



National Infrastructure Planning
Temple Quay House
2 The Square
Bristol, BS1 6PN

Customer Services: 0303 444 5000
e-mail:

BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

To the Applicant
(By email only)

Your Ref:

Our Ref: EN010147

Date: 13 December 2024

Dear Mr Alsop

Planning Act 2008 (as amended) – Section 51

Application by Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Botley West Solar Farm

Advice following issue of decision to accept the application for examination

On 13 December 2024 the Secretary of State decided that the application for the above project satisfied the acceptance tests under section 55 of the Planning Act 2008 (PA2008). The Planning Inspectorate's acceptance checklist and the application documents have been published and made available on the project page of our website.

In undertaking checks at the acceptance stage, the Inspectorate has made some initial observations in relation to the application. This letter comprises advice to the Applicant provided under section 51 of the PA2008 in respect of these initial observations. The Applicant should pay attention to its content and consider how appropriate action might be taken in response.

Consultees identified on a precautionary basis

Given the individual circumstances of this case, the Planning Inspectorate advises taking a precautionary approach to consultation under s42(1)(a) of PA2008 to ensure that all persons potentially affected by, or potentially likely to have an interest in the application are given the opportunity to participate fully in the Examination of the application. On this basis, the Applicant may wish to serve notice on the bodies listed in Box 6 of the section 55 checklist when it serves notice of the accepted application under s56(2)(a) of the PA2008; unless there is a specific justification why this is not necessary.

Location plan

A separate Location Plan has not been provided but appears to be included in an Appendix to the Environmental Statement (Site Location and Order Limits Overview Figure 1 (Doc 6.4, Figure 1.1)). The Planning Inspectorate advises that a stand alone Location Plan would assist all parties in interpreting the suite of application documents and the extent of the Order Limits. On the Location Plan, the Order Limit boundary should be marked in a distinguishable manner to indicate the side of the boundary line on which the Proposed Development sits.

Operational Development Areas Plans (Doc 7.3.2), Landscape, Ecology & Amenities Layer Plan (Doc 7.3.3) and Temporary Facilities Plans (Doc 7.3.4)

The Inspectorate draws the attention of the applicant to APFP Regulation 5 (4A) in relation to these plan documents. The applicant may wish to amend these plans to ensure that the scale being used follows this regulation. For the benefit of the understanding of all parties to a future examination it may be desirable if it was more clearly presented on the plans which areas are within the Order Limits and how the sheet in question fits in the context of the wider site.

Statement of Reasons (4.1) and Planning Supporting Statement (7.1)

The Inspectorate acknowledges that the Statement of Reasons (SoR) and Planning Supporting Statement (PSS) contain some justification as to the need for the project. Whilst it is not a statutory requirement, it would be useful for all parties if the Applicant could submit a 'Statement of Need' as a stand alone document. This document should consolidate relevant points from the SoR and PSS, but it should also address amongst other things, the following points:

- UK future electricity requirements and what role would solar farms play, if any, in helping to meet any increases in demand.
- Additional detail on the reasons for the scale of the proposed solar farm.
- Information on the efficiency and how economically attractive solar generation in the U.K is, compared to other forms of renewable generation, would also be helpful.

Minor errors and omissions

There are minor errors and omissions, as reflected in Box 30 of the acceptance checklist. The Applicant may wish to carry out a detailed review of the relevant documents and submit updated documents.

Please pay close attention to the advice set out in this letter and act on it accordingly. This will contribute towards a more efficient examination and give any future Examining Authority comfort that the documentation is complete and accurate.

We trust you find this advice helpful, however if you have any queries on these matters please do not hesitate to contact our office using the contact details at the head of this letter.

Yours sincerely

Caroline Hopewell

**Caroline Hopewell
Case Manager**

This communication does not constitute legal advice.
Please view our [Privacy Notice](#) before sending information to the Planning Inspectorate.

<https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk>

