



21st September 2023

While St Mary Bourne Parish Council (SMB-PC) are not against renewable energy and fully support the drive to have less impact on our wider environment; the primary objective of the council is to the residents and businesses of the parish, neighbouring parish councils and any potential impact to the environment in which we live.

Since the initial proposal of the solar farm, almost 12 months ago, a number of questions have recently been raised and the council feel these need to be raised further, and satisfied, as part of the application.

The question around the potential impact to residents looking to use the Harroway / Walworth Road (H/WR) during construction continues. While lights have been proposed, this will have a significant impact on those who commute or need to access Andover.

The crossroad at Chapmansford has been historically dangerous and many accidents already occur. The increase in traffic accessing a solar farm ongoing will only increase the associated risk of an accident. Removal of the hedge to create better visual lines, would of course have a negative impact on the resident wildlife.

The alternative routes for residents to access Andover, would be to drive through Hurstbourne Priors (HBP) or Hurstbourne Tarrant (HBT), which are already significantly busy 'rat-runs' or use the narrow Finkley Road, which is certainly not designed for significant traffic usage.

It has also been pointed out that within the planning statement (point 15.14) - two properties will be affected by glint and glare for up to an hour a day for three months of the year. We have also been asked of this glare will have any impact on low flying aircraft, particularly as this area is used by both the Military flying training school at Middle Wallop and Popham Airfield.

The number of articulated lorries which use H/WR, considering these are recognised routes for Vitacress and Apsley Estate, will further impact residents and businesses of St Mary Bourne as delays are more than likely to occur. This is primarily during construction, which assumes that the building works are also completed on time, but ongoing with any maintenance vehicles.

It has been raised recently that the possible impact to the roads and especially the verges, from the additional construction and delivery vehicles using both Finkley Road and H/WR, as well as the connecting lanes, will negatively impact the condition of the roads long-term. A suggestion has been made whereby, if permission goes ahead, funds are to be deposited into a joint account, managed by all interested parties (i.e. multiple agreement for spend). The amount to be deposited would be based on a predicted cost of repair from Hampshire Highways. This would be refunded / spent on repair, following a full structural integrity survey.



The impact on local wildlife is unknown and while a prediction has been made, the removal of a significant parcel of land, which will be surrounded by fields, will impact natural boundaries.

The installation of 2.6m fencing was raised when the initial presentation was made, but there is a continued feeling that this will have a negative impact on local wildlife. More detail would need to be provided on existing wildlife species and patterns of use for this land and how any diversification may have an impact.

It is also a continued concern that the proposal is within a recognised Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and that this would destroy the views and natural balance of the local environment. We understand that this matter will be progressed by Councillor Sam Carr and North Wessex Downs.

It remains unclear if additional pylons are required for any ongoing re-distribution. Recent national news articles have raised the question of the suitability of existing overground infrastructures, which may not be capable of re-distributing generated electricity back into the National Grid. Clarity is now requested on the existing infrastructure capability and any possible need for new installations.

Confirmation of all the power redistribution and connection to the national grid are required, and should be made available, at this time.

Further to this, confirmation is requested that if any new infrastructure (pylons or buildings), outside of the application, are required, will these be installed without the need for planning permission and the land obtained under compulsory purchase and will they cross land within the parish of St Mary Bourne or neighbouring HBP / HBT?

It has been suggested that 7,500 homes will be powered from this space, could it be confirmed how suitable existing houses and businesses within St Mary Bourne could benefit from this supply, or will they have to purchase renewable at the market price?

On wider points, following the year or more of conflict in Ukraine, and the disruption to the food chain, we are of the point of view that local policies should focus on the sustainability of food supply and investigate alternative options and technologies for renewable energy, against the installation of a 45 year 'temporary' structure on farming land.

For example, recent developments in solar panels allow floating panels, to utilise large spaces of unproductive water resources; during planning and construction of commercial industrial parks, statutory installation of roof panels would cover a significant space. The distribution park in Andover appears to have no renewable sources on the many 'mega-shed' roofs. Further, France and many other countries, have solar panels on carpark roofs. We would be willing to discuss planned redevelopment of the pavilion/muga to incorporate some renewable sources.



A 'goodwill' figure of c. £29,000 has been proposed. With the rising margins of energy and significant dividend contributions paid to shareholders, if permission is agreed, SMB-PC would like this figure to be positively revised and index linked to the proposed start date and payment made, prior to breaking the ground.

The fund is also to be deposited with the Parish Hub, which will be a registered charity, managed by the residents of SMB, for distribution for local activities, and not a 3rd party.

SMB-PC feel that these recent matters and points of view need to be raised and for all additional information to be provided, so that the impact to our residents and area of outstanding natural beauty are not negatively impacted.

Signed on behalf of St Mary Bourne Parish Council

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Oliver Madge'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a horizontal line under the name.

Oliver Madge

Chair