



Confidential guidance: Attending the consultation events as a resident



With the information provided in this handout in your mind please aim to do the following:

1. Read the Developer's booklet if you receive one.
2. Read at least a summary of the PEIR (Preliminary Environmental Impact Report) on either the campaign website stopbotleywest.com/peir or the developer's website www.botleywest.co.uk
3. Visit at least 2 consultations, look at the information provided and ask questions.
4. Make a note on the quality/adequacy/consistency of the answers
5. Complete the SBW questionnaire online.
6. Email the developer with your observations/complaints and ask for a reply. Send the same message to your councillors and MP or just copy them all into your e-mail - **find all addresses on the SBW website**. Also write to the Planning Inspectorate (botleywestsolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk) by the end of the consultation period (Feb 8).
7. Fill in the response form on the SBW website with feedback for the campaign on any statements in the consultation materials themselves that concern you. (coming soon)

In the Planning Act 2008: the government's guidance states:

"to be of most value, a consultation should be:

- based on accurate information that gives consultees a clear view of what is proposed including any options;
- shared at an early enough stage so that the proposal can still be influenced, while being sufficiently developed to provide some detail on what is being proposed; and
- engaging and accessible in style, encouraging consultees to react and offer their views."

Ways to consider adequacy

Adequacy of Access

1. Was it easy to attend in person? Were the times of day convenient for you?
2. Was the time of year appropriate? - Did Christmas events affect your ability to attend?
3. Was there an event in your area?
4. Was it easy to get there by public transport?
5. Was parking easy?
6. Was there disabled access?
7. Was it easy to visit a Community Access point for the full consultation materials?
8. Did you have time to read the non-technical summary (60 pages) or full PEIR report (7000+ pages)?

Interpreting the information provided (either at in person events or in the booklet through your door)

- Look at the maps
 - Can you clearly see: the exact cable route, vehicular access points, security cameras and lighting, inverters, substations, temporary construction compounds, new access roads, footpaths, fences
 - Is there enough detail? Is the key clear?
- Look at the information
 - Are the plans clearly explained?
 - Anything missing you expected to see?
 - Are figures given (eg height of panels, fencing, number of cameras)
 - Is there enough detail (eg how security lighting will be triggered?)

Quality of Information and answers

1. Were the maps provided detailed enough? (labelling, size, any items missing?)
2. Were the photomontage visualisations clear? eg did you recognise the view? Were photographs taken in summer or winter? Were the viewpoints used representative of the area near you?
3. Were diagrams clear? Was anything confusing or misleading?

Responses to questions

1. Could the staff on duty answer your question(s)?
2. If you visited two consultations, did you receive consistent or contradictory answers to your questions?
3. Did the person you spoke to know or understand the area of BWSF?
4. Were the answers/information given demonstrably true or untrue?

Use your local knowledge to illustrate your questions about the area you know best.

NB You are almost certainly better informed than the person you are speaking to!

Eg Damage to Dornford Lane track near Wootton, number of lorries through Bladon, restrictions caused by fencing on footpaths eg “the track” in Cassington, number of vehicular access points from Lower Road (Eynsham to Hanborough), number of lorries using Denman lane in Cumnor, Noise from substation (south), exact route of cable across the Thames.

Topics and suggested Questions

1. Damage to hedgerows. Will this [specific hedge you know] be dug up for access?
2. Damage/disruption to tracks, minor roads. Will this [specific track/road you know] be used by construction traffic?
3. Why is security lighting needed? How is it triggered? Who responds if triggered?
4. Exactly where and how big will the 4 “temporary construction sites” be? When will these be removed and restored? What decommissioning guarantees exist?
5. Where will new access roads be? Do you admit that there will be serious loss of wildlife habitat? How many lorries per day during (a) construction, (b) operation?
6. Security fencing - height, type, effect on walkers, wildlife
7. Flood risk. How much run off will there be from over 2 million panels?
8. Footpaths and fences. How much hedging will you remove for construction traffic access?
9. Sub-station. What is the precise location? Question claims about their agreement/contract with National Grid for a connection. Do you have a firm written contract?
10. Cable routes. Which meadow will you be digging up to cross the Thames? Are you aware this will cause irreversible damage?
11. How many houses are there less than 1km from the site edge with direct line of sight to the panels? (The answer is 799 as stated by PVDP in the PEIR) Why have you shown almost none of these properties in your photomontage visualisations?
12. What noise (in Db) will there be from inverters, small substations? If there's one near your house ask how many decibels at my house xxx meters away?
13. What will the total carbon emissions be in the construction, transportation, installation and decommissioning of components, solar panels and other infrastructure?
14. The proposal is due to last 42 years yet panels only have a life of 25 years. What will you do after 25 years?
15. Are you aware that overwintering swans may try to land on the panels near Cassington thinking they are floodwater? How are you going to prevent this?
16. Can you confirm that you will actually see this project through to construction and operation - including the promised “community benefits”? Or will you, as in all previous projects, sell up and get out with a large profit before it even starts?
17. 75% of the site is on Green Belt land. How have you demonstrated objectively that this is not ‘inappropriate development’. [Ref: Section 5.10 NP - EN1 guidance published in 2011]

THANK YOU - any specific example or your experience during the consultation period will be greatly appreciated. Please send any comments to

feedback@stopbotleywest.com