



# **Botley West Solar Farm**

## **Consultation Report Appendix 5.1.4**

### **Statement of Community Consultation Materials**

**November 2024**

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PINS Ref: EN010147

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APFP Regulation 5(2)(q); Planning Act 2008; and Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations

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# 1 Early Working Draft of the SoCC



# **Botley West Solar Farm**

Statement of Community Consultation

*Draft for consultation*

April 2023

## 1. Introduction

**Photovolt Development Partners ('PVDP', or the 'Applicant') is proposing a new solar farm, situated in Oxfordshire.**

The solar farm will support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system, deliver sustainable, homegrown and low-cost energy to the national grid and enhance the local environment and biodiversity. The project is called Botley West Solar Farm, referred to in this document as 'Botley West'.

This document, known as a Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC"), has been prepared in accordance with Section 47(1) of the Planning Act 2008 (the "Act") and guidance<sup>1</sup> to explain how Photovolt Development Partners intends to carry out its statutory consultation with you, the local community, for the proposed Development Consent Order (DCO) for Botley West.

The approach to consultation set out in this document has been consulted on with West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council as the host local authorities within which Botley West Solar Farm will be situated, and as required by Section 47(2) of the Act. We have had regard to the comments that they have made.

Photovolt Development Partners recognises consultation to be a vital stage in the development of our proposals, we want to listen to your views and work with you to develop our proposals for Botley West. This will allow us to develop our plans responsibly and in a manner that supports local community interests.

This SoCC outlines how we will consult with you during the 'pre-application stage' before we submit our DCO application for the project to the Planning Inspectorate. There is more information on the DCO process in Section 9 of this SoCC.

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<sup>1</sup>[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418009/150326\\_Pre-Application\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418009/150326_Pre-Application_Guidance.pdf)

## 2. About Us

**PVDP is a developer of solar power projects across Europe and Japan, with an 18-year track record of delivering large-scale projects.**

PVDP is a privately held company that specialises in the development and asset management of renewable energy projects, ranging from site acquisition, engineering and construction management through to commissioning.

PVDP has appointed a professional project team to provide support and expertise throughout the consenting stages of Botley West Solar Farm. Together, the project team has significant experience of working on both solar and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

### 3. Botley West Solar Farm

The proposals for Botley West include:

- A solar array, which will provide electricity to the National Grid.
- An output from the solar array of over 50 megawatts (MW).
- Electrical connection infrastructure to a new National Grid substation, together with underground cables to connect the field parcels.
- Mitigation and enhancement measures.
- Other ancillary works including access during construction and operation, fencing, landscaping and drainage.

If approved, Botley West could generate up to 840 MW of renewable energy. The site for the solar farm, including mitigation and enhancement measures, as well as an area for potential highways works, equates to approximately 1,400 hectares (circa 3,450 acres) of land to the northwest, west and southwest of Oxford.

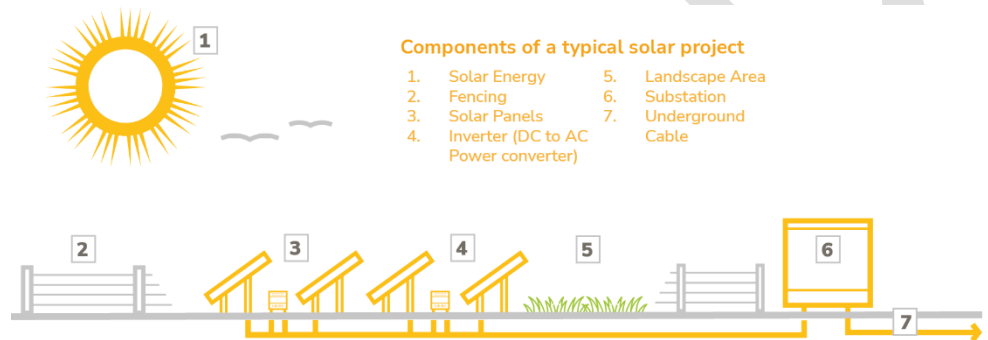
**Botley West Solar Farm has the potential to:**

- Power approximately 330,000 homes.
- Support homegrown, low-cost energy generation that increases the reliability of our national grid.
- Help the UK reach urgent climate change targets while supporting the local environment by delivering a significant biodiversity net gain.
- Provide increased public access to the area by incorporating new and/or linked recreational routes.

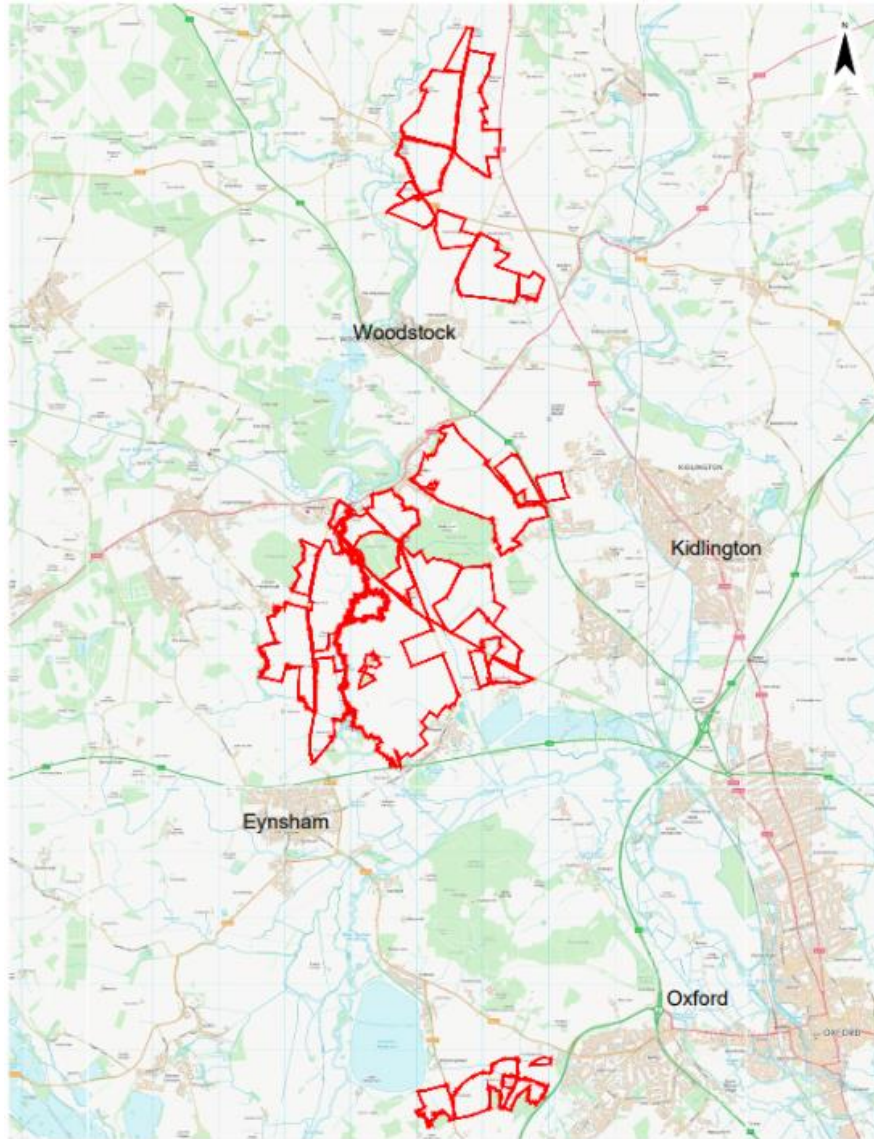
*Our vision for Botley West is to support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system, deliver sustainable, homegrown and low-cost energy to the national grid and enhance the local environment and biodiversity.*

*At a time when energy prices are at an all-time high due to our reliance on imported energy, it is our ambition to create homegrown, low-cost renewable energy that is kind to the environment and helps deliver the UK's commitments to achieving net zero.*

**Figure 1: Components of a typical solar project**



**Figure 2: Proposed site boundary**



*Site Location Plan used for Phase One consultation, to be updated for formal SoCC consultation.*

## 4. Our public consultation process

We are undertaking an iterative consultation process for Botley West. The feedback and information we receive will help inform the final design of the project that we submit to the Planning Inspectorate as part of our application for development consent made to the Secretary of State. Our consultation consists of two phases of community consultation, including:

- A non-statutory Phase One community consultation, lasting seven weeks, which was held from 3 November 2022 until 22 December 2022
- A statutory Phase Two community consultation, lasting eight weeks, in Summer 2023.

This SoCC relates to the delivery of the Phase Two consultation.

### **Phase One consultation (3 November 2022 - 22 December 2023)**

This non-statutory consultation introduced our early-stage proposals for Botley West to the community. We received feedback on our initial concept plan and the community's knowledge of the local area, allowing us to understand and refine our proposals.

We engaged with local authorities, parish and town councils prior to the launch of consultation. This helped to inform our approach and promote upcoming consultation opportunities.

We posted consultation leaflets and extension postcards to over 22,000 properties within the consultation zone to publicise our consultation.

We organised five in-person information events at Woodstock, Long Hanborough, Cassington, Tackley, and Cumnor, alongside an online webinar. During the consultation period, in response to requests from stakeholders at parish and district councils, we agreed to hold an additional two information events at Eynsham and Begbroke

The feedback received, together with information from our environmental and technical surveys and discussions with technical stakeholders, has

informed the development of our design. Phase One consultation was open to all interested members of the public and featured digital and non-digital methods for engagement.

Our Phase One consultation resulted in a good level of engagement and feedback, with 676 attendees across our events and over 1000 submissions of feedback. We will therefore be replicating our methods of publicity and opportunities for engagement at our phase two consultation.

### **Phase Two consultation (Late 2023)**

This statutory consultation, in accordance with Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 (the 'Act'), will allow us to update you on our proposals for Botley West. We will consult on our developed proposals together with the results from the ongoing environmental and technical surveys that have been carried out to date, which will be published in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

Phase Two is the consultation that we must carry out as required by Part 5, Chapter 2, of the Act. More specific details of what we will consult on are listed in Section 5 of this SoCC, and the methods for how we will consult are listed in Section 7.

You will also have the opportunity to comment formally on our proposals for Botley West when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. After submission, the Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, will decide whether or not the application meets the standards required to be accepted for examination. Following this the public will be able to register with the Planning Inspectorate to become an Interested Party by making a Relevant Representation which is a summary of a person's views on the application, made in writing. The Planning Inspectorate has up to six months to carry out the examination. During this stage, Interested Parties who have registered by making a Relevant Representation are invited to provide more details of their views in writing. Guidance on the process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>



## Consultation reporting

As part of the DCO application, currently anticipated for the end of 2023, we will submit a Consultation Report that:

- Describes our consultation process.
- Explains how we have satisfied and adhered to legal requirements.
- Details how we have worked with Local Planning Authorities to ensure our consultation is suitable for the area through the proposals set out in this SoCC.
- Details the feedback and consultation responses we have received.
- Responds to the feedback we have received, including explaining how we have had regard to feedback and how it has influenced our proposals.

## 5. What will we consult on?

We have already held our Phase One non-statutory consultation to inform the refinement of our early-stage proposals. We will be holding the next phase of statutory consultation on our more detailed proposals.

The aim of our pre-application public consultations is to ensure that both community and technical consultees have a chance to understand and influence our proposals. At each phase of consultation, we will be seeking feedback to help refine our proposals. This will include producing plans and documents to understand and explore potential issues such as, but not limited to:

- Temporary impacts during construction
- Operational impacts
- Benefits, such as the opportunity for biodiversity and recreational improvements.

The description and proposed layout of the development of Botley West, will be set out in the consultation materials.

	<b>Scope of consultation</b>
Phase One non-statutory consultation (held 03 November – 22 December 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early-stage concept plan of Botley West including potential mitigation and enhancement areas.</li><li>• Vision for the project.</li><li>• Opportunities for delivering biodiversity net gain.</li><li>• Opportunities for recreational improvements.</li></ul>
Phase Two statutory consultation (Late 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Developed plans which have had regard to the comments received during our Phase One consultation and our ongoing assessment work.</li><li>• Developed design proposals for how Botley West could look to local residents and visitors. This will include visualisations of the solar farm from key viewpoints.</li><li>• The proposed cable route for the project including, where relevant, varying route options.</li><li>• Proposed mitigation measures.</li><li>• Our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and PEIR Non-Technical Summary (NTS).</li></ul>

## 6. Who will we consult?

We will consult individuals, groups and organisations within an agreed consultation zone. Due to the nationally significant nature of the scheme, the project has determined a broad **Core Consultation Zone (CCZ)**. An initial distance of 2km from the edge of the proposed development boundary has been considered and refined dependant on how the CCZ interacts and bisects property interests on the ground. The CCZ extends beyond 2km in certain areas, for instance to incorporate the entire village of Kidlington as to not bisect the village and has been reduced in other areas where there are no property interests within a 2km distance from the boundary of the proposed development. The Properties within the Core Consultation Zone will receive communications such as consultation leaflets from us in the post (as set out in section 7). Information events will be held at locations within the Core Consultation Zone, and relevant organisations, such as parish councils and community groups, will be notified of consultation opportunities.

Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within the Core Consultation Zone include: Cassington, Woodstock, Hanborough, Begbroke, Bladon, Kidlington, Eynsham, Cumnor, Wootton, Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp, Tackley, Yarnton, Blenheim, Freeland, Stanton Harcourt and Sutton, Steeple Barton, Rousham, Gosford and Water Eaton, North Leigh and North Hinksey.

### Other interested stakeholders

We recognise that there may be some interested individuals or parties who are not within the Core Consultation Zone. We are committed to ensuring that these interested parties still have an opportunity to view our proposals and have their say. We will publicise consultation opportunities to communities beyond the core consultation zone by advertising in local media and maintaining a register of interested individuals. Informative consultation materials will be published online and available to view and collect via our contact details (for a reasonable charge).

As well as the community consultation, we will be consulting with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees on Botley West Solar Farm, including:

- Owners, tenants and occupiers of the land included within the DCO application.
- MPs, Local Planning Authorities and parish councils.
- Statutory stakeholders, such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.
- Environmental groups, including RSBP and the local Wildlife Trusts and nature partnerships.
- Local interest and community groups.

We will be building on engagement already undertaken since the project launch with local authorities, MPs, parish councils and local community groups focussed on agriculture and low carbon energy generation.

### Other groups

The Applicant will design the consultation and prepare the materials so that they are accessible and clear. Additionally, the Applicant will also carry out the activities below.

1. Work with the host local authorities to identify a range of other groups and individuals, including representatives of local seldom heard groups and inform them of the consultation and to see if they need any further assistance to enable their participation.
2. Display the project contact information prominently on all materials to enable individuals to contact them with any questions or requests.
3. Ensure that the consultation leaflet can be made available in alternative forms on request.

Where possible we will aim to hold events at venues that are accessible and can be reached by public as well as private transport. For anyone with

specific additional requirements please contact us our communications channels listed in this document.

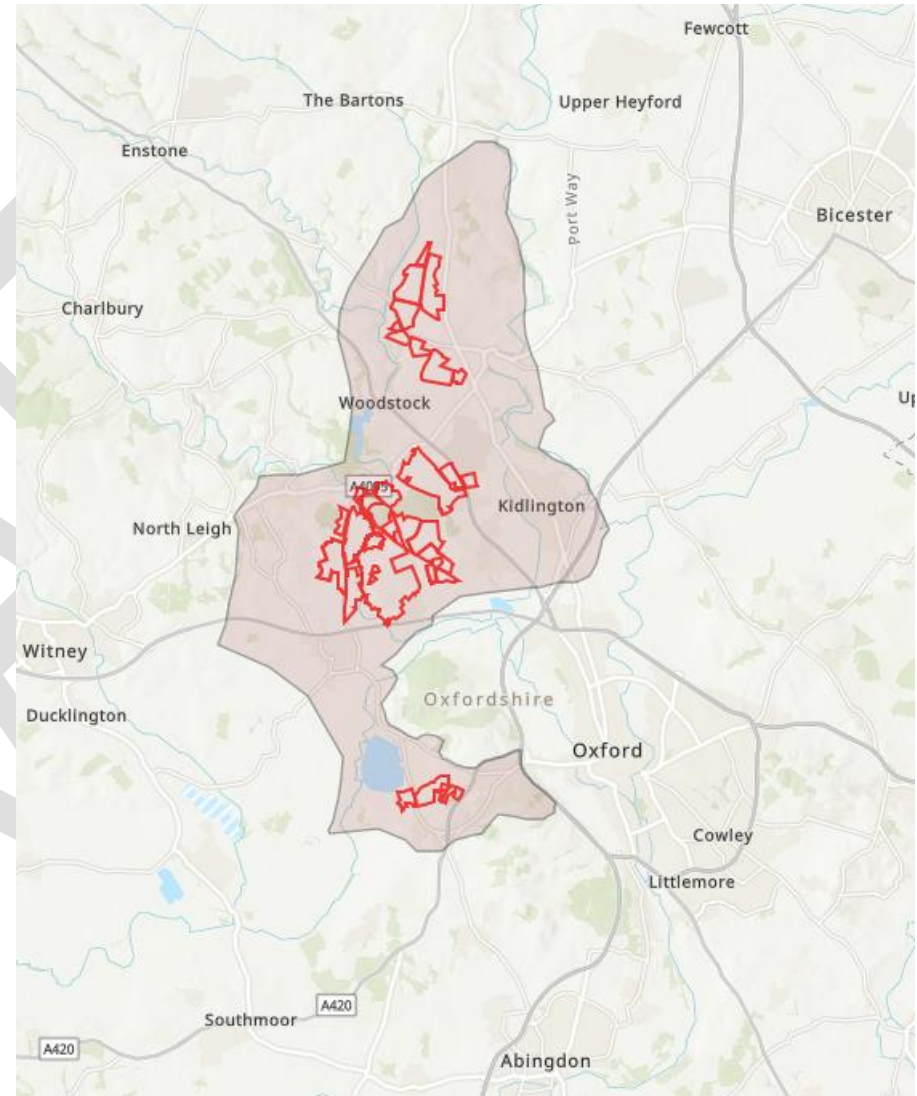
**Our consultation process is open to anyone who may be interested in, or in any way feels impacted by, our proposals for Botley West.**

You can get in touch with us at any stage of the development process. Our contact details can be found in Section 12 of this SoCC. We are seeking actively to engage with the widest possible range of individuals and groups. We want our consultation to be accessible for everyone to respond, regardless of their personal circumstances.

You will also have the opportunity to formally comment on our proposals for the project when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Guidance on the process can be found on the PINS website at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>.

**Figure 3: Botley West Solar Farm consultation zone**



**Based on Site Location Plan used for Phase One consultation, to be updated for formal SoCC consultation**

## 7. How will we consult?

**The consultation activities described in this section of the SoCC ensure inclusive, meaningful and open consultation. The activities include a range of methods to ensure our consultation can be accessed by all members of the community.**

Our statutory Phase Two consultation is planned to take place in Summer 2023. This phase of consultation looks to build on the methods of engagement and publicity used for our first phase of consultation, as well as incorporating feedback received regarding our consultation.

Our Phase Two consultation will be carried out in the following ways:

### **Meetings and events**

**Information events** will be held at locations across the Core Consultation Zone (see Section 6). In the event of a booked venue suddenly becoming unavailable, changing Government guidelines due to COVID-19, or other unforeseen circumstances meaning the consultation events must be cancelled, we will inform people as early as possible of the cancellation and, where possible, give details of a substitute event via the scheme's website, on social media, and through the local media. They will be advertised in consultation leaflets, across local media, at local information points and at CAP sites.

We will hold at least seven information events during our Phase Two consultation. Considering the feedback received during the first phase of consultation, we are committing to an extensive programme of events, including an event in Bladon. These events will be held on different days of the week including weekends, with varied hours to accommodate different availability within the community.

**Table of events to be inserted when finalised.**

Members of the Botley West team will be at these events to answer questions and discuss the proposals in more detail. Project materials setting

out the developed proposals will be displayed and available to take away. The PEIR will be available in hard copy for a reasonable charge.

**A webinar** will be held for any member of the public to join via telephone and internet. Participants will be invited to submit questions. Members of the BWSF project team will then respond to the questions on the webinar.

**Meetings and briefing sessions** may be arranged with local parish councils within the area the proposed development will be located, elected members and key local stakeholder groups that are present within the Core Consultation Zone and the wider consultation area.

### **Literature**

We have noted the feedback received during the first phase of consultation regarding requests for more materials for the second phase of consultation. The text below details the increased number of materials that will be available at the second phase of consultation.

A **Consultation leaflet** will be posted to all properties in the Core Consultation Zone at the start of Phase Two consultation. These leaflets will also be available online, to collect from Community Access Points, and to take away from our information events. Leaflets can also be posted to those outside the Core Consultation Zone on request.

We have also considered how our posted materials are presented to encourage engagement with them following feedback regarding the plain envelopes our phase one leaflets were posted in.

These leaflets will outline the updates in the proposals that have been made since the first phase of consultation, on design and environmental mitigation. They will publicise the Phase Two consultation opportunities and the information being consulted on. This will include the details of the consultation period and the activities being undertaken, such as dates, times and locations of information events or community webinars. Leaflets will also include details of how to access the project website and communications channels.

**Feedback forms** will be made available for community members to respond to the consultation. These will be available online and in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and by request. Feedback forms can be returned free of charge using the Botley West FREEPOST address (FREEPOST BWSF).

The **Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and Non-Technical Summary (NTS)** will be available to read online, in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and will be available to take away in hard copy by request (for a reasonable charge).

### **Open communication**

Our communications lines are open throughout the entire pre-application stage. Outside of consultation period, through these channels you will be able to speak to a member of our consultation team to ask questions.

You can provide written feedback during the consultation period in the following ways:

- By submitting an online feedback form through the project website
- By completing a paper copy feedback form, which can be submitted at an in-person event or returned via the project freepost address
- By emailing: [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)
- By writing, free of charge, to: FREEPOST BWSF

During consultation periods, questions and requests for more information can be made to the communication channels above, as well as through calling the project's freephone information line on 0808 175 3085 (open 09:00-17:00, Monday-Friday. A voicemail service will operate for out of office hours).

### **Our project website and online information**

A **dedicated project website** ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)) is live and will be updated at the start of the second phase of consultation for you to find out more information and provide your feedback through an online feedback form.

Consultation material will be presented digitally, providing information consistent with that available at information events and Community Access Points through hard copy materials.

### **Advertising and local notices**

**Local press adverts or statutory notices** will be placed in suitable local publications such as the Oxford Times, the Banbury Guardian, the Herald Series and the Witney Gazette to inform local communities of the forthcoming Phase Two consultation. Adverts will include contact information and consultation event dates, times and locations.

**Local information points** such as village halls, places of worship, shops and civic buildings will be provided with posters containing consultation information.

**Parish councils** will be provided with digital materials to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation via their own websites, social media and online community forums. Requests for hard copy materials will also be considered.

### **Local media engagement**

We will be promoting our Phase Two consultation by engaging with local media outlets such as the Oxford Mail and the Witney Gazette. This will support with broadcasting the consultation to a wider audience and further ensure that interested individuals and parties have an opportunity to comment on our proposals.

We will be sending our statutory notifications to statutory consultees under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 and fulfilling the requirements under Sections 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 to advertise the consultation in national and local newspapers.

**Should any changes to our consultation activities be required due to unforeseen events outside of our control, new details will be publicised on our website in line with the methods set out in this SoCC.**

## 8. Community Access Points

Hard copies of this document and Phase Two consultation materials, including our consultation leaflet and feedback form, and Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR), PEIR Non-Technical Summary (NTS) will be available to view at the following locations:

Location	Opening Times
<b>Woodstock Library</b> Fletchers House, Park St, Woodstock OX20 1SN	<b>Tues – Fri:</b> 10am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm <b>Sat:</b> 10am - 12.30pm, 1pm - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> 2pm - 5pm <b>Mon:</b> closed
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council Town Centre Shop</b> 3 Welch Way, Witney, OX28 6JH	<b>Mon – Fri:</b> 9am - 5pm <b>Sat &amp; Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Kidlington Library</b> 23 Oxford Rd, Kidlington, OX5 2BP	<b>Mon &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5pm <b>Tues &amp; Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Weds:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Sat:</b> 9am - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Botley Library</b> 5a Church Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 9TH	<b>Mon, Tues &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5.30pm <b>Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Sat:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Weds &amp; Sun:</b> Closed

### **[Indicative Community Access Points to be agreed]**

All documents are available on our project website ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)). Documents can also be provided in hard copy, including in alternative formats by request. Please note that a reasonable charge may apply.

## 9. The Planning process

**Botley West is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) as it has a proposed generating capacity of over 50 MW. As an NSIP we must apply for a DCO.**

The DCO application will be dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate, the agency responsible for managing the examination process for NSIPs. If accepted, it will then be examined by an independent Examining Authority, which will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS). The SoS will then review the recommendation before deciding on whether to grant a DCO.

For more information on this process, or for advice on how to respond to our pre-application consultation, you can access the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 8 at:

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Advice-note-8.0.pdf>

### **Pre-application**

Botley West must consult with the community and statutory consultees (such as the host Local Planning Authorities and Natural England) in compliance with the Planning Act 2008. To demonstrate this to the Planning Inspectorate, we will submit a Consultation Report alongside the DCO application, containing details of our method for consulting, the feedback submitted in response to the consultation, and how this has influenced our proposals.



### **Acceptance**

The Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has 28 days to decide whether the application meets the required standards to proceed to examination, including whether our consultation has been adequate.



### **Pre-Examination**

Once the application has been accepted the public will be invited to register as an interested party by making a relevant representation. An Examining Authority is also appointed at the Pre-examination stage, and all Interested Parties will be invited to attend a Preliminary Meeting, run and chaired by the Examining Authority.



### **Examination**

During this stage, Interested Parties who have registered by making a Relevant Representation are invited to provide more details of their views in writing or orally at hearings.



### **Recommendation and Decision**

A recommendation to the Secretary of State will be issued by the Planning Inspectorate within three months of the close of the Examination. The Secretary of State then has a further three months to issue a decision on the proposal.



### **Post-decision**

Once a decision has been issued by the Secretary of State, there is a six-week period for legal challenge on the decision.



**PVDP will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and produce an Environmental Statement (ES) for Botley West Solar Farm project.**

EIA is the process of identifying, evaluating and mitigating the likely significant environmental effects of a scheme or project. The ES is the document that records that process and describes the likely significant effects and proposed mitigation measures. The requirement for EIA for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects is transposed into law through the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations).

The EIA Regulations specify which developments and schemes are required to undergo an EIA. The Scheme is a Schedule 2 development and therefore is judged to require an ES to be submitted alongside the application for Development Consent.

The following reports (listed below) will be prepared as part of the ES process and as the DCO application is prepared:

**Scoping Report**

Our Scoping Report was published in [TBC] and described the project and the assessment we will undertake to describe any likely significant impacts to the receiving environment.

Feedback on this from Local Planning Authorities and statutory consultees resulted in a Scoping Opinion, which was published by the Planning Inspectorate on [TBC]. Both of these documents are available to view on the Planning Inspectorate's website: [link to be provided when available].

**Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)**

The PEIR is the document on which we will base our Phase Two statutory consultation. It builds upon the findings from studies and assessment work we have carried out to date and the feedback received through the Phase One consultation and engagement with stakeholders.

This will enable consultees to develop an informed view of the likely significant effects that Botley West may have on the local environment. In

our Phase Two consultation, we will be seeking feedback on the findings of the PEIR.

**Environmental Statement (ES)**

Following our Phase Two consultation, the ES will further develop the content of the PEIR and continue to incorporate the responses from the Phase Two consultation, stakeholder engagement and results of the surveys undertaken. It will also describe any changes to the project and any mitigation measures that need to be implemented. The ES will form part of the DCO application..

## 11. Indicative consultation timeline

*All future dates are indicative and subject to change.*

***Timeline to be inserted for formal SoCC consultation***

## 12. Contact Us

**Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about Botley West Solar Farm.**

You can get in touch with members of our stakeholder engagement team using any of the communications lines listed below.

Should you require any documents in large print, audio or braille then please contact us at the details provided. All graphics and maps in this document are for illustrative purposes only.

Our data privacy statements are available on the project website at the following link: <https://botleywest.co.uk/legal-statements.html>



**Email: [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)**

**Freephone information line: 0808 175 3085**

**Freepost: FREEPOST BWSF**

**Website: [www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)**

## 2 Copy of stakeholder list provided with early working draft SoCC

**Table 5.1.4.1: Statutory consultees, seldom heard groups and non prescribed groups consulted on with local authorities during the early working draft of the SoCC**

<b>Organisation</b>	
The Health & Safety Executive	Stratford on Avon District Council
NHS England	South Oxfordshire District Council
NHS Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOBICB)	Swindon Borough Council
Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust	West Berkshire Council
Natural England	Gloucestershire County Council
Historic England	Warwickshire County Council
Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service	West Northamptonshire Council
South Central Ambulance Service	Buckinghamshire Council
Police & Crime Commissioner (Thames Valley)	Wiltshire Council
The Environment Agency	Reading Borough Council
The Equality and Human Rights Commission	Wokingham Council
Commission on Sustainable Development	Cassington Parish Council
Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board	Woodstock Town Council
Homes England	Hanborough Parish Council
The Joint Nature Conservation Committee	Bladon Parish Council
The Commission for Rural Communities	Begbroke Parish Council
The Maritime and Coastguard Agency	Kidlington Parish Council
The Marine Management Organisation	Eynsham Parish Council
The Civil Aviation Authority	Cumnor Parish Council
National Highways - South East	Wootton (Woodstock) Parish Council
Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) and Passenger Transport Executives (PTEs)	Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp Parish Council
The relevant Highways Authority	Tackley Parish Council
Transport for London	Yarnton Parish Council
Transport Focus (formerly Passengers Council and Passenger Focus)	Freeland Parish Council
The Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee	Wildlife Trust for Berks, Bucks and Oxon (BBOWT)
The Coal Authority	Woodland Trust
The Office of Road and Rail	National Trust - Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire
The relevant Waste Regulation Authority	RSPB
UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA)	Icomos UK
Thames Valley Local Resilience Forum	National Farmers Union - Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire
The Crown Estate Commissioners	CLA South East (Country Landowners Association)

<b>Organisation</b>	
The Forestry Commission	CPRE Oxfordshire
Ministry of Defence	RSPCA Oxford
Office of Nuclear Regulation	Oxfordshire Local Nature Partnership
Network Rail Infrastructure Ltd	Age UK Oxfordshire
Historical Railways Estate	Mind Oxfordshire
The relevant internal drainage board	Oxfordshire Deaf and Hard of Hearing Centre
The Gas & Electricity Markets Authority	Community First Oxfordshire (ACRE)
The Water Services Regulation Authority	Oxon and Bucks Gypsy and Traveller Service
Thames Water	Oxfordshire Family Information Service (OxonFIS)
National Grid Electricity Transmission Plc	Oxfordshire Association for the Blind
National Grid Electricity System Operator Ltd	Oxfordshire Volunteer Befriending Service
The Canal and River Trust	Oxfordshire Chinese Community & Advice Centre
Trinity House	The WI - Oxfordshire
National Air Traffic Systems	Oxfordshire Youth
Royal Mail Group	Down's Syndrome Oxford
West Oxfordshire District Council	Oxford Polish Association
Vale of White Horse District Council	Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action (OCVA)
Cherwell District Council	Oxfordshire All In
Oxfordshire County Council	Oxfordshire Black and Minority Ethnic Community Champions
Oxford City Council	Oxford Community Action
Cotswold District Council	Oxfordshire Community Foundation

### 3 Draft SoCC



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# **Botley West Solar Farm**

Statement of Community Consultation

**July 2023**

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## 1. Introduction

**Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd 'the Applicant' is proposing a new solar farm, situated in Oxfordshire.**

The solar farm will support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system, deliver sustainable, homegrown and low-cost energy to the national grid and enhance the local environment and biodiversity. The project is called Botley West Solar Farm, referred to in this document as 'Botley West'.

This document, known as a Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC"), has been prepared in accordance with Section 47(1) of the Planning Act 2008 (the "Act") and guidance<sup>1</sup> to explain how PVDP intends to carry out its statutory consultation with you, the local community and other interested parties, for the proposed Development Consent Order (DCO) for Botley West.

The approach to consultation set out in this document has been discussed with West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council as the host local authorities within which Botley West Solar Farm will be situated, and as required by Section 47(2) of the Act. We have had regard to the comments that they have made.

PVDP is aware that consultation is a vital stage in the development of their proposals, they wish to listen to your views and work with you to develop their proposals for Botley West. This will allow PVDP to develop plans responsibly and in a manner that recognises local community interests.

This SoCC outlines how PVDP will consult with you during the 'pre-application stage' before they submit their DCO application for the project to the Planning Inspectorate. There is more information on the DCO process in Section 9 of this SoCC.

<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418009/150326\\_Pre-Application\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418009/150326_Pre-Application_Guidance.pdf)

## 2. About Us

**PVDP is a developer of solar power projects across Europe and Japan, with an 18-year track record of delivering large-scale projects.**

PVDP is a privately held company that specialises in the development and asset management of renewable energy projects, ranging from site acquisition, engineering and construction management through to commissioning. SolarFive Ltd is the UK company which owns the grid connection and will be the Applicant for the project.

PVDP has appointed a professional project team to provide support and expertise throughout the consenting stages of Botley West Solar Farm. Together, the project team has significant experience of working on both solar and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

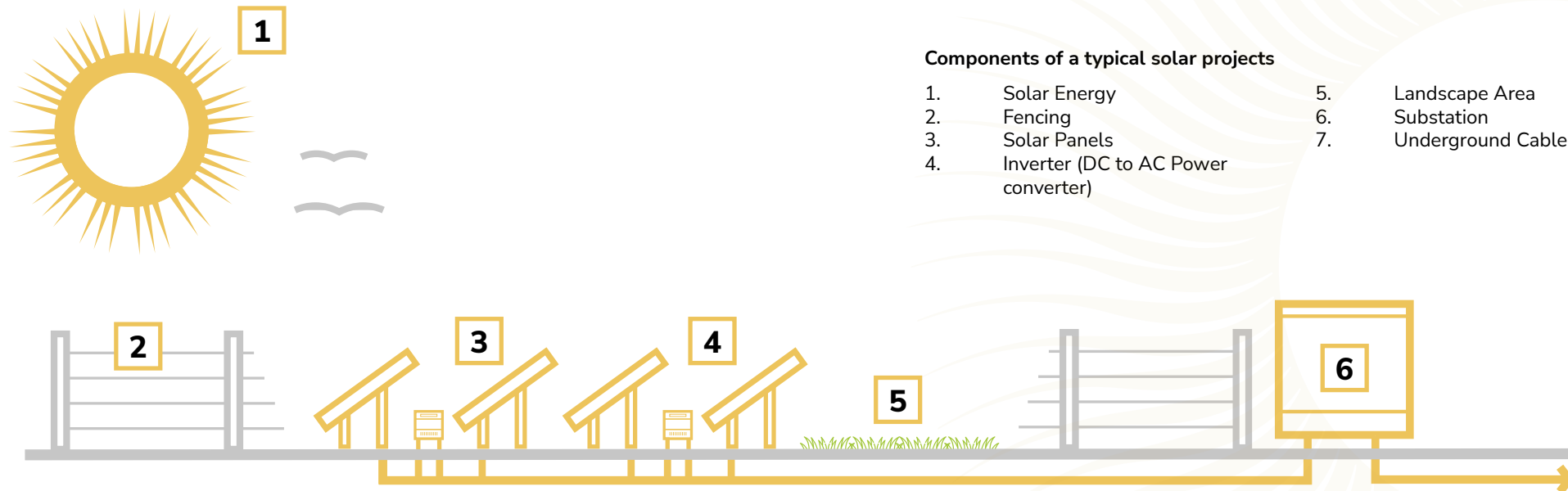
### 3. Botley West Solar Farm

The proposals for Botley West include:

- A solar array, which will provide electricity to the National Grid.
- An output from the solar array of over 50 megawatts (MW).
- Electrical connection infrastructure to a new National Grid substation, together with underground cables to connect the field parcels.
- Mitigation and enhancement measures.
- Other ancillary works including access during construction and operation, fencing, landscaping and drainage.

If approved, Botley West could generate up to 840 MW of renewable energy. The site for the solar farm, including mitigation and enhancement measures, equates to approximately 1,400 hectares (circa 3,450 acres) of land to the northwest, west and southwest of Oxford.

Figure 1: Components of a typical solar project



The proposals for Botley West include:

- Power the equivalent of approximately 330,000 homes.
- Support homegrown, low-cost energy generation that increases the reliability of our national grid.
- Help the UK reach urgent climate change targets while supporting the local environment by delivering a significant biodiversity net gain.
- Provide increased public access to the area by incorporating new and/or linked recreational routes.

*Our vision for Botley West is to support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system, deliver sustainable, homegrown and low-cost energy to the national grid and enhance the local environment and biodiversity.*

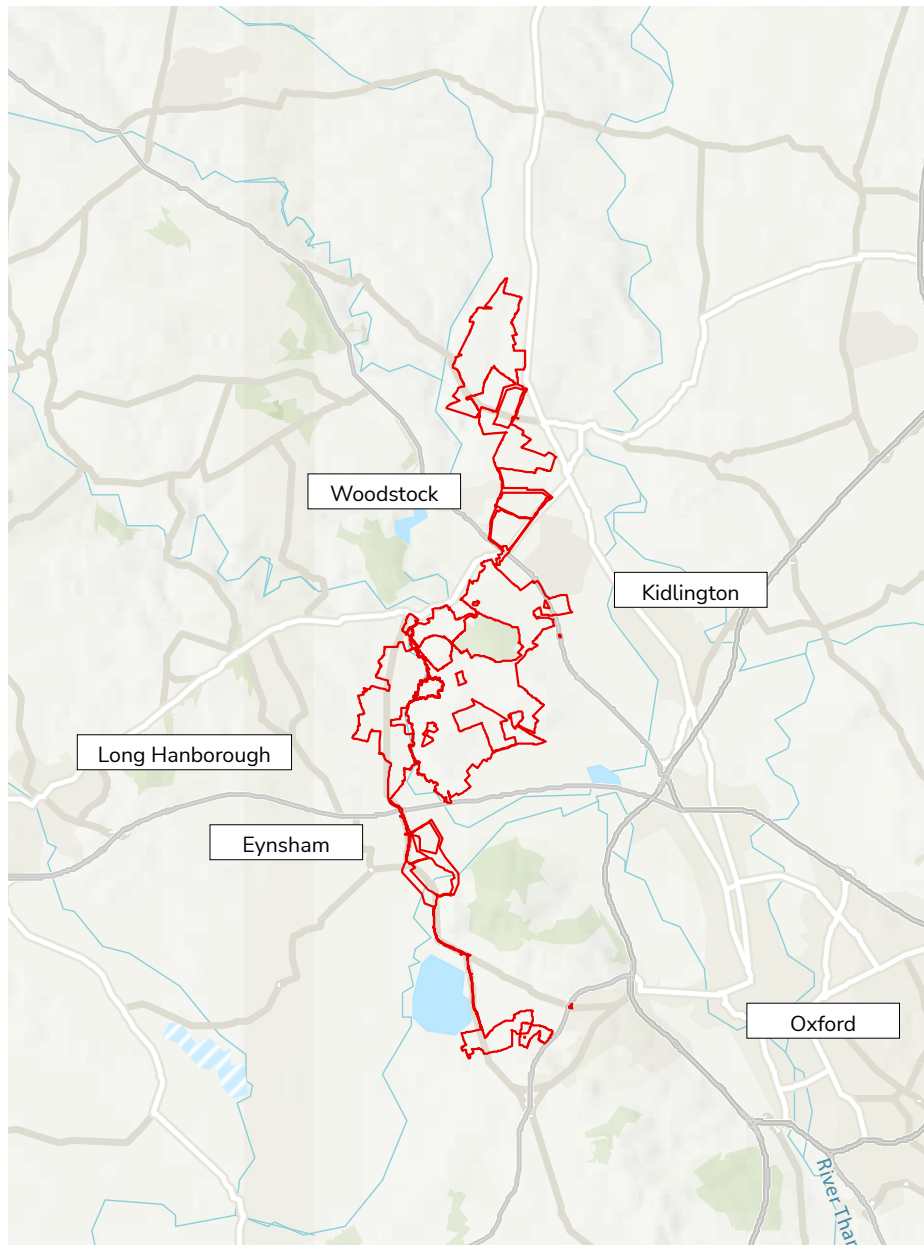
*At a time when energy prices are at an all-time high due to our reliance on imported energy, it is our ambition to create homegrown, low-cost renewable energy that is kind to the environment and helps deliver the UK's commitments to achieving net zero.*

#### Components of a typical solar projects

- |  |                      |
|--|----------------------|
| 1. Solar Energy                        | 5. Landscape Area    |
| 2. Fencing                             | 6. Substation        |
| 3. Solar Panels                        | 7. Underground Cable |
| 4. Inverter (DC to AC Power converter) |                      |



Figure 2: Proposed site boundary



## 4. Our Public Consultation Process

PVDP is undertaking an iterative consultation process for Botley West. The feedback and information we receive will help inform the final design of the project that in turn will form the basis of the Development Consent Order application that we will submit to the Planning Inspectorate for determination by the Secretary of State. Our consultation consists of two phases of community consultation, including:

- A non-statutory Phase One community consultation, lasting seven weeks, which was held from 3 November 2022 until 22 December 2022.
- A statutory Phase Two community consultation, lasting no less than eight weeks, in Autumn 2023.

This SoCC relates to the delivery of the Phase Two consultation. If there are any subsequent consultations (including any targeted consultations) following Phase Two that may be triggered by events such as a material change to the red line boundary, or as a result of feedback from the Phase Two consultation, they will be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC to the extent they are relevant to the subsequent consultation.

### Phase One consultation (3 November 2022 - 22 December 2023)

This non-statutory consultation introduced our early-stage proposals for Botley West to the community. We received feedback on our initial concept plan and the community's knowledge of the local area, allowing us to understand and refine our proposals.

We engaged with local authorities, parish and town councils prior to the launch of consultation. This helped to inform our approach and promote upcoming consultation opportunities.

We posted consultation leaflets and extension postcards to over 22,000 properties within the consultation zone to publicise our consultation.

We organised five in-person information events at Woodstock, Long Hanborough, Cassington, Tackley, and Cumnor, alongside an online webinar. During the consultation period, in response to requests from stakeholders at parish and district councils, we agreed to hold an additional two information events at Eynsham and Begbroke.

The feedback received, together with information from our environmental and technical surveys and discussions with technical stakeholders, has informed the development of our design. Phase One consultation was open to all interested members of the public and featured digital and non-digital methods for engagement.

Our Phase One consultation resulted in a good level of engagement and feedback, with 676 attendees across our events and over 1000 submissions of feedback. We will therefore be replicating our methods of publicity and opportunities for engagement at our phase two consultation.

### **Phase Two consultation (Autumn 2023)**

This statutory consultation, in accordance with Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008, will allow us to update you on our proposals for Botley West. Guidance on the DCO process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>

We will consult on our developed proposals using the results from the ongoing environmental and technical surveys that have been carried out to date. This information will be published in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

Phase Two is the consultation that we must carry out as required by Part 5, Chapter 2, of the Act. More specific details of what we will consult on are listed in Section 5 of this SoCC, and the methods for how we will consult are listed in Section 7.

### **Consultation reporting**

As part of the DCO application, currently anticipated for the end of 2023, we will submit a Consultation Report that:

- Describes our consultation process.
- Explains how we have satisfied and adhered to legal requirements.
- Details how we have worked with Local Planning Authorities to ensure our consultation is suitable for the area through the proposals set out in this SoCC.
- Details the feedback and consultation responses we have received.
- Responds to the feedback we have received, including explaining how we have had regard to all feedback relevant to the project and how it has influenced our proposals.

### **Examination process**

You will also have the opportunity to comment formally on our proposals for Botley West when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. After submission, the Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, will decide whether or not the application meets the standards required to be accepted for examination. Following this the public will be able to register with the Planning Inspectorate to become an Interested Party by making a Relevant Representation which is a summary of a person's views on the application, made in writing. The Planning Inspectorate has up to six months to carry out the examination. During this stage, Interested Parties who have registered by making a Relevant Representation are invited to provide more details of their views in writing. Guidance on the process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>

## 5. What Will We Consult On?

We have already held our Phase One non-statutory consultation to inform the refinement of our early-stage proposals. We will be holding the next phase of statutory consultation on our more detailed proposals.

The aim of our pre-application public consultations is to ensure that both community and technical consultees have a chance to understand and influence our proposals. At each phase of consultation, we will be seeking feedback to help refine our proposals. This will include producing plans and documents to understand and explore potential issues such as, but not limited to:

- Temporary impacts during construction.
- Operational impacts.
- Benefits, such as the opportunity for biodiversity and recreational improvements.

The description and proposed layout of the development of Botley West will be set out in the consultation materials.

	Scope of Consultation
Phase One non-statutory consultation (held 03 November – 22 December 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early-stage concept plan of Botley West including potential mitigation and enhancement areas.</li> <li>• Vision for the project.</li> <li>• Opportunities for delivering biodiversity net gain.</li> <li>• Opportunities for recreational improvements.</li> </ul>
Phase Two statutory consultation (Late 2023)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed plans which have had regard to the comments received during our Phase One consultation and our ongoing assessment work.</li> <li>• Developed design proposals for how Botley West could look to local residents and visitors. This will include visualisations of the solar farm from some key viewpoints.</li> <li>• The proposed cable route for the project including, where relevant, varying route options.</li> <li>• Proposed mitigation measures.</li> <li>• All of the above contained within a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and PEIR Non-Technical Summary (NTS).</li> </ul>

## 6. Who Will We Consult?

We will consult individuals, groups and organisations within an agreed consultation zone. Due to the nationally significant nature of the scheme, the project has determined a broad Core Consultation Zone (CCZ). An initial distance of 2km from the edge of the proposed development boundary has been considered and refined dependant on how the CCZ interacts and bisects property interests on the ground. The CCZ extends beyond 2km in certain areas, for instance to incorporate the entire village of Kidlington so as to not bisect the village. It has been reduced in other areas where there are no property interests within a 2km distance from the boundary of the proposed development. The properties within the Core Consultation Zone will receive communications such as consultation leaflets from us in the post (as set out in section 7). Information events will be held at locations within the Core Consultation Zone, and relevant organisations, such as parish councils and community groups, will be notified of consultation opportunities.

Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within the Core Consultation Zone include: Cassington, Woodstock, Hanborough, Begbroke, Bladon, Kidlington, Eynsham, Cumnor, Wootton, Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp, Tackley, Yarnton, Blenheim, Freeland, Stanton Harcourt and Sutton, Steeple Barton, Rousham, Gosford and Water Eaton, North Leigh and North Hinksey.

### Other interested stakeholders

We recognise that there may be some interested individuals or parties who are not within the Core Consultation Zone. We are committed to ensuring that these interested parties still have an opportunity to view our proposals and have their say. We will publicise consultation opportunities to communities beyond the core consultation zone by advertising in local media and maintaining a register of interested individuals. Informative consultation materials will be published online and available to view and collect via our contact details (for a reasonable charge).

As well as the community consultation, we will be consulting with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees on Botley West Solar Farm, including:

- Owners, tenants and occupiers of the land included within the DCO application.
- MPs, Local Planning Authorities and parish councils.
- Statutory stakeholders, such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.
- Environmental groups, including RSBP and the local Wildlife Trusts.
- Local interest and community groups.

We will be building on engagement already undertaken since the project launch with local authorities, MPs, parish councils and local community groups focussed on agriculture and low carbon energy generation.

### Other groups

The Applicant will design the consultation and prepare the materials so that they are accessible and clear. Additionally, the Applicant will also carry out the activities below.

1. Work with the host local authorities to identify a range of other groups and individuals, including representatives of local seldom heard groups and inform them of the consultation and to see if they need any further assistance to enable their participation.
2. Display the project contact information prominently on all materials to enable individuals to contact them with any questions or requests.
3. Ensure that the consultation leaflet can be made available in alternative forms on request.

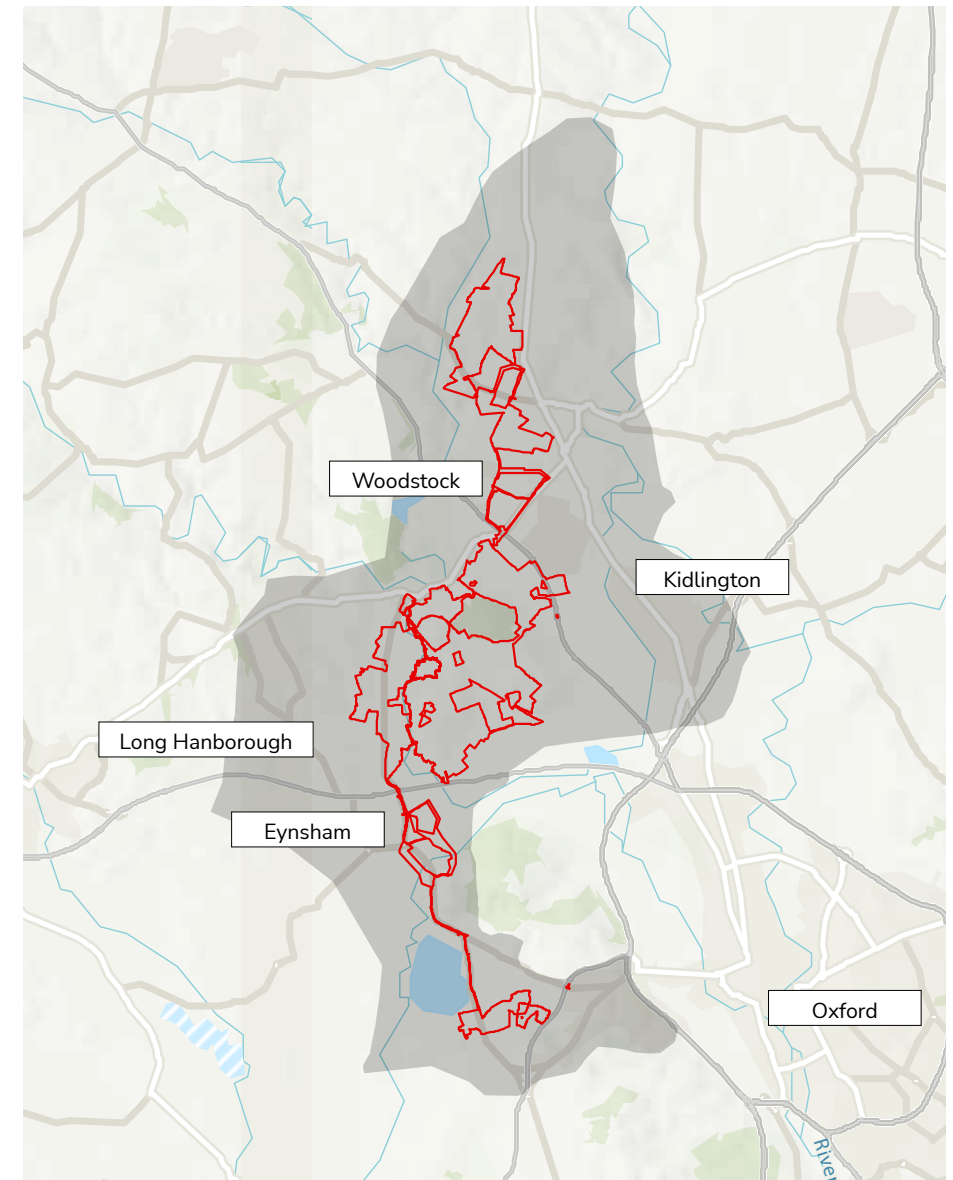
Where possible we will aim to hold events at venues that are accessible and can be reached by public as well as private transport. For anyone with specific additional requirements please contact us our communications channels listed in this document.

**Our consultation process is open to anyone who may be interested in, or in any way feels impacted by, our proposals for Botley West.**

You can get in touch with us at any stage of the development process. Our contact details can be found in Section 12 of this SoCC. We are seeking actively to engage with the widest possible range of individuals and groups. We want our consultation to be accessible for everyone to respond, regardless of their personal circumstances.

You will also have the opportunity to comment formally on our proposals for the project when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Guidance on the process can be found on the PINS website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>.

**Figure 3: Botley West Solar Farm consultation zone**



Based on Site Location Plan used for Phase One consultation, to be updated for formal SoCC consultation

## 7. How Will We Consult?

The consultation activities described in this section of the SoCC ensure inclusive, meaningful and open consultation. The activities include a range of methods to ensure our consultation can be accessed by all members of the community.

Our statutory Phase Two consultation is planned to take place in Autumn 2023. This phase of consultation looks to build on the methods of engagement and publicity used for our first phase of consultation, as well as incorporating feedback received regarding our consultation.

Our Phase Two consultation will be carried out in the following ways:



### Meetings and events

Information events will be held at locations across the Core Consultation Zone (see Section 6). In the event of a booked venue suddenly becoming unavailable, changing Government guidelines due to COVID-19, or other unforeseen circumstances meaning the consultation events must be cancelled, we will inform people as early as possible of the cancellation and, where possible, give details of a substitute event via the scheme's website, on social media, and through the local media. They will be advertised in consultation leaflets, across local media, at local information points and at Community Access Points (CAP) sites (see Section 8).

We will hold at least seven information events during our Phase Two consultation. Considering the feedback received during the first phase of consultation, we are committing to an extensive programme of events, including an event in Bladon. These events will be held on different days of the week including weekends, with varied hours to accommodate different availability within the community.

Location	Date & Time
Community Webinar	<b>Thursday 14th September</b> 5:30pm till 7pm
Tackley Village Hall, Medcroft Road, OX5 3AH	<b>Monday 18th September</b> 3pm till 7p
Seacourt Hall, 3 Church Way, Botley, OX2 9TH	<b>Thursday 21st September</b> 4pm till 8pm
Woodstock Community Centre, New Road, OX20 1PB	<b>Saturday 23rd September</b> 11am till 4pm
Hanborough Pavilion & Village Hall, Roosevelt Road, OX29 8JG	<b>Monday 25th September</b> 2pm till 5pm
Cassington Village Hall, The Green, OX29 4AX	<b>Wednesday 27th September</b> 2pm till 5pm
Bladon Methodist Church, 28 Park Street, Bladon. OX20 1RW	<b>Saturday 30th September</b> 11am till 4pm
Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington, OX5 1AB	<b>Monday 2nd October</b> 3pm till 7pm
Cumnor Village Hall, Leys Road, OX2 9QF	<b>Thursday 5th October</b> 2pm till 6pm
Eynsham Village Hall, 46 Back Ln, Eynsham, OX29 4QW	<b>Friday 6th October</b> 3pm till 7pm
Community Webinar	<b>Monday 9th October</b> 5:30pm till 7pm

Members of the Botley West team will be at these events to answer questions and discuss the proposals in more detail. Project materials setting out the developed proposals will be displayed and available to take away. The PEIR will be available in hard copy for a reasonable charge.

A **webinar** will be held for any member of the public to join via telephone and internet. Participants will be invited to submit questions. Members of the Botley West Solar Farm project team will then respond to the questions on the webinar.

**Meetings and briefing sessions** may be arranged with local parish councils within the area the proposed development will be located, elected members and key local stakeholder groups that are present within the Core Consultation Zone and the wider consultation area.



## Literature

We have noted the feedback received during the first phase of consultation regarding requests for more materials for the second phase of consultation. The text below details the increased number of materials that will be available at the second phase of consultation.

**A Consultation leaflet** will be posted to all properties in the Core Consultation Zone at the start of Phase Two consultation. These leaflets will also be available online, to collect from Community Access Points, and to take away from our information events. Leaflets can also be posted to those outside the Core Consultation Zone on request.

We have also considered how our posted materials are presented to encourage engagement with them following feedback regarding the plain envelopes our phase one leaflets were posted in.

These leaflets will outline the updates in the proposals that have been made since the first phase of consultation, on design and environmental mitigation. They will publicise the Phase Two consultation opportunities and the information being consulted on. This will include the details of the consultation period and the activities being undertaken, such as dates, times and locations of information events or community webinars. Leaflets will also include details of how to access the project website and communications channels.

**Feedback forms** will be made available for community members to respond to the consultation. These will be available online and in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and by request. Feedback forms can be returned free of charge using the Botley West FREEPOST address (FREEPOST BWSF).

**The Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and Non-Technical Summary (NTS)** will be available to read online, in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and will be available to take away in hard copy by request (for a reasonable charge).



## Open communication

Our communications lines are open throughout the entire pre-application stage. Outside of consultation period, through these channels you will be able to speak to a member of our consultation team to ask questions.

You can provide written feedback during the consultation period in the following ways:

- By submitting an online feedback form through the project website
- By completing a paper copy feedback form, which can be submitted at an in-person event or returned via the project freepost address
- By emailing: [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)
- By writing, free of charge, to: FREEPOST BWSF

During consultation periods, questions and requests for more information can be made to the communication channels above, as well as through calling the project's freephone information line on 0808 175 3085 (open 09:00-17:00, Monday-Friday. A voicemail service will operate for out of office hours).



## Our project website and online information

A dedicated project website ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)) is live and will be updated at the start of the second phase of consultation for you to find out more information and to provide your feedback through an online feedback form.

Consultation material will be presented digitally, providing information consistent with that available at information events and Community Access Points through hard copy materials.



### Advertising and local notices

Local press adverts or statutory notices will be placed in suitable local publications such as the Oxford Times, the Banbury Guardian, the Herald Series and the Witney Gazette to inform local communities of the forthcoming Phase Two consultation. Adverts will include contact information and consultation event dates, times and locations.

Local information points such as village halls, places of worship, shops and civic buildings will be provided with posters containing consultation information. Parish councils will be provided with digital materials to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation via their own websites, social media and online community forums. Requests for hard copy materials will also be considered.



### Local media engagement

We will be promoting our Phase Two consultation by engaging with local media outlets such as the Oxford Mail and the Witney Gazette. This will broadcast the consultation to a wider audience and further ensure that interested individuals and parties have an opportunity to comment on our proposals.

We will be sending our statutory notifications to statutory consultees under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 and fulfilling the requirements under Sections 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 to advertise the consultation in national and local newspapers.

**Should any changes to our consultation activities be required due to unforeseen events outside of our control, new details will be publicised on our website in line with the methods set out in this SoCC.**

## 8. Community Access Points

Location	Opening Times
<b>Woodstock Library</b> Fletchers House, Park St, Woodstock OX20 1SN	<b>Tues – Fri:</b> 10am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm <b>Sat:</b> 10am - 12.30pm, 1pm - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> 2pm - 5pm <b>Mon:</b> closed
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council Town Centre Shop</b> 3 Welch Way, Witney, OX28 6JH	<b>Mon – Fri:</b> 9am - 5pm <b>Sat &amp; Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Kidlington Library</b> 23 Oxford Rd, Kidlington, OX5 2BP	<b>Mon &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5pm <b>Tues &amp; Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Weds:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Sat:</b> 9am - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Botley Library</b> 5a Church Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 9TH	<b>Mon, Tues &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5.30pm <b>Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Sat:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Weds &amp; Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Eynsham Library</b> 30 Mill Street, Eynsham, OX29 4JS	<b>Mon:</b> 9:30am-1pm and 2pm and 5pm <b>Wed &amp; Thurs:</b> 1pm-5pm <b>Friday:</b> 1-7pm <b>Sat:</b> 9:30-1pm

All documents are available on our project website ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)). Documents can also be provided in hard copy, including in alternative formats by request. Please note that a reasonable charge may apply.

## 9. The Planning Process

**Botley West is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) as it has a proposed generating capacity of over 50 MW. As an NSIP we must apply for a Development Consent Order (DCO).**

The DCO application will be dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate, the agency responsible for managing the examination process for NSIPs. If accepted, it will then be examined by an independent Examining Authority, which will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS). The SoS will then review the recommendation before deciding on whether to grant a DCO.

For more information on this process, or for advice on how to respond to our pre-application consultation, you can access the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 8 at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Advice-note-8.0.pdf>

### Pre-application

Botley West must consult with the community and statutory consultees (such as the host Local Planning Authorities and Natural England) in compliance with the Planning Act 2008. To demonstrate this to the Planning Inspectorate, we will submit a Consultation Report alongside the DCO application, containing details of our method for consulting, the feedback submitted in response to the consultation, and how this has influenced our proposals.



### Acceptance

The Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has 28 days to decide whether the application meets the required standards to proceed to examination, including whether our consultation has been adequate.



### Pre-Examination

Once the application has been accepted the public will be invited to register as an interested party by making a relevant representation. An Examining Authority is also appointed at the Pre-examination stage, and all Interested Parties will be invited to attend a Preliminary Meeting, run and chaired by the Examining Authority.



### Examination

During this stage, Interested Parties who have registered by making a Relevant Representation are invited to provide more details of their views in writing or orally at hearings.



### Examination

During this stage, Interested Parties who have registered by making a Relevant Representation are invited to provide more details of their views in writing or orally at hearings.



### Post-decision

Once a decision has been issued by the Secretary of State, there is a six-week period for legal challenge on the decision.



## 10. Environmental Information

PVDP will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and produce an Environmental Statement (ES) for the Botley West Solar Farm project.

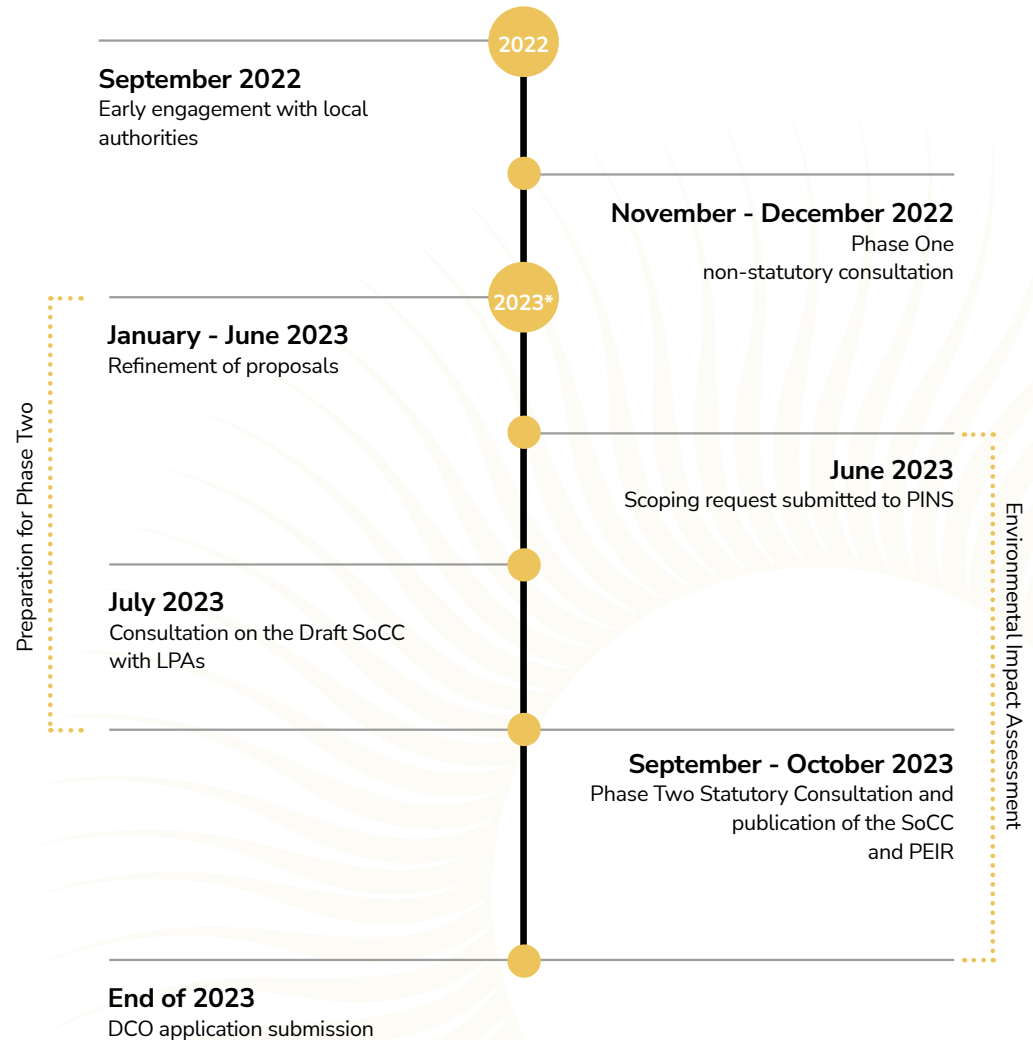
EIA is the process of identifying, evaluating and mitigating the likely significant environmental effects of a scheme or project. The ES is the document that records that process and describes the likely significant effects and proposed mitigation measures. The requirement for EIA for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects is transposed into law through the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations).

The EIA Regulations specify which developments and schemes are required to undergo an EIA. The Scheme is a Schedule 2 development and is judged to require an ES to be submitted alongside the application for Development Consent.

The following reports (listed below) will be prepared as part of the ES process and as the DCO application is prepared:

Scoping Report
<p>Our Scoping Report was published on 15 June 2023 and described the project and the assessment we will undertake to describe any likely significant impacts to the receiving environment.</p> <p>Feedback on this from Local Planning Authorities and statutory consultees will be published in the Scoping Opinion, which will be issued by the Planning Inspectorate. Both of these documents will be available to view on the Planning Inspectorate’s website: <a href="https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/botley-west-solar-farm/?ipcsection=docs">https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/botley-west-solar-farm/?ipcsection=docs</a></p>
Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)
<p>The PEIR is the document on which we will base our Phase Two statutory consultation. It builds upon the findings from studies and assessment work we have carried out to date and the feedback received through the Phase One consultation and engagement with stakeholders. This will enable consultees to develop an informed view of the likely significant effects that Botley West may have on the local environment. In our Phase Two consultation, we will be seeking feedback on the findings of the PEIR.</p>
Environmental Statement (ES)
<p>Following our Phase Two consultation, the ES will further develop the content of the PEIR and continue to incorporate the responses from the Phase Two consultation, stakeholder engagement and results of the surveys undertaken. It will also describe any changes to the project and any mitigation measures that need to be implemented. The ES will form part of the DCO application.</p>

## 11. Indicative Consultation Timeline



All future dates are indicative and subject to change.

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## Contact us

**Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about Botley West Solar Farm.**

You can get in touch with members of our stakeholder engagement team using any of the communications lines listed below.

Should you require any documents in large print, audio or braille then please contact us at the details provided. All graphics and maps in this document are for illustrative purposes only.

Our data privacy statements are available on the project website at the following link: <https://botleywest.co.uk/legal-statements.html>



**Email: [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)**



**Freephone Information Line: 0808 175 3085**

Available Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Voicemails can be left outside of these hours



**Freepost: BWSF**

You will not need a stamp to send any correspondence to the freepost address



**Website: [www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)**

## 4 Letter to local authorities sent alongside draft SoCC



[Contact Name]

[Job Title]

[Local Planning Authority]

[Address Line 1]

[Address Line 2]

[Address Line 3]

[Address Line 4]

[Postcode]

Sent via email to: XXXX

14 July 2023

Dear XXXX,

**Botley West Solar Farm: Section 47 Planning Act (2008) Consultation on Draft Statement of Community Consultation with Local Planning Authorities**

Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd is proposing to build and operate a new ground mounted solar farm in Oxfordshire. The development site (the Site) has a total area of approximately 1400 hectares (ha) and is located within parts of the administrative areas of Cherwell, West Oxfordshire and The Vale of White Horse Districts.

The proposals for Botley West have an anticipated potential output from the solar array of over 50 MW. Accordingly, it will be classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and must comply with the Development Consent Order (DCO) regime as defined in the Planning Act 2008 ('2008 Act').

As part of our duty to consult the local community on the proposals for Botley West, we have prepared a draft Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC). The draft SoCC outlines how communities can engage throughout the development process and explains how we intend to consult with communities in the vicinity of the project.

Local authorities have an important role in the 2008 Act process. In accordance with Section 47(2) of the 2008 Act, Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd is required to consult with the host local authorities on the draft SoCC, as set out under Section 43(1) of the 2008



Email us at:  
[info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)



Call our Freephone information line:  
0808 175 3085



Write to us at:  
FREEPOST BWSF



Visit our website at:  
[www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)



Act. We are seeking the views from local authorities with an administrative boundary that our proposed core consultation zone extends into. Your input will be used to ensure that the people affected by the proposed development can take part in a thorough, accessible, and effective consultation exercise.

We recognise that effective and appropriate consultation is of critical importance to this project. As a local authority, we strongly welcome your local knowledge and insight to advise us on how best to conduct community consultation. Building on the initial feedback provided to our early working draft of the SoCC, you are invited to comment on any aspect of the SoCC you consider appropriate. In particular, we seek your guidance to inform:

- **Section 4 – Our public consultation process:** we welcome your comments and suggestions on our iterative and phased approach to consultation.
- **Section 6 – Who will we consult?:** we welcome your comments and suggestions on our approach to ensuring accessible consultation. Please do let us know of any parish councils (beyond those we have listed), community or “hard to reach’ groups you advise us engaging with. We will be contacting these groups ahead of our Stage Two consultation, to ensure our actives are well-publicised and accessible. Please also note the extent of our Consultation Zone, shown in Figure 3.
- **Section 7 – How will we consult?:** we welcome your comments and suggestions on our proposed range of consultation and publicity activities. This includes the proposed channels of consultation, the number and location of in-person and online information events we will hold, and the local newspapers we will be using to publicise our consultation.
- **Section 8 – Community Access Points:** we welcome your comments and suggestions on our proposed community access points and guidance on accessing these facilities.

In accordance with Section 47(3) of the 2008 Act, a statutory 28 days for comments is provided. This period will commence on the day after the local authority receives the consultation documents. We kindly request all comments to the draft SoCC to be received **no later than Monday 14 August**.

Following receipt of all comments from the local authorities, we will seek to incorporate comments and suggestions and, as required in Section 47(5) of the 2008 Act, demonstrate the regard had to all comments received.

Photovoltaic Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd intends to publicise the SoCC in August 2023. The SoCC will be publicised across our consultation zone and wider consultation area through local media, local notices and online via our dedicated project website.

Shortly after publicising our SoCC, we intend to launch our Phase Two statutory consultation. This will be further publicised in line with the methods set out in the SoCC, including sending a Community Consultation Leaflet to an agreed consultation zone. This will provide information on our proposals and Phase Two consultation opportunities. As set out in the draft SoCC, we will be holding a series of community consultation activities during the Phase Two consultation period, to present



Email us at:  
[info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)



Call our Freephone information line:  
0808 175 3085



Write to us at:  
FREEPOST BWSF



Visit our website at:  
[www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)



our detailed design, mitigation, and enhancement proposals for Botley West. This will involve utilising a range of digital and non-digital channels.

We invite all comments to the attached draft SoCC be received no later than **Monday 14 August 2023** through the following contact details:

**Project email:** [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)

**Postal address:** FREEPOST BWSF

Please do not hesitate to get in contact with the project team at any time using the details provided or via our project Freephone information line: 0808 175 3085.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Owen-Lloyd

Project Developer, Botley West Solar Farm



Email us at:  
[info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)



Call our Freephone information line:  
0808 175 3085



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## 5 Published SoCC



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# **Botley West Solar Farm**

Statement of Community Consultation

**November 2023**

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## 1. Introduction

**Photovolt Development Partners GmbH (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd ('the Applicant') is proposing a new solar farm, situated in Oxfordshire.**

The solar farm will support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system, deliver sustainable, homegrown and low-cost energy to the national grid and enhance the local environment and biodiversity. The project is called Botley West Solar Farm, referred to in this document as 'Botley West'.

This document, known as a Statement of Community Consultation ("SoCC"), has been prepared in accordance with Section 47(1) of the Planning Act 2008 (the "Act") and provides guidance to explain how PVDP intends to carry out its statutory consultation with you, the local community and other interested parties, for the proposed Development Consent Order (DCO) for Botley West.

The approach to consultation set out in this document has been discussed with West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and Oxfordshire County Council as the host local authorities within which Botley West Solar Farm will be situated, and as required by Section 47(2) of the Act. We received comments from West Oxfordshire District Council, Cherwell District Council, and Vale of White Horse District Council. We have had regard to the comments they have made. Oxfordshire County Council have confirmed that they have no comments on this document.

PVDP is aware that consultation is a vital stage in the development of their proposals, they wish to listen to your views and work with you to develop their proposals for Botley West. This will allow PVDP to develop plans responsibly and in a manner that recognises local community interests.

This SoCC outlines how PVDP will consult with you during the 'pre-application stage' before they submit their DCO application for the project to the Planning Inspectorate. There is more information on the DCO process in Section 9 of this SoCC.

<sup>1</sup> [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/418009/150326\\_Pre-Application\\_Guidance.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/418009/150326_Pre-Application_Guidance.pdf)

## 2. About Us

**PVDP is a developer of solar power projects across Europe and Japan, with an 18-year track record of delivering large-scale projects.**

PVDP is a privately held company that specialises in the development and asset management of renewable energy projects, ranging from site acquisition, engineering and construction management through to commissioning. PVDP has established a UK company, SolarFive Ltd for developing Botley West. Therefore, SolarFive Ltd is the UK company which owns the grid connection and will be the Applicant for the project.

PVDP has appointed a professional project team to provide support and expertise throughout the consenting stages of Botley West Solar Farm. Together, the project team has significant experience of working on both solar and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

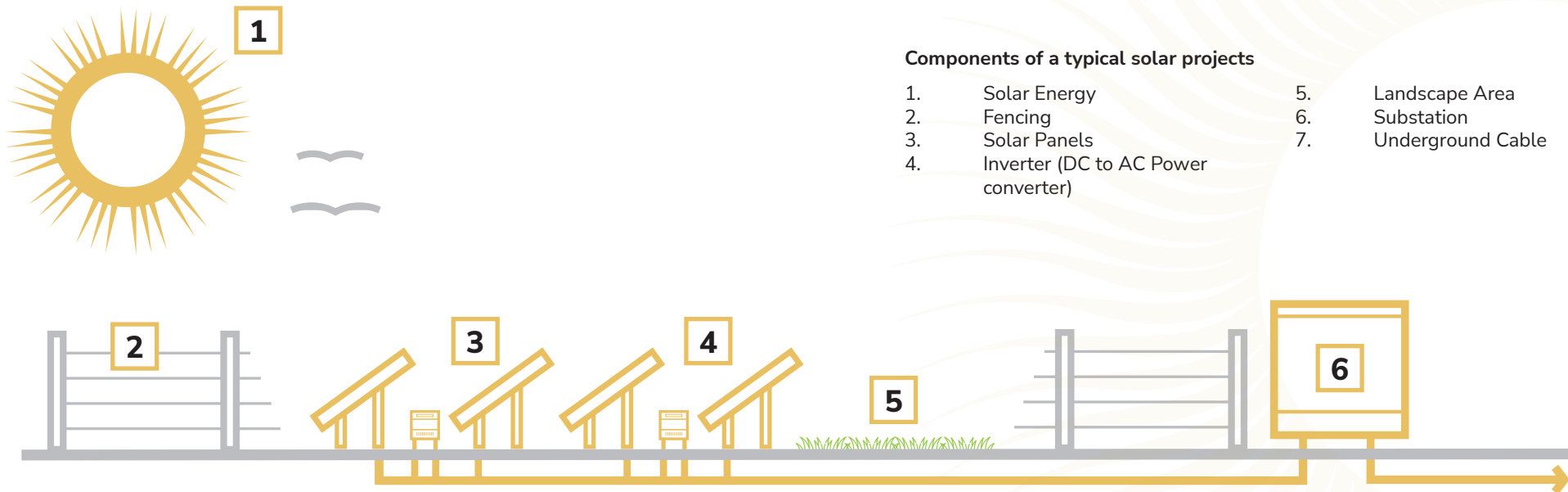
### 3. Botley West Solar Farm

The proposals for Botley West include:

- A solar array, which will provide electricity to the National Grid.
- An output from the solar array of over 50 megawatts (MW).
- Electrical connection infrastructure to a new National Grid substation, together with underground cables to connect the field parcels.
- Mitigation and enhancement measures.
- Other ancillary works including access during construction and operation, fencing, landscaping and drainage.

If approved, Botley West could generate up to 840 MW of renewable energy. The site for the solar farm, including mitigation and enhancement measures, equates to approximately 1,300 hectares (circa 3200 acres) of land to the northwest, west and southwest of Oxford.

Figure 1: Components of a typical solar project



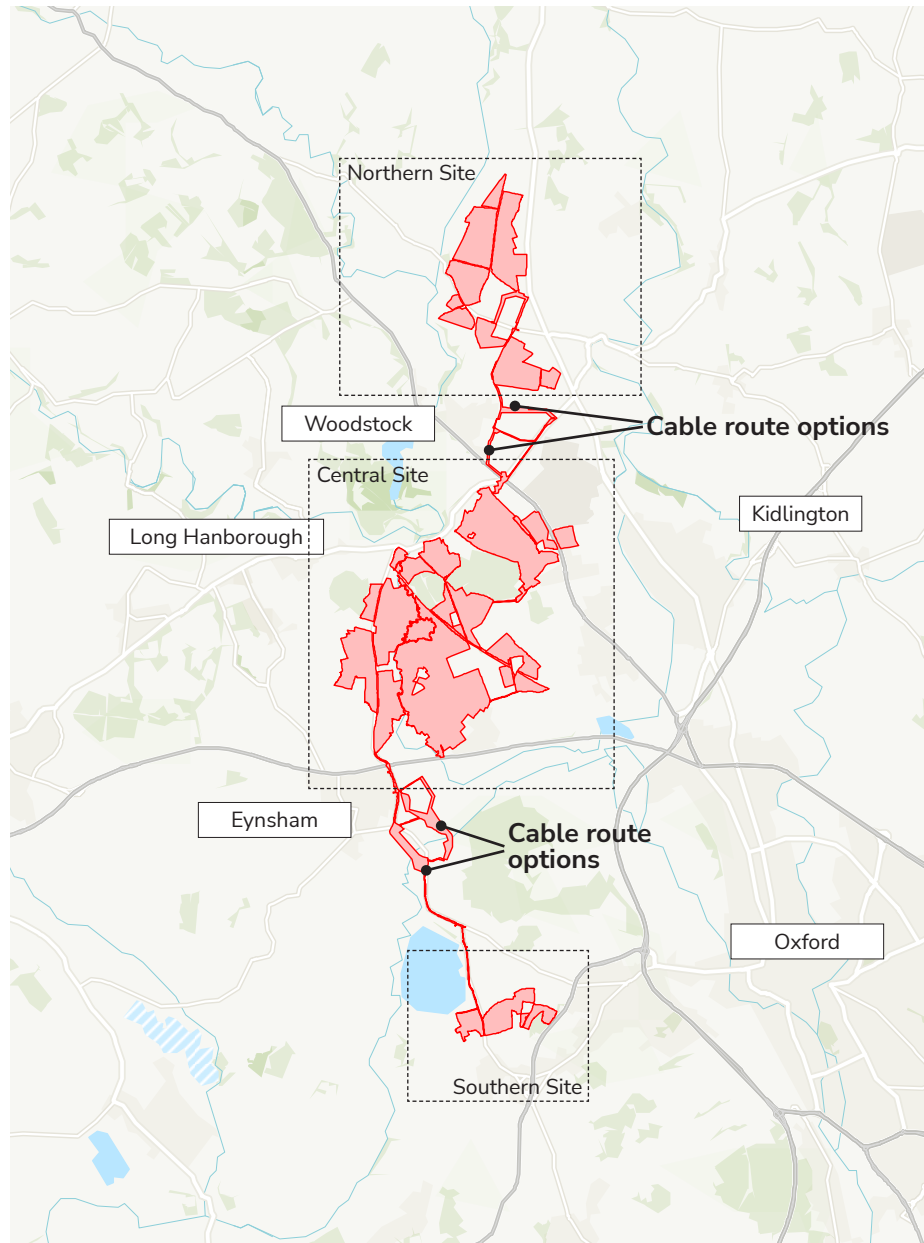
The proposals for Botley West include:

- Power the equivalent of approximately 330,000 homes.
- Support homegrown, low-cost energy generation that increases the reliability of our national grid.
- Help the UK reach urgent climate change targets while supporting the local environment by delivering a significant biodiversity net gain.
- Provide increased public access to the area by incorporating new and/or linked recreational routes.

*Our vision for Botley West is to support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system, deliver sustainable, homegrown, and low-cost energy to the national grid and enhance the local environment and biodiversity.*

*At a time when energy prices are at an all-time high due to our reliance on imported energy, it is our ambition to create homegrown, low-cost renewable energy that is kind to the environment and helps deliver the UK's commitments to achieving net zero.*

Figure 2: Proposed site boundary



## 4. Our Public Consultation Process

PVDP is undertaking an iterative consultation process for Botley West. The feedback and information we receive will help inform the final design of the project, that in turn will form the basis of the Development Consent Order application that we will submit to the Planning Inspectorate for determination by the Secretary of State. Our consultation consists of two phases of community consultation, including:

- A non-statutory Phase One community consultation, lasting seven weeks, which was held from 3 November 2022 until 22 December 2022.
- A statutory Phase Two community consultation, lasting 10 weeks, from 30 November 2023 until 8 February 2024.

This SoCC relates to the delivery of the Phase Two consultation. If there are any subsequent consultations (including any targeted consultations) following Phase Two that may be triggered by events such as a material change to the red line boundary, or as a result of feedback from the Phase Two consultation, they will be undertaken in a manner that is consistent with the principles and methods set out in this SoCC to the extent they are relevant to the subsequent consultation.

### Phase One consultation (3 November 2022 until 22 December 2022)

This non-statutory consultation introduced our early-stage proposals for Botley West to the community. We received feedback on our initial concept plan and the community's knowledge of the local area, allowing us to understand and refine our proposals.

We engaged with local authorities, parish and town councils prior to the launch of consultation. This helped to inform our approach and promote upcoming consultation opportunities.

We posted consultation leaflets and extension postcards to over 22,000 properties within the consultation zone to publicise our consultation.

Seven in-person information events were held during the consultation period. They were held in Woodstock, Long Hanborough, Cassington, Tackley, Cumnor, Eynsham and Begbroke, alongside an online webinar. The events in Eynsham and Begbroke were agreed to be held in response to requests from stakeholders at parish and district councils.

The feedback received, together with information from our environmental and technical surveys and discussions with technical stakeholders, has informed the development of our design. Phase One consultation was open to all interested members of the public and featured digital and non-digital methods for engagement.

Our Phase One consultation resulted in a good level of engagement and feedback, with 676 attendees across our events and over 1000 submissions of feedback. We will therefore be replicating our methods of publicity and opportunities for engagement at our Phase Two consultation.

### **Phase Two consultation (30 November 2023 until 8 February 2024)**

This statutory consultation, in accordance with Sections 42, 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008, will allow us to update you on our proposals for Botley West. Guidance on the DCO process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>

We will consult on our developed proposals using the results from the ongoing environmental and technical surveys that have been carried out to date. This information will be published in our Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR).

Phase Two is the consultation that we must carry out as required by Part 5, Chapter 2, of the Planning Act 2008. More specific details of what we will consult on are listed in Section 5 of this SoCC, and the methods for how we will consult are listed in Section 7.

### **Consultation reporting**

As part of the DCO application, currently anticipated for Spring 2024, we will submit a Consultation Report that:

- Describes our consultation process.
- Explains how we have satisfied and adhered to legal requirements.
- Details how we have worked with Local Planning Authorities to ensure our consultation is suitable for the area through the proposals set out in this SoCC.
- Details the feedback and consultation responses we have received.
- Responds to the feedback we have received, including explaining how we have had regard to all feedback relevant to the project and how it has influenced our proposals.

### **Examination process**

You will also have the opportunity to comment formally on our proposals for Botley West when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. After submission, the Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, will decide whether or not the application meets the standards required to be accepted for examination. Following this the public will be able to register with the Planning Inspectorate to become an Interested Party by making a Relevant Representation which is a summary of a person's views on the application, made in writing. The Planning Inspectorate has up to six months to carry out the examination. During this stage, Interested Parties who have registered by making a Relevant Representation are invited to provide more details of their views in writing. Guidance on the process can be found on the Planning Inspectorate's website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>

## 5. What Will We Consult On?

We have already held our Phase One non-statutory consultation to inform the refinement of our early-stage proposals. We will be holding the next phase of statutory consultation on our more detailed proposals.

The aim of our pre-application public consultations is to ensure that both community and technical consultees have a chance to understand and influence our proposals. At each phase of consultation, we will be seeking feedback to help refine our proposals. This will include producing plans and documents to understand and explore potential issues such as, but not limited to:

- Temporary impacts during construction.
- Operational impacts.
- Benefits, such as the opportunity for biodiversity and recreational improvements.

The description and proposed layout of the development of Botley West, will be set out in the consultation materials.

	Scope of Consultation
Phase One non-statutory consultation (held 03 November – 22 December 2022)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early-stage concept plan of Botley West including potential mitigation and enhancement areas.</li> <li>• Vision for the project.</li> <li>• Opportunities for delivering biodiversity net gain.</li> <li>• Opportunities for recreational improvements.</li> </ul>
Phase Two statutory consultation (30 November 2023 - 8 February 2024)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed plans which have had regard to the comments received during our Phase One consultation and our ongoing assessment work.</li> <li>• Developed design proposals for how Botley West could look to local residents and visitors. This will include visualisations of the solar farm from some key viewpoints.</li> <li>• The proposed cable route for the project including, where relevant, varying route options.</li> <li>• Proposed mitigation measures.</li> <li>• All of the above contained within a Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and PEIR Non-Technical Summary (NTS).</li> </ul>

## 6. Who Will We Consult?

We will consult anybody who is interested in taking part in the consultation. Due to the nationally significant nature of the scheme, the project has determined a broad Core Consultation Zone (CCZ), which can be viewed on page 13 of this document. We will proactively contact individuals, groups and organisations within the CCZ. The properties within the CCZ will receive communications such as consultation leaflets from us in the post (as set out in section 7). Information events will be held at locations within the CCZ, and relevant organisations, such as parish councils and community groups, will be notified of consultation opportunities.

An initial distance of 2km from the edge of the proposed solar development areas, and 500m from the proposed cable route, has been considered and refined dependent on how the CCZ interacts and bisects property interests. The CCZ extends beyond 2km in certain areas, for instance to incorporate the entire village of Kidlington so as to not bisect the village. It has been reduced in other areas where there are no property interests within a 2km distance from the boundary of the proposed development.

Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings within the Core Consultation Zone include: Cassington, Woodstock, Hanborough, Begbroke, Bladon, Kidlington, Eynsham, Cumnor, Wootton, Shipton-on-Cherwell and Thrupp, Tackley, Yarnton, Blenheim, Freeland, Stanton Harcourt and Sutton, Steeple Barton, Rousham, Gosford and Water Eaton, North Leigh, and North Hinksey.

### Other interested stakeholders

We recognise that there may be some interested individuals or parties who are not within the Core Consultation Zone. We are committed to ensuring that these interested parties still have an opportunity to view our proposals and have their say. We will publicise consultation opportunities to communities beyond the CCZ by advertising in local media and maintaining a register of interested individuals. Informative consultation materials will be published online and available to view online, can be requested via our contact details and collected via our Community Access Points on page 19 of this document. (Reasonable charges may apply).

As well as the community consultation, we will be consulting with a range of statutory and non-statutory consultees on Botley West Solar Farm, including:

- Owners, tenants and occupiers of the land included within the DCO application.
- MPs, Local Planning Authorities and parish councils.
- Statutory stakeholders, such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.
- Environmental groups, including RSBP and the local Wildlife Trusts.
- Local interest and community groups.

We will be building on engagement already undertaken since the project launch with local authorities, MPs, parish councils and relevant interest groups.

### Other groups

We will design the consultation and prepare the materials so that they are accessible and clear. Additionally, we will also carry out the activities below:

1. Work with the host local authorities to identify a range of other groups and individuals, including representatives of local seldom heard groups and inform them of the consultation and to see if they need any further assistance to enable their participation and the individuals and groups that they represent.
2. Display the project contact information prominently on all materials to enable individuals to contact them with any questions or requests.
3. Ensure that the consultation leaflet can be made available in alternative forms on request.

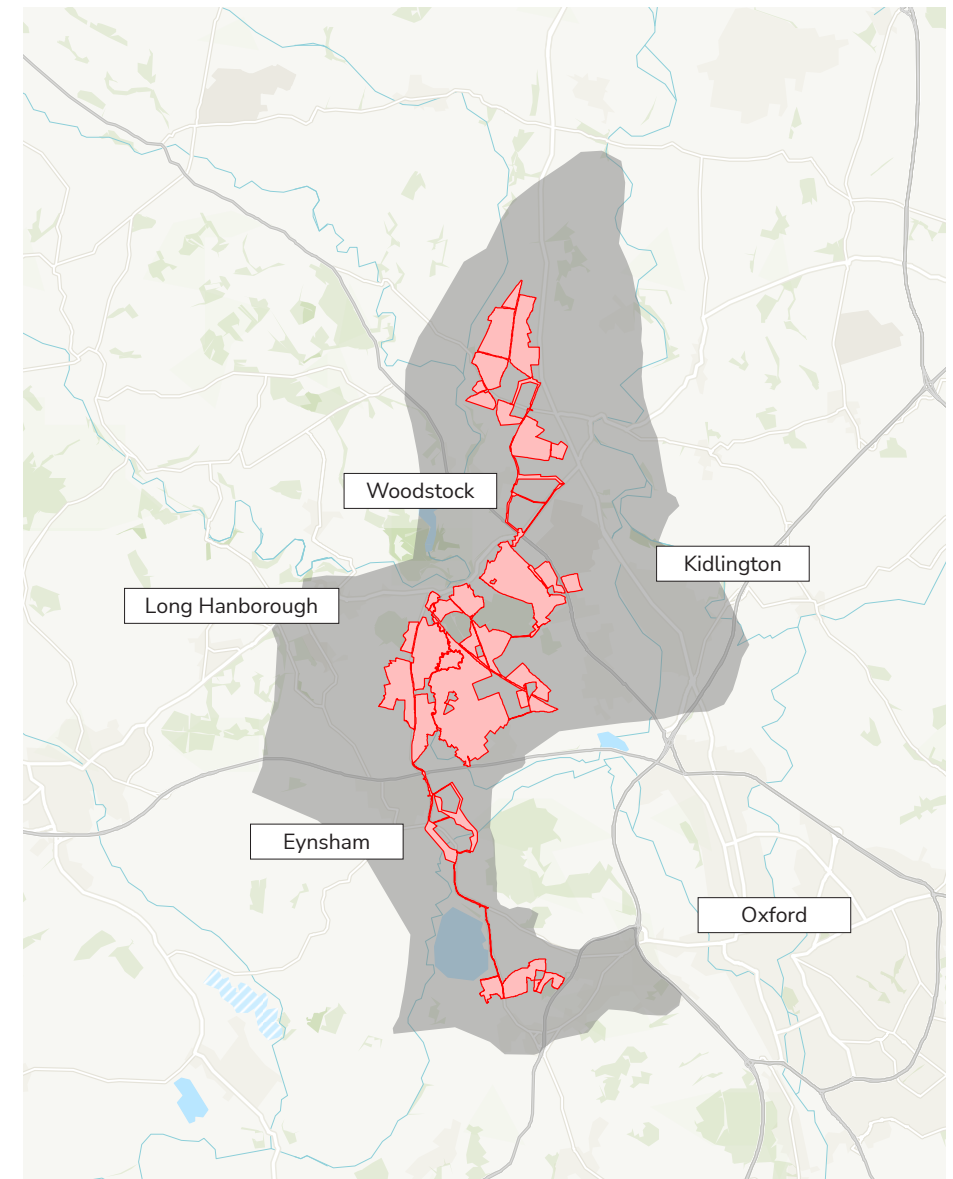
Where possible we will aim to hold events at venues that are accessible and can be reached by public as well as private transport. For anyone with specific additional requirements please contact us our communications channels listed in this document.

**Our consultation process is open to anyone who may be interested in, or in any way feels impacted by, our proposals for Botley West. This includes those within or outside of the consultation zone.**

You can get in touch with us at any stage of the development process. Our contact details can be found in Section 12 of this SoCC. We are seeking to actively engage with the widest possible range of individuals and groups. We want our consultation to be accessible for everyone to respond, regardless of their personal circumstances.

You will also have the opportunity to comment formally on our proposals for the project when the DCO application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. Guidance on the process can be found on the PINS website at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/legislation-and-advice>.

**Figure 3: Botley West Solar Farm consultation zone**



## 7. How Will We Consult?

The consultation activities described in this section of the SoCC ensure inclusive, meaningful and open consultation. The activities include a range of methods to ensure our consultation can be accessed by all members of the community.

Our statutory Phase Two consultation is planned to take place from 30 November 2023 until 8 February 2024. This phase of consultation looks to build on the methods of engagement and publicity used for our first phase of consultation, as well as incorporating feedback received regarding our consultation.

Our Phase Two consultation will be carried out in the following ways:



### Meetings and events

In-person information events will be held at locations across the Core Consultation Zone (see Section 6). In the event of a booked venue suddenly becoming unavailable, or other unforeseen circumstances meaning the consultation events must be cancelled, we will inform people as early as possible of the cancellation and, where possible, give details of a substitute event via the scheme's website, on social media, and through the local media. They will be advertised in consultation leaflets, across local media, at local information points and at Community Access Points (CAP) sites (see Section 8).

We will hold at least seven in-person information events during our Phase Two consultation. Considering the feedback received during the first phase of consultation, we are committing to an extensive programme of events, including an event in Bladon. These events will be held on different days of the week including weekends, with varied hours to accommodate different availability within the community.

Location	Date & Time
<b>Bladon Methodist Church,</b> 28 Park Street, Bladon, OX20 1RW	<b>Friday 8th December 2023</b> 3pm - 7:30pm
<b>Woodstock Community Centre,</b> 32 New Road, OX20 1PB	<b>Saturday 9th December 2023</b> 11am - 3pm
<b>Begbroke Village Hall,</b> 3 Begbroke Lane, Kidlington, OX5 1RN	<b>Tuesday 12th December 2023</b> 3pm - 7:30pm
<b>Hanborough Pavilion &amp; Village Hall,</b> Roosevelt Road, OX29 8JG	<b>Wednesday 13th December 2023</b> 1pm - 5pm
<b>Cassington Village Hall,</b> The Green, OX29 4AX	<b>Friday 12th January 2024</b> 3pm - 7:30pm
<b>Woodstock Community Centre,</b> 32 New Road, OX20 1PB	<b>Saturday 13th January 2024</b> 11am - 3pm
<b>Cumnor Village Hall,</b> Leys Road, OX2 9QF	<b>Wednesday 17th January 2024</b> 3pm - 7:30pm
<b>Seacourt Hall,</b> 3 Church Way, Botley, OX2 9TH	<b>Thursday 18th January 2024</b> 1pm - 5pm
<b>Eynsham Village Hall,</b> 46 Back Ln, Eynsham, OX29 4QW	<b>Friday 19th January 2024</b> 2pm - 6pm
<b>Community Webinar</b> Zoom	<b>Tuesday 23rd January 2024</b> 5.30pm - 7pm

Members of the Botley West project team will be at these events to answer questions and discuss the proposals in more detail. Project materials setting out the developed proposals will be displayed and available to take away. The PEIR will be available in hard copy for a reasonable charge.

A **webinar** will be held for any member of the public to join via telephone and internet. Participants will be invited to submit questions. Members of the Botley West Solar Farm project team will then respond to the questions on the webinar.

**Meetings and briefing sessions** may be arranged with local parish councils within the area the proposed development will be located, elected members and key local stakeholder groups that are present within the Core Consultation Zone and the wider consultation area.



## Literature

We have noted the feedback received during the first phase of consultation regarding requests for more materials for the second phase of consultation. The text below details the increased number of materials that will be available at the second phase of consultation.

**A Consultation leaflet** will be posted to all properties in the Core Consultation Zone ahead of Phase Two consultation. These leaflets will also be available online, to collect from Community Access Points, and to take away from our information events. Leaflets can also be posted to those outside the Core Consultation Zone on request.

We have also considered how our posted materials are presented to encourage engagement with them following feedback regarding the plain envelopes our phase one leaflets were posted in.

These leaflets will outline the updates in the proposals that have been made since the first phase of consultation, on design and environmental mitigation. They will publicise the Phase Two consultation opportunities and the information being consulted on. This will include the details of the consultation period and the activities being undertaken, such as dates, times and locations of information events and community webinars. Leaflets will also include details of how to access the project website and communications channels.

**Feedback forms** will be made available for community members to respond to the consultation. These will be available online and in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and by request. Feedback forms can be returned free of charge using the Botley West freepost address (FREEPOST BWSF).

**The Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) and Non-Technical Summary (NTS)** will be available to read online, in hard copy at Community Access Points, information events, and will be available to take away in hard copy by request (for a reasonable charge).



## Open communication

Our communications lines are open throughout the entire pre-application stage. Outside of consultation period, through these channels you will be able to speak to a member of our consultation team to ask questions. You can provide written feedback during the consultation period in the following ways:

- By submitting an online feedback form through the project website
- By completing a paper copy feedback form, which can be submitted at an in-person event or returned via the project freepost address
- By emailing: [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)
- By writing, free of charge, to: FREEPOST BWSF

During consultation periods, questions and requests for more information can be made to the communication channels above, as well as through calling the project's freephone information line on 0808 175 3085 (open 09:00-17:00, Monday-Friday. A voicemail service will operate for out of office hours).



## Our project website and online information

A dedicated project website ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)) is live and will be updated at the start of the second phase of consultation for you to find out more information and to provide your feedback through an online feedback form.

Consultation material will be presented digitally, providing information consistent with that available at information events and Community Access Points through hard copy materials.





### Advertising and local notices

Local press adverts or statutory notices will be placed in suitable local publications such as the Oxford Times, the Banbury Guardian, the Herald Series, the Bicester Advertiser and the Witney Gazette to inform local communities of the forthcoming Phase Two consultation. Adverts will include contact information and consultation event dates, times and locations.

Local information points such as village halls, places of worship, shops and civic buildings will be provided with posters containing consultation information. Parish councils will be provided with digital materials to enable them to advertise and promote the consultation via their own websites, social media and online community forums. Requests for hard copy materials will also be considered.



### Local media engagement

We will be promoting our Phase Two consultation by engaging with local media outlets such as the Oxford Mail and the Witney Gazette. This will broadcast the consultation to a wider audience and further ensure that interested individuals and parties have an opportunity to comment on our proposals.

We will be sending our statutory notifications to statutory consultees under Section 42 of the Planning Act 2008 and fulfilling the requirements under Sections 47 and 48 of the Planning Act 2008 to advertise the consultation in national and local newspapers.

**Should any changes to our consultation activities be required due to unforeseen events outside of our control, new details will be publicised on our website in line with the methods set out in this SoCC.**

## 8. Community Access Points

Location	Opening Times
<b>Woodstock Library</b> Fletchers House, Park St, Woodstock OX20 1SN	<b>Tues – Fri:</b> 10am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm <b>Sat:</b> 10am - 12.30pm, 1pm - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> 2pm - 5pm <b>Mon:</b> Closed
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council Town Centre Shop</b> 3 Welch Way, Witney, OX28 6JH	<b>Mon – Fri:</b> 9am - 5pm <b>Sat &amp; Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Kidlington Library</b> 23 Oxford Rd, Kidlington, OX5 2BP	<b>Mon &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5pm <b>Tues &amp; Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Weds:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Sat:</b> 9am - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Botley Library</b> 5a Church Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 9TH	<b>Mon, Tues &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5.30pm <b>Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Sat:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Weds &amp; Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Eynsham Library</b> 30 Mill Street, Eynsham, OX29 4JS	<b>Mon:</b> 9:30am-1pm and 2pm and 5pm <b>Wed &amp; Thurs:</b> 1pm-5pm <b>Friday:</b> 1-7pm <b>Sat:</b> 9:30-1pm

All documents are available on our project website ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)). Documents can also be provided in hard copy, including in alternative formats by request. Please note that a reasonable charge may apply.

## 9. The Planning Process

**Botley West is classified as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) as it has a proposed generating capacity of over 50 MW. As an NSIP we must apply for a Development Consent Order (DCO).**

The DCO application will be dealt with by the Planning Inspectorate, the agency responsible for managing the examination process for NSIPs. If accepted, it will then be examined by an independent Examining Authority, which will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State (SoS). The SoS will then review the recommendation before deciding on whether to grant a DCO.

For more information on this process, or for advice on how to respond to our pre-application consultation, you can access the Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 8 at: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/wpcontent/uploads/2013/04/Advice-note-8.0.pdf>

### Pre-Application

Botley West must consult with the community and statutory consultees (such as the host Local Planning Authorities and Natural England) in compliance with the Planning Act 2008. To demonstrate this to the Planning Inspectorate, we will submit a Consultation Report alongside the DCO application, containing details of our method for consulting, the feedback submitted in response to the consultation, and how this has influenced our proposals.



### Acceptance

The Planning Inspectorate, on behalf of the Secretary of State, has 28 days to decide whether the application meets the required standards to proceed to examination, including whether our consultation has been adequate.



### Pre-Examination

Once the application has been accepted the public will be invited to register as an interested party by making a relevant representation. An Examining Authority is also appointed at the pre-examination stage, and all Interested Parties will be invited to attend a Preliminary Meeting, run and chaired by the Examining Authority.



### Examination

During this stage, Interested Parties who have registered by making a Relevant Representation are invited to provide more details of their views in writing or orally at hearings.



### Recommendation and Decision

A recommendation to the Secretary of State will be issued by the Planning Inspectorate within three months of the close of the Examination. The Secretary of State then has a further three months to issue a decision on the proposal.



### Post-Decision

Once a decision has been issued by the Secretary of State, there is a six-week period for legal challenge on the decision.

## 10. Environmental Information

PVDP will undertake an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process and produce an Environmental Statement (ES) for the Botley West Solar Farm project.

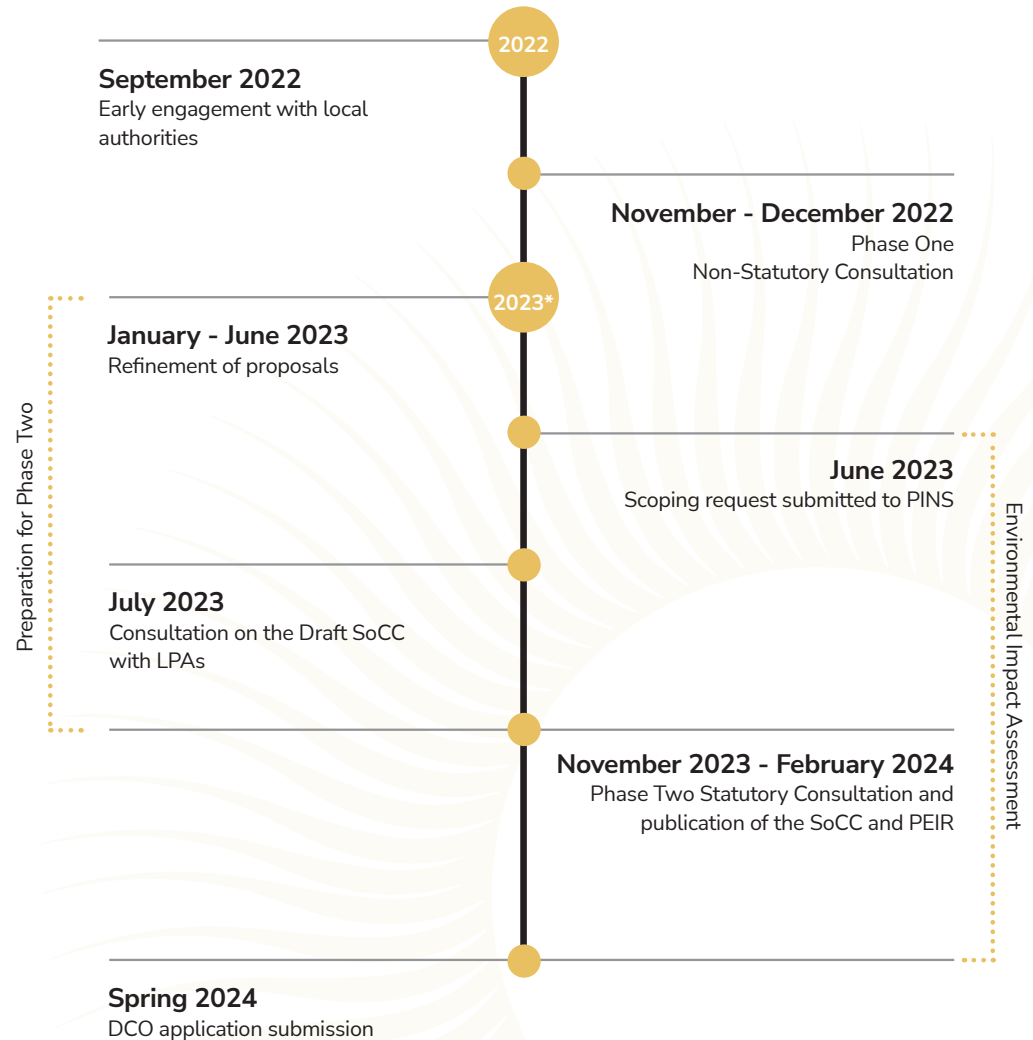
EIA is the process of identifying, evaluating and mitigating the likely significant environmental effects of a scheme or project. The ES is the document that records that process and describes the likely significant effects and proposed mitigation measures. The requirement for EIA for Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects is transposed into law through the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations).

The EIA Regulations specify which developments and schemes are required to undergo an EIA. The Scheme is a Schedule 2 development and is judged to require an ES to be submitted alongside the application for Development Consent.

The following reports (listed below) will be prepared as part of the ES process and as the DCO application is prepared:

Scoping Report
<p>Our Scoping Report was published on 15 June 2023 and described the project and the assessment we will undertake to describe any likely significant impacts to the receiving environment.</p> <p>Feedback on this from Local Planning Authorities and statutory consultees was published in the Scoping Opinion issued by the Planning Inspectorate on 24 July 2023. Both of these documents will be available to view on the Planning Inspectorate’s website: <a href="https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/botley-west-solar-farm/">https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/south-east/botley-west-solar-farm/</a></p>
Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR)
<p>The PEIR is the document on which we will base our Phase Two statutory consultation. It builds upon the findings from studies and assessment work we have carried out to date and the feedback received through the Phase One consultation and engagement with stakeholders. This will enable consultees to develop an informed view of the likely significant effects that Botley West may have on the local environment. In our Phase Two consultation, we will be seeking feedback on the findings of the PEIR.</p>
Environmental Statement (ES)
<p>Following our Phase Two consultation, the ES will further develop the content of the PEIR and continue to incorporate the responses from the Phase Two consultation, stakeholder engagement and results of the surveys undertaken. It will also describe any changes to the project and any mitigation measures that need to be implemented. The ES will form part of the DCO application.</p>

## 11. Indicative Consultation Timeline



All future dates are indicative and subject to change.

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## Contact us

**Please don't hesitate to get in touch if you would like to find out more information about Botley West Solar Farm.**

You can get in touch with members of our stakeholder engagement team using any of the communications lines listed below.

Should you require any documents in large print, audio or braille then please contact us at the details provided. All graphics and maps in this document are for illustrative purposes only.

Our data privacy statements are available on the project website at the following link: <https://botleywest.co.uk/legal-statements.html>



**Email: [info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)**



**Freephone Information Line: 0808 175 3085**

Available Monday - Friday, 9am - 5pm

Voicemails can be left outside of these hours



**Freepost: BWSF**

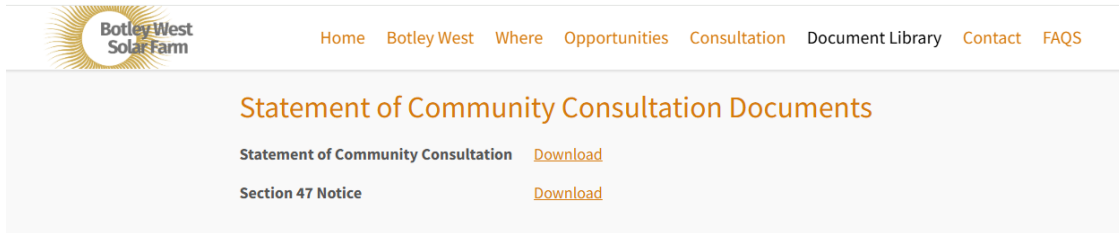
You will not need a stamp to send any correspondence to the freepost address



**Website: [www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)**

## 6 Evidence of final SoCC hosted on website document library

Website URL: [https://botleywest.co.uk/document\\_library.html](https://botleywest.co.uk/document_library.html)



## **7 Copies of Section 47 notice, as placed in newspapers**

# Botley West Solar Farm



Botley West  
Solar Farm

Notice publicising a Statement of Community Consultation (“SoCC”) in accordance with section 47(6) of the Planning Act 2008.

Notice is hereby given that Photovolt Development Partners GmbH (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd (Company Number 12602740), whose registered office is 2 West Street, Henley On Thames, Oxfordshire, England, RG9 2DU (“the Applicant”) has produced a Statement of Community Consultation (“SoCC”) in accordance with Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008.

## The project

1. The Applicant is proposing to make an application under Section 37 of the Planning Act 2008 to the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero for a Development Consent Order to authorise a new solar energy generation station (“Botley West Solar Farm”) on three land parcels located within parts of the administrative areas of Cherwell, West Oxfordshire and The Vale of White Horse Districts. The project includes the associated infrastructure for connection to the National Grid at a new substation to utilise the renewable energy generated by Botley West Solar Farm for homes and businesses across the country.

2. Botley West Solar Farm would allow for the generation and export of over 50 megawatts (MW) of electricity. In doing so, Botley West Solar Farm will support the urgent need to decarbonise our electricity system by delivering sustainable, homegrown and low-cost energy to the region.

3. The Applicant is committed to working closely with stakeholders and the local community to develop the project by having regard to the feedback received through public consultation.

4. The Applicant is represented by PVDP, specialising in the development and asset management of renewable energy projects, ranging from site acquisition, engineering and construction management through to commissioning.

## Statement of Community Consultation (SoCC)

5. The Applicant has a duty to consult the local community under Section 47 of the Planning Act 2008. The Applicant has, therefore, prepared a SoCC that explains how people living in the vicinity of the proposed project boundary will be consulted throughout the pre-application process. Additionally, Botley West Solar Farm is an Environmental Impact Assessment development as it falls within Schedule 2 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017. A Preliminary Environmental Information Report (PEIR) has therefore been produced, alongside other consultation documents. The SoCC sets out how the Applicant intends to consult on the PEIR and other consultation documents.

6. The consultation process is designed to provide information about Botley West Solar Farm and give the opportunity for local communities and other stakeholders to have their say and help develop the final design for the project.

7. The Applicant has consulted relevant Local Planning Authorities on the contents of the SoCC and duly considered the comments made regarding the proposed approach to consultation.

8. This notice provides formal notification of the publication of the SoCC which can be viewed on the project website ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)) and is also available to view free-of-charge from the Community Access Points (CAPs) listed in this notice from Thursday 16 November 2023. Requests for hard copies of the SoCC can be made using the contact details below.

## The consultation process

9. The Applicant will carry out a second phase of community consultation on their proposals between **30 November 2023** and **8 February 2024**.

10. Consultation will include a series of activities, which will be available and accessible to all interested members of the local community. Consultation materials will be available to access at information events, CAPs (listed below), on the project website ([www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk)) and by request (contact details below).

11. Consultation materials can also be made available by request in alternative formats, such as large print, translated language, audio or braille, by contacting the Applicant using the details below. Please note that there will be a reasonable charge for hard copies of the PEIR.

12. Feedback can be submitted online via the project website, in writing using the contact details below (via email or freepost) or at an information event. Response deadlines for each phase of consultation will be publicised. The deadline for feedback at this second phase of community consultation is **8 February 2024**.

## Community Access Points

Venue	Opening hours
<b>Woodstock Library</b> Fletchers House, Park St, Woodstock, OX20 1SN	<b>Tues – Fri:</b> 10am - 1pm, 2pm - 5pm <b>Sat:</b> 10am - 12.30pm, 1pm - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> 2pm - 5pm <b>Mon:</b> closed
<b>West Oxfordshire District Council Town Centre Shop</b> 3 Welch Way, Witney, OX28 6JH	<b>Mon – Fri:</b> 9am - 5pm <b>Sat &amp; Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Kidlington Library</b> 23 Oxford Rd, Kidlington, OX5 2BP	<b>Mon &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5pm <b>Tues &amp; Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Weds:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Sat:</b> 9am - 4.30pm <b>Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Botley Library</b> 5a Church Way, Botley, Oxford, OX2 9TH	<b>Mon, Tues &amp; Thurs:</b> 9.30am - 5.30pm <b>Fri:</b> 9.30am - 7pm <b>Sat:</b> 9.30am - 1pm <b>Weds &amp; Sun:</b> Closed
<b>Eynsham Library</b> 30 Mill Street, Eynsham, OX29 4JS	<b>Mon:</b> 9:30am-1pm and 2pm and 5pm <b>Wed &amp; Thurs:</b> 1pm-5pm <b>Friday:</b> 1-7pm <b>Sat:</b> 9:30-1pm

## GET IN TOUCH



Email us at:  
[info@botleywest.co.uk](mailto:info@botleywest.co.uk)



Call our Freephone information line:  
0808 175 3085



Write to us at:  
FREEPOST BWSF



Visit our website:  
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