW          GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 91m AOD          DISTANCE TO SITE: 5m          CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)          CAMERA VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m          CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm</p>	
---	--

BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.1a  
Photomontages



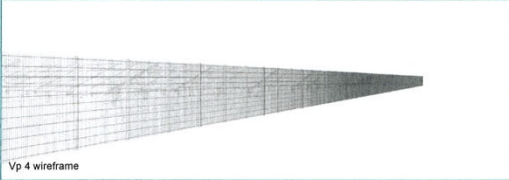






VIEWPOINT No. 4 PROPOSED with mitigation shown after 5-7 years growth

Image 14 - ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT BAKE FARM



VIEWPOINT: 4  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 11:03  
 GRID REF: SU 11709 27933  
 BEARING: 316° NW  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 91m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 5m  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.1c  
 Photomontages





VIEWPOINT No 11 EXISTING

111616 11 - 11/10/2014 11:45 AM - 11/10/2014 11:45 AM

VIEWPOINT: 11  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 11:45  
 GRID REF: SU 10987 25881  
 BEARING: 11° NE  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 89m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 1.7km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.2a  
 Photomontages



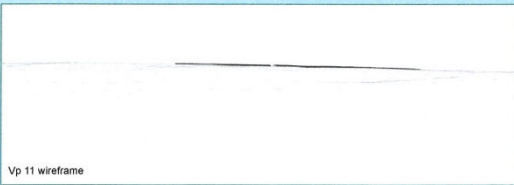






VIEWPOINT No 11 PROPOSED with no mitigation

11.02a 11 - 1 PROPOSED WITH NO MITIGATION\_VIEWPOINT



VIEWPOINT 11  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 11:45  
 GRID REF: SU 10987 25881  
 BEARING: 11° NE  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 89m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 1.7km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.2b  
 Photomontages



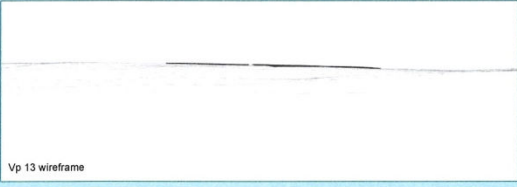






VIEWPOINT No. 13 PROPOSED with no mitigation

Sheet 14 - 1: PROSPECTORS - Lake Park HOPECHURCH - 100m PAUL



VIEWPOINT: 13  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 11:55  
 GRID REF: SU 11114 25562  
 BEARING: 6° N  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 107m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 2km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



BAKE FARM

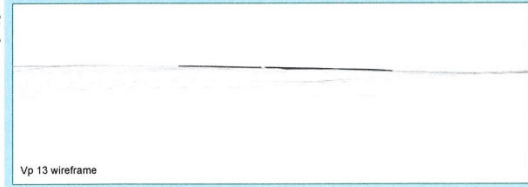
FIGURE 6.19.3b  
Photomontages







VIEWPOINT No 13 PROPOSED with mtgafon shown after 5-7years growth



Vp 13 wireframe

VIEWPOINT: 13  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 11:55  
 GRID REF: SU 11114 25552  
 BEARING: 6° N  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 107m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 2km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



13.24 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100

BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.3c  
 Photomontages





VIEWPOINT No 18 EXISTING

<p>VIEWPOINT: 18          DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 12:25          GRID REF: SU 10125 25673          BEARING: 28° NE          GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 131m AOD          DISTANCE TO SITE: 2.2km          CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)          CAMERA VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m          CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm</p>	
--	--

18 of 14 - PROJECT/000001 - BAKE FARM PV/REGENERATION/000001/000001

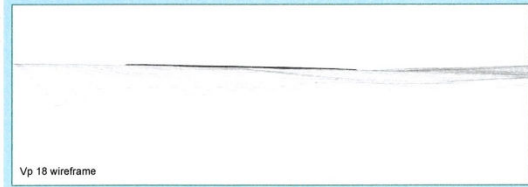
BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.10.4a  
Photomontages





VIEWPOINT No 18 PROPOSED with no mitigation



VIEWPOINT: 18  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 12:25  
 GRID REF: SU 10125 25673  
 BEARING: 28° NE  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 131m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 2.2km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



181024-14 - E:\PROJECTS\181024-14 - Hope Chapel Hill\181024-14\181024-14.dwg

BAKE FARM

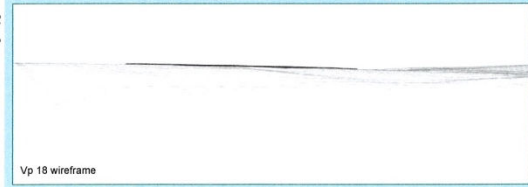
FIGURE 6.19.4b  
 Photomontages







VIEWPOINT No 18 PROPOSED with mitigation shown after 5-7years growth



Vp 18 wireframe

VIEWPOINT: 18  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 12:25  
 GRID REF: SU 10125 25673  
 BEARING: 28° NE  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 131m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 2.2km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



18-03-14 © PHOTOMONTAGE - BAKE FARM PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN PUGH/AL

BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.4c  
 Photomontages







VIEWPOINT No. 19 EXISTING

<p>VIEWPOINT: 19            DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 12:45            GRID REF: SU 10211 23992            BEARING: 12° NE            GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 142m AOD            DISTANCE TO SITE: 3.7km            CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)            CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m            CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm</p>	
--	--

© 2014 Landmark Practice Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced without the prior written consent of Landmark Practice Ltd.

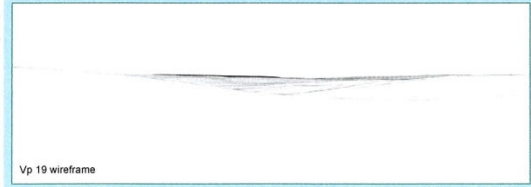
BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.5a  
 Photomontages





VIEWPOINT No 19 PROPOSED with no mitigation



Vp 19 wireframe

VIEWPOINT: 19  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 12:45  
 GRID REF: SU 10211 23992  
 BEARING: 12° NE  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 142m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 3.7km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



BAKE FARM

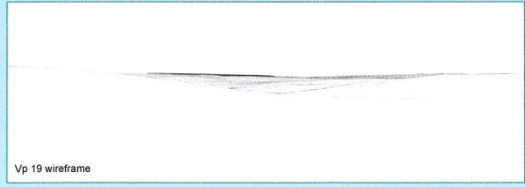
FIGURE 6.19.5b  
 Photomontages





VIEWPOINT No 19 PROPOSED with mitigation shown after 5-years growth

191914 - E:\PROJECTS\1914 - BAKE FARM\1914\_VIEWPOINTS\1914\_VP\_19.JPG



Vp 19 wireframe

VIEWPOINT: 19  
 DATE OF PHOTOGRAPH: 24 April 14 @ 12:45  
 GRID REF: SU 10211 23992  
 BEARING: 12° NE  
 GROUND LEVEL ELEVATION: 142m AOD  
 DISTANCE TO SITE: 3.7km  
 CAMERA: Nikon D40 digital SLR (18-55mm lens)  
 CAMERA/VIEWER HEIGHT: 1.8m  
 CAMERA FOCAL LENGTH: 55mm



BAKE FARM

FIGURE 6.19.5c  
 Photomontages





Applicants additional information and response to comments received: Consultees and Neighbours

British Solar Renewables: Bake Farm Solar Park  
 Ref: 14/06864/FUL - Wiltshire Council

Statutory and Neighbourhood Representations Overview

From	Date	Objection/ No Objection	Comments	Applicant's response
1 English Heritage	28.07.14	No Objection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes the comprehensive ES has robustly examined potential impacts to the historic environment</li> <li>- Concludes the proposal <i>will not</i> result in 'substantial harm' to relevant heritage assets.</li> <li>- Notes that site has the potential to include significant archaeological deposits and anticipates continued engagement with the WCC Archaeology Service.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agree that there has been a robust assessment and note that the WCC Archaeology Service has also confirmed <b>no objection</b></li> </ul>
2 Wessex Water	12.08.14	No Objection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No comments - map attached for reference</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agree and note that there is <b>no objection</b> and no nearby apparatus of concern</li> </ul>
3 Natural England	15.08.14	Neither	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clarifies that the proposal is unlikely to affect any SSSI's or European sites. However, NE notes that Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB is adjacent to site. Strongly advise the Council to seek advice from the AONB partnership and weight to their comments.</li> <li>- Consider the application has the potential to impact on a significant amount of 'best and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agree and note that there is no impact on designated sites, and can confirm that NE standing advice on protected species has been followed as evidenced by ecology chapter of ES</li> <li>- Note that there is <b>no landscape objection</b></li> <li>- Note NE's advice that the proposal will not lead to the long term loss of agricultural land</li> </ul>

				<p>most versatile' agricultural land, however, would not lead to the long term loss and no likely loss of agricultural quality. Urges Council to fully consider the best and most versatile land issues relating to the proposal against DCLG guidance for renewable and low carbon energy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The authority should consider securing measures to enhance biodiversity of the site.</li> <li>- Protected species and locally specific information has not been addressed, and NE urge the Council to refer to published 'standing advice' for these material considerations.</li> </ul>	<p>as it is a temporary use that is wholly reversible. We agree and would add that the land would remain available for future agricultural use and any permission can be conditioned to ensure that it is retained in its original state at the end of the period of operation, so there would be no permanent loss of agricultural land, such as would be the case with industrial or residential development. In any event records indicate that the land is Grade 3 and it is not therefore of the highest quality (i.e. Grade one or two). In addition, biodiversity benefits would be gained around the field margins through improved and retained hedgerows, and that grazing, an agricultural use, could continue around the solar panels whilst they are in operation. Again appropriate planning conditions can secure biodiversity benefits (e.g. a habitat management plan) as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Agree and note that there is <b>no objection</b></li> </ul>
4	County Archaeologist	19.08.14	Neither	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Chapter within EIA provides proportionate assessment of archaeological remains. Majority of mitigation will be by design.</li> <li>- Recommends condition is applied to provide a written programme of investigation. Further recommends that work should be conducted by a professionally recognised archaeologist.</li> </ul>	
6	Wiltshire Highways	Undated, uploaded			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- No objection subject to planning condition</li> </ul>



		14.09.14				
7	Coombe Bissett Parish Council	14.09.14		Detailed letter		- Please see separate response
8	CCWWD AONB Partnership	10.09.14		Detailed letter		- Please see separate response

#### Non-statutory consultation responses (Residents etc)

From	Date	Objector/ Supporter	Comments
CPRE – Campaign to Protect Rural England	21.08.14	Objection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of concerns and believe that new amended plan is only slightly improved and does not address concerns raised previously.</li> <li>Visually intrusive on Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB and surrounding countryside/ vistas.</li> <li>Suggests that the development would be unnatural in scale and form and that the mitigation strategy is not acceptable.</li> <li>States that solar farms should be built on brownfield sites, not agricultural Greenfield sites. No indication that alternative sites have been considered.</li> <li>Suggests a solar farm will attract thieves to the area and that the legally binding</li> </ul>
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disagree – the revised layout has been put forward following detailed consideration of the previous objections and represents a significant improvement.</li> <li>Disagree – the site is outside the AONB and would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the AONB, surrounding countryside or vistas. The conclusion to the landscape and visual chapter of the ES is that the landscape in the study area can accommodate this development without causing significant harm to landscape and visual resources.</li> <li>The site selection exercise is described at para 3.40-3.61 of the ES</li> <li>Security measures to deter thieves form part of the proposals</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>renewable targets carry much less weight.</li> <li>The amended plan places an inordinate number of panels close to Old Foundry Cottage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The revised scheme ensures that no panels are located close to Old Foundry Cottages</li> </ul>
Mrs Rachel A Jowett	24/07/14	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fully supports this application.</li> <li>The site is not very visible, solar energy does not pollute the atmosphere and the proposal area will support biodiversity.</li> <li>Current arable use uses energy in the form of fuel.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support noted</li> </ul>
Mr Hewitt	26.07.14	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lived in Bake Farm since 1988 and strongly supports the application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support noted</li> </ul>
Mr & Mrs Lumber	30.07.14	Supporter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In complete agreement with the proposal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Support noted</li> </ul>
Mr & Mrs Buckley	04.08.14	Objection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aesthetically inappropriate which will defile landscape of great natural beauty.</li> <li>If permitted, this development could set a precedent for other large scale developments in the rural locality.</li> <li>How will upgrading be managed if the current technology is superseded, could the scale of the development increase further or could the infrastructure be abandoned with brownfield implications?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Disagree – the site is outside the AONB and would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the AONB, surrounding countryside or vistas. The conclusion to the landscape and visual chapter of the ES is that the landscape in the study area can accommodate this development without causing significant harm to landscape and visual resources</li> <li>As each planning application is to be determined on its own merits, the proposal would not set a precedent for development elsewhere</li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supports DECC guidance on solar PV. farms as stated by John Glen regarding effects on environmental considerations, appropriate siting of the proposal and giving local communities the opportunity to influence decisions.</li> <li>- Suggests such a large scale proposal could be incorporated into rooftops</li> <li>- Suggestion to harness the power of existing natural resources of rivers and springs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are no proposals to upgrade the development once operational any proposal to do so would require planning permission in any event.</li> <li>- There are insufficient roofspaces to accommodate a solar farm of this size</li> <li>- The generation potential from rivers and springs is limited and very unlikely to match the output of the proposed solar farm.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dr Paul W Lord</b></p>	<p><b>07.08.14</b></p>	<p><b>Objection</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The proposed power station is an extensive, industrial facility which should be based on brown field land, if approved it will set a precedent for green field land. The scheme removes prime agricultural land from provision of food</li> <li>- Proposed scheme is ugly and will be visible from adjacent roads/ footpaths/ hills and surrounding areas. Will change Salisbury from a 'town in the countryside' to an 'industrial town'</li> <li>- Unacceptably close to residential properties and the remaining land in the developers ownership will eventually be developed on</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The proposal is located so as to benefit from an available grid connection point, and is a temporary use which would not result in the permanent loss of agricultural land. Grazing of animals can continue even whilst the solar farm is in operation.</li> <li>- The site is not visible from Salisbury and the conclusion to the landscape and visual chapter of the ES is that the landscape in the study area can accommodate this development without causing significant harm to landscape and visual resources</li> <li>- This revised proposal is now well separated from third party residential properties and is a significant improvement upon the previous application in this regard</li> </ul>



			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Solar power is uneconomic without taxpayer subsidy and facility will increase electricity prices. The government also said sites like this should not be used for solar energy production.</li> <li>- Solar power is not clean energy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Solar power is promoted by the Government through the ROC and FIT process. Other forms of electricity generation are also subsidised</li> <li>- Solar power is accepted as a renewable energy</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mr &amp; Mrs Jowett</b></p>	<p>28.08.14</p>	<p>Supporter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Application is consistent with international, national and local policy to reduce reliance on fossil fuels</li> <li>- Scheme will secure future of family run farm which provides local employment and is a valuable resource to the community</li> <li>- Scheme will allow for long term establishment of conservation grass sward, which is beneficial to local birds and insects</li> <li>- Comprehensive landscaping plan to screen distant or close views into the scheme</li> <li>- The site would be virtually silent in operation, with no noise detectable to local residents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support noted</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mr &amp; Mrs Chelu</b></p>	<p>14.08.14</p>	<p>Objection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concerned that many people on holiday will be denied the opportunity to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There has been adequate time for the community to comment with residents informed</li> </ul>

<p>comment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Notes that the modification means not as many views into the solar farm can be seen from previous vantage points. However, the resident suggests that a further layout revision would create virtually no views from vantage points.</li> <li>- Plan provided suggesting the relocation of a southern section of the panels to the north east of the site.</li> <li>- Residents are also disappointed photomontages were not included showing views from the previously mentioned vantage points.</li> <li>- Significant visual impact on local landscape and AONB. Objector against prime arable land becoming a brownfield site when more appropriate sites are available. Suggests amended scheme has doubled in size since last application was withdrawn.</li> </ul>	<p>through both the Council's standard procedure and additional correspondence/leaflets from British Solar Renewables/Savills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This revised scheme has been revised in line with previous comments received from the parish council and planning officer</li> <li>- The photomontages from a variety of viewpoints are presented in ES appendix 6.1, part 3, figures 16.19 onwards</li> </ul>	
<p>Lady Lucy Pleydell-Bouverie</p>	<p>21.08.14</p> <p><b>Objection</b></p>	
<p>Disagree – the site is an appropriate location outside the AONB and would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the AONB, surrounding countryside or vistas. The conclusion to the landscape and visual chapter of the ES is that the landscape in the study area can accommodate this development without causing significant harm to landscape and visual resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The proposal is located so as to benefit from an available grid connection point, and is a temporary use which would not result in the permanent loss of agricultural land. Grazing of animals can continue even whilst the solar farm is in operation</li> </ul>		



				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The amended scheme is smaller than the previous scheme as evidenced by the peak generation capacity which has reduced from 16.07 MW to 14.3MW. Please also note that the revised proposals include a temporary construction and unloading area within the planning application red line area whilst the previous proposals did not, this means that the site areas are not directly comparable.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mr &amp; Mrs Cookson</b></p>	<p>20.08.14</p>	<p><b>Objection</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- This modification is unacceptable because it covers a greater area and is just as visible from surrounding areas. The delayed hedge planting will provide minimal screening.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- As stated above, the modification results in a smaller solar farm with an output of 14.3MW rather than 16.07MW</li> <li>- The hedge planting will provide some mitigation from the time of planting, with this improving with time.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mr Hodgson</b></p>	<p>20.08.14</p>	<p><b>Objection</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development will be visible from Chalke Valley, from elevated points and footpaths, spoiling views toward Salisbury.</li> <li>- The amended plan is even more unacceptable, on more elevated land and larger in scope.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The conclusion to the landscape and visual chapter of the ES is that the landscape in the study area can accommodate this development without causing significant harm to landscape and visual resources</li> <li>- As stated above, the modification results in a smaller solar farm with an output of 14.3MW rather than 16.07MW; and the amends have been made to reduce the visibility of the proposed solar farm by removing panels from the steeper, more visible parts of Bake Farm to the more level, upper areas.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Mr Horsley</b></p>	<p>12.08.14</p>	<p>Objection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Proposal will destroy rolling countryside.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Disagree – the site is an appropriate location outside the AONB and would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the AONB, surrounding countryside or vistas. The conclusion to the landscape and visual chapter of the ES is that the landscape in the study area can accommodate this development without causing significant harm to landscape and visual resources</li> <li>- The proposal is a temporary use which would not result in the permanent loss of agricultural land. Grazing of animals can continue even whilst the solar farm is in operation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ms Martha Pleydell-Bouverie</b></p>	<p>21.08.14</p>	<p>Objection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Adjacent to AONB and properties, visible from most areas and now extending to 44ha on prime agricultural land</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The amended scheme is smaller than the previous scheme as evidenced by the peak generation capacity which has reduced from 16.07 MW to 14.3MW. Please also note that the revised proposals include a temporary construction and unloading area within the planning application red line area whilst the previous proposals did not, this means that the site areas are not directly comparable.</li> <li>- Disagree – the site is an appropriate location outside the AONB and would not result in an unacceptable impact upon the AONB, surrounding countryside or vistas. The conclusion to the landscape and visual chapter</li> </ul>



<p><b>Countess of Radnor</b></p>	<p>21.08.14</p>	<p><b>Objection</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Amended proposal has increased in size, which will ruin beautiful countryside and have impact on neighbouring properties</li> <li>- Painting of security fences etc will not change their industrial nature and newly planted hedges will not screen this development, even when mature.</li> <li>- Greenfield site and should be on brownfield site, productive arable land should be used for crops.</li> </ul>	<p>of the ES is that the landscape in the study area can accommodate this development without causing significant harm to landscape and visual resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The proposal is a temporary use which would not result in the permanent loss of agricultural land. Grazing of animals can continue even whilst the solar farm is in operation.</li> <li>- See above</li> </ul>
<p><b>Dr &amp; Mrs Willis</b></p>	<p>19.08.14</p>	<p><b>Objection</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Other BSF developments are significantly smaller in size and only one is on poor agricultural land. Grade 3 agricultural land should be avoided, as stated in Government guidance.</li> <li>- Development adjacent to AONB and close to some dwellings, visible from the A354 and elevated areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See responses above</li> <li>- A detailed noise assessment was submitted with the ES at appendix 3.2 to chapter 3, this concludes that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>' it has been demonstrated that the predicted specific noise associated with the inverter units will be at least 10 dB or more below the measured background noise level at the</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<p>identified noise sensitive premises and as a result the noise from the PV solar farm is unlikely to be significant or detectable at nearest noise sensitive properties. As a result, no significant noise impact is expected, complaints are proven as unlikely and this development should not be refused for reasons of noise impact.</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Concern about noise from transformers and huge visual impact on area. Maturing of new hedgerows will take 12-15 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- development is not appropriate in this area of</li> <li>- unique outstanding natural beauty and it would be totally out of keeping with the village and its surroundings.</li> <li>- The industrialisation of a working, agricultural farm is the height of folly when there are many Brownfield sites that offer less impact on the countryside.</li> </ul>	<p><b>27.08.14</b></p> <p><b>Objection</b></p>	<p><b>Mr and Mrs Simmonds</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- See responses above</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Appropriate location as site not widely visible</li> <li>- Concerned about environmental impacts of electricity generated from fossil fuels</li> <li>- Supports solar power</li> <li>- Notes that electricity demand continues to increase</li> </ul>	<p><b>26.7.14</b></p> <p><b>Support</b></p>	<p><b>Dr Jowett and Roger Hewett</b></p>