

[REDACTED]

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**From:** Park, Emily  
**Sent:** 22 September 2023 14:30  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Botley West Solar Farm; Harrold, George  
**Subject:** FW: Botley West Solar Farm application

**Categories:** HEO

Dear Mr Rogers,

Thank you for your email.

The Scoping Report referred to in your below email has a specific function within the process set out under Regulation 10 of the Infrastructure Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, whereby a person who proposes to make an application for an order granting development consent may ask the Secretary of State for its opinion as to the scope and level of detail of the information to be provided in the Environmental Statement. Please refer to section 5 of the Planning Inspectorate's ['Advice Note 7: Seven: Environmental Impact Assessment: Process, Preliminary Environmental Information and Environmental Statements'](#) for further details, including what information developers are required to include in their request under Regulation 10(1) (which is often in the form of a 'Scoping Report'). The part of the Scoping Opinion that you refer to, I believe you mean Table 3.9 Socio-Economics, ID 3.9.8, is commenting on impacts proposed to be scoped out by the Applicant during operation in Table 7-18 in section 7.9 of the Scoping Report. Scoping Opinion ID 3.9.8 identifies that limited evidence and rationale was provided in the Scoping Report to support scoping the matter out, and so the applicant will be required to provide such evidence within the ES if it intends to scope this matter out and not provide an assessment. Please note that the EIA Regulations state at Regulation 14 (3)(a) that where a scoping opinion has been adopted, the ES should be based on this. Please also note that if the application is accepted into examination and insufficient justification is provided to scope the matter out, the Examining Authority may request such an assessment.

However, the project is currently at the pre-application stage of the planning process and I would direct you specifically to part 8 of the [Planning Inspectorate's Advice Note 7](#) regarding an Applicant's consultation with the local community and advise you to communicate with the Applicant should you have concerns or questions on its submission. For taking part in the examination, you will be able to register as an Interested Party by submitting a Relevant Representation. This must be submitted on the electronic form which will be made available on the project webpage of the National Infrastructure Planning website at the appropriate time. Further information about registering as an Interested Party can be found in the Inspectorate's ['Advice Note 8.2: How to register to participate in an Examination'](#).

I hope that is helpful.

Kind regards,



**Emily Park | Senior EIA Advisor (PIEMA)**  
**National Infrastructure & NSIP Reform**  
The Planning Inspectorate  
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**From:** David Rogers [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 18 September 2023 18:10  
**To:** Botley West Solar Farm <[BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Re: Botley West Solar Farm application

Dear Emily,

Thank you for this clarification.

I have questions about the Scoping Report and your subsequent Scoping Opinion about the Botley West Solar Farm proposal for Oxfordshire.

In the Scoping Report from the developers, Section 7.9 Socio-economics, they acknowledge the 'potential impacts on house values and amenity of residents' but then scope this out in Table 7.18, because "The solar farm and the substations are relatively low impact in terms of built form and are temporary in nature limiting the potential for any widespread adverse effect on housing value or affordability. Unlikely to have any significant impact."

You may know that I subsequently corresponded with the Planning Inspectorate with the attached document analysing the global literature on the impact of large scale utility solar installations on local house values. This analysis shows that on balance one should expect such an impact, especially given the size of the Botley West proposal and the number of properties it potentially affects.

I am not sure whether or not my document had any effect on the subsequent Scoping Opinion from PINS but in it, on p. 35 (referring to 3.9.8, Table 7-18), you will find the following:

*"The Scoping Report anticipates that the Proposed Development infrastructure would have minimal adverse effect on housing values or affordability. Whilst the Inspectorate broadly agrees considering the nature of the Proposed Development during operation, the ES should explain why the Proposed Development would have a minimal effect on housing value and affordability during operation."*

I have two questions about this Scoping Opinion statement:

1. Should the first use of the term 'during operation' in fact read 'during construction'? Otherwise the Planning Inspectorate is making two rather contradictory statements about 'during operation' ; in the first agreeing with the developers anticipating minimal adverse impacts and in the second asking the developers to explain why they believe there would be minimal effects on house values. Thus I believe this paragraph should read as follows, with the suggested change in red:

*"The Scoping Report anticipates that the Proposed Development infrastructure would have minimal adverse effect on housing values or affordability. Whilst the Inspectorate broadly agrees considering the nature of the Proposed Development during **construction**, the ES should explain why the Proposed Development would have a minimal effect on housing value and affordability during operation."*

2. Does your request that "...the ES should explain why the Proposed Development would have a minimal effect on housing value and affordability during operation." amount to instructing the developers to Scope In the possible effect on house values rather than Scope it out? There's some ambiguity in your statement here. The developers could choose to ignore your request, or could do minimal compliance by continuing to claim there IS no effect (referring only to selected literature where no effect was found)? As I hope my document made clear, those who claim no impact on house values are often estate agents (USA realtors) in non-peer reviewed documents. I can think of no peer-reviewed paper which does not claim some effect or other on house values. Thus this effect really should not be scoped out, especially as Botley West Solar

Farm is the only one on the planet with quite so many houses quite so close to it (c. 11,000 within 1.5 kms - see the attached).

I do hope your Scoping Opinion statement amounts to a request to the developers to scope in this effect, and that the developers are fully aware of this.

Yours sincerely,

David Rogers

David J. Rogers  
Emeritus Professor of Ecology  
Department of Zoology,  
University of Oxford, UK

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The old @zoo address will function only until the end of September 2023

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**From:** Botley West Solar Farm <[BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 29 August 2023 08:48

**To:** David Rogers [REDACTED]; Botley West Solar Farm  
<[BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: Botley West Solar Farm application

Dear Mr Rogers,

Thank you for your email.

To confirm, all responses to the scoping consultation are appended to the end of the Scoping Opinion and contained within that document. The response from Reading Borough Council was submitted after the deadline and therefore has not informed the Scoping Opinion and instead, was forwarded to the Applicant and published separately on our website.

Kind regards,

Emily



**Emily Park | Senior EIA Advisor**  
**National Infrastructure & Project Speed**

The Planning Inspectorate

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**From:** David Rogers [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 27 August 2023 22:55

To: Botley West Solar Farm <[BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)>

Subject: Botley West Solar Farm application

Sirs

As at 27/08/23 the Pre-application phase of the proposed NSIP Botley West Solar Farm in Oxfordshire (S. East Region) reckons there are only three documents (see screen grab below). All other responses from the District Councils and Parish Councils seem to have disappeared from the PINS website.

I would be grateful if this error could be corrected,

Yours sincerely,

David Rogers

- Overview
- s51 advice
- Documents

## Botley West Solar Farm

You can filter the results to show only the items that match your interest.

**Documents Published By Stage**

- ➔ Pre Application (3)
- ➔ Developer's Application (0)
- ➔ Acceptance (0)
- ➔ Pre Examination (0)
- ➔ Examination (0)
- ➔ Decision (0)
- ➔ Decided (0)

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- | Description   |
|---|
| <p><b><a href="#">Reading Borough Council</a></b> (PDF, 129 KB)</p> <p>Late scoping consultation response</p> <p><i>Pre Application &gt; Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping</i></p>      |
| <p><b><a href="#">Scoping Opinion</a></b> (PDF, 8 MB)</p> <p>Scoping Opinion adopted by the Secretary of State</p> <p><i>Pre Application &gt; Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping</i></p> |
| <p><b><a href="#">SolarFive Ltd</a></b> (PDF, 34 MB)</p> <p>Scoping Report submitted to the Secretary of State</p> <p><i>Pre Application &gt; Environmental Impact Assessment Scoping</i></p> |

Showing 1 to 3 of 3 entries

David J. Rogers  
Emeritus Professor of Ecology  
Department of Zoology,  
University of Oxford, UK

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