

Many IP submissions have drawn strong attention to the incongruities of the Longfield proposals. It has been noted that the Application has been inconsistent in the figures given for the BMV soils that are within the Order. The analysis by Professor Mike Alder gets to the heart of the matter.// Many submissions also draw attention to the ever-increasing need to protect our food security. The Applicant's generalised response to this is that sheep can still be raised on solar farms. There is no shortage of sheep in the country, while the necessity to produce much greater quantities of plant-based foods is what we need to be concentrating on. The Applicant expresses the point of view that food security will not be threatened but it already is. //Transport and Access is also a major concern and the inadequacy of the two minor roads that are the only possible route into the solar site is clear. The Applicant insists that Cranham Road will take most of the HGV traffic, although Waltham Road from the southern entrance in Boreham will also be used as an alternative. In addition the trenching programme indicates that traffic management on Waltham Road will be necessary for up to 30 weeks to allow construction vehicles to turn into the land on the west side of Waltham Road, on average 3-4 per hour throughout the working day. This will be particularly frustrating to residents and rush hour traffic. I drew attention in my RR to the danger for pedestrians in this road which has no footways and Longfield have answered that their Scheme is unlikely to attract any pedestrians (I heartily concur) but nevertheless, pedestrians will occur and some of the PRow's give onto the road.// The placement of the BESS close to the valuable ancient woodland has been widely criticised and although the Applicant frequently uses the phrase in all sections of its comments that "xyz is not expected", clearly accidents are not usually expected. But evidence shows that they do occur and can be devastating. The ancient woodlands in this country are under constant threat and they are an irreplaceable natural asset. The NPPF, the Forestry Commission and Natural England all make provision to protect them, but in spite of this another 290 cases of loss were recorded in the 12 months to October 2021. It is because inappropriate siting of big developments continuing to compromise the woodlands that Government has declared its commitment to strengthen their protection. I referred to this matter in my RR (APP-083) but I feel strongly on this subject which is my reason for returning to it. Longfield's BESS is huge and only 15m from the nearest parcel of woodland which is not nearly enough. While on this subject, I would like to add that Longfield have referred to noise and vibration as only being troublesome 'on fine and sunny days' but it is the prevailing wind direction that carries the sound. Many residents will be affected.