

Proposed Solar PV Development

Byers Gill Solar

EN010139



Statement of Common Ground with RWWE

Planning Act 2008

APFP Regulation 5(2)(q)

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms
and Procedure) Regulations 2009

August 2024

Table of Contents

Page

1.	Introduction	1
1.1.	Purpose of this document	1
1.2.	Terminology	1
1.3.	Status of this document	1
2.	Current position	3

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1. This Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) has been prepared to support the Examination of the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for Byers Gill Solar (the Proposed Development).
- 1.1.2. This SOCG has been prepared by Bishopton Parish Council (BPC) to state their position on the proposed development. Having no experience of this process or resources to employ Planning Experts, this document is prepared to reflect the position of Parishioners as represented to the Parish Council.
- 1.1.3. This document has been prepared in response to a specific request from the ExA as per the Rule 6 Letter [PD-003] issued on 25 June 2024 and further discussion between the parties and the ExA at the Preliminary Meeting held on 23 July 2024.

1.2. Terminology

- 1.2.1. Section 2 of this document sets out the relevant matters raised through discussion between the parties. It provides a summary of the position of each party and identifies the status of discussions on each matter:
- “Agreed” means that a matter has been resolved between the parties and is not anticipated to be subject to further discussion;
 - “Under discussion” means that a matter remains in active dialogue between the parties and a final position has not been reached;
 - “Not agreed” means that the parties have established a final position that they cannot resolve the matter and will remain a point of difference.
- 1.2.2. In accordance with the request from the ExA in the Rule 6 Letter [PD-003], a **Low**, **Medium** and **High** ‘traffic light’ system is applied to each matter to indicate the likelihood of their resolution during the Examination period.

1.3. Status of this document

- 1.3.1. This document is currently in draft form and is unsigned.

- 1.3.2. When a final position has been reached on all matters, the respective parties shall sign the SoCG and submit it into the Examination as final and signed.

2. Current position

- 2.1.1. The table below provides a summary of the current position of the Applicant and BPC in relation to specific matters that have been under discussion to date.
- 2.1.2. Where a matter is not represented in the table, it should be assumed that it is either: (i) agreed between the parties and has never required detailed discussion; or, (ii) not relevant to the discussion between the parties.
- 2.1.3. Appendix A of this document provides a record of engagement undertaken between the parties in relation to the Proposed Development. This is limited to engagement which is materially relevant to the contents of this SoCG and does not seek to include every correspondence between the parties (e.g. that which was primarily administrative).

Table 1 Current position of matters relevant to the parties' discussions

Row ID	Topic	BPC Position	Applicant Position	Status
BPC1	Concept	The opportunistic land grabbing in this area to meet the project's requirements rather than a considered approach is the root of the Parish Council's objections. No consideration has been made regarding the Conservation status of Bishopton or the economy and environment of the local and wider area where heavy industry is supported leaving this as one the remaining rural areas	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed
BPC2	Design	Design is about meeting development criteria, not impact on those living in the area. There is nothing in the practical designs that give local residents belief that this will have anything but major impact on their lives. RWE state they had Design Consultation meetings which were actually high level, generalist meetings with no opportunity for discussion – the plans were already laid and there was no flexibility. Glib statements about building 15m high structures having no impact demonstrate the lack of sensitivity or respect for those	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed

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		living in the area. Also, there have been no Risk Assessments received.		
BPC3	Location	The land assembly is a hotch-potch and makes no sense except this is what RWE could achieve. This is not a Solar Farm but a collection of Solar fields set across a long area and adjacent to other Solar projects and Wind Farms. The area is one of the few rural areas in an industrial region and these Solar developments seem determined to ensure that the whole area becomes covered in structures	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed
BPC4	Consultation	Poor consultation and superficial engagement – meetings held many miles away from the Parish and lack of detailed discussion. No responses to surveys and questionnaires. Comments like, “this is going to happen” not exactly consultative. BPC did not feel consulted with, rather informed of progress.	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed
BPC5	Communication	Similarly all communication assumes that the project planning has been granted and it is just a matter of time. The changing of parameters and details is an example of how RWE believe that the residents don’t understand that theirs is a purely financial project with no regard to the environment or people in the area.	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed
BPC6	Irradiance	BPC questions whether there is sufficient sun to make this a useful project – RWE state there is sufficient irradiance but it is only just over 50% in this area compared to south England. We already have wind farms and that is understandable but Solar Farms should be in areas of highest irradiance such as the south coast of England. Is this not a “Blue Zone” area where it has been stated that Solar is not viable?	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed
BPC7	Cumulative Effect	The impact of Wind Farms and other Solar Farms in this area is already having an impact – this proposal just adds to the feeling of industrialisation and building over the rural area. Someone has to stop these developments in	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed

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		an area already giving much to renewable energy whereas other parts of the country are offering nothing. To be clear there are already 2 large Wind Farms and 12 potential Solar developments (3 approved) in a four mile radius of Bishopton		
BPC8	Aesthetics and local amenities	People live in the area due to its character and rural nature in many cases having moved away from towns and cities. There is no design of these Solar facilities that can ameliorate the damaging impact onto the aesthetics of the area or removal of amenities for walking and enjoying the countryside.	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed
BPC9	Disturbance	If, with much disappointment, planning is approved we are extremely concerned about the ongoing disturbance that will be caused. Comments about “trying” to minimise impact hide the reality that this will be years of noise, traffic, dirty roads and a despoiling of one of the few rural areas in this region. Do those proposing the development live next to a Solar Farm being developed?	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed
BPC10	Proximity to children	There are extreme concerns about the proposals to place batteries and solar units near to the school and play areas.	RWE disagrees with this analysis as described in planning application documents	Not Agreed

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