

# Comment for planning application 22/03873/F

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| <b>Application Number</b> | 22/03873/F  |
| <b>Location</b>           | Land North And Adjacent To Mill Lane Stratton Audley  |
| <b>Proposal</b>           | Installation and operation of a renewable energy generating station comprising ground-mounted photovoltaic solar arrays and battery-based electricity storage containers together with a switchgear container, inverter/transformer units, Site access, internal access tracks, security measures, access gates, other ancillary infrastructure and landscaping and biodiversity enhancements.  |
| <b>Case Officer</b>       | Rebekah Morgan  |
| <b>Organisation Name</b>  | steve Smith   |
| <b>Address</b>            | Rigden House,Bicester Road,Stratton Audley,Bicester,OX27 9BT  |
| <b>Type of Comment</b>    | Objection   |
| <b>Type</b>               | neighbour   |
| <b>Comments</b>           | <p>I object to the Padbury Brook Solar Farm based on the following:</p> <p>Site<br/>The proposed site is on 147 acres of agricultural land with Godington 664 metres and Stratton Audley a conservation area village 907 metres away from the site, there are two neighbouring properties Oldfields House 126 metres from the site, and Pool Farm which adjoins the site separated only by hedgerows<br/>The following article is taken from the Cherwell District Council Stratton Audley Conservation area appraisal February 2022,<br/>"Protection of important open spaces and views 14.5, It is important to protect the open and aesthetic quality of the countryside adjacent to the village because it is integral to the character and appearance of the conservation area. Open space sometimes has its own historic significance. The inclusion of peripheral open spaces around the settlement in the designation of the conservation area is specifically to ensure that the character of these spaces is preserved."</p> <p>The applicant states within the application "brownfield land would be preferable "</p> <p>The security/deer fence which surrounds the perimeter of the site is approximately a total of 4.1 kilometres of fencing and will be supported by a base of crushed concrete 250mm deep by 4 metres wide, assuming the given figures are correct 6970 tonnes of crushed concrete will be required.<br/>The solar panel access tracks will approximately be 2.7 kilometres of track, constructed and filled to a depth of 250mm by 4 metres wide with crushed concrete, assuming the given figures are correct 4590 tonnes of crushed concrete will be required.<br/>The figures stated are only an estimate which could possibly increase due to the Construction Compound drawing only showing area size, nothing mentioned regarding base aggregates required.</p> <p>According to the applicants site map there will be approximately 51 units consisting of battery stations, storage units, customer switchgear, inverter stations and DNO, the longest measures 12,492mm , the tallest being 3775mm, all units will be erected on a 300mm depth bed of gravel.<br/>Based on the unit size and quantity and not including the unit outside perimeter which if included would increase substantially; an estimated 900 tonnes of gravel would be required.</p> <p>The applicant has submitted a drawing for a Communication mast to be erected, the size is 5 metres tall with a satellite dish approximately 650mm diameter positioned to the top of the mast, unfortunately I have not identified where the mast will be erected within the site.</p> <p>The applicant wishes to remove hedgerows referred to as H1,H13,H49,H50 and H51, the hedgerows consist of hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple ,oak and hazel, the Arboricultural Consultant report refers to the hedgerows as "in good condition".</p> <p>Soil</p> |

The applicant has shown the soil is a sub-grade 3b, although the land is still capable of producing moderate range of crops offering yields of cereals, grass and lower yields of other crops. The soil in question is not of the poorest quality, the proposed fields have recently produced crops, it is of my opinion with the demand for domestic produce food the site should be retained and not be built upon.

#### Glint and Glare

The report by Pager power identifies the local airfields within the area; the author has stated the following for Bicester Airfield, Runway 16/34

"Solar reflections are not geometrically possible along the approach path for runway 34. The modelling has shown solar reflections are possible from 0.1 miles to 2 miles from the runway threshold along the approach path for runway 16. However, they are predicted to occur outside a pilot's 50-degree field- of-view. A low impact is predicted and therefore no mitigation is required".

The author has failed to identify the London Heathrow flight path directly above the proposed site, the flight path is for aircraft mainly from the USA, Canada, Iceland, domestic flights all entering Heathrow Airport, the aircraft mentioned are descending at quite a rapid rate between 14000 to 8000 feet, the majority of the International flights arrive early in the morning at the point when the sun is low, many glint and glare reports have confirmed glare is more apparent from solar panels when the sun is low together with the angle of the panels.

#### Cable route

The route of the cable going through Stratton Audley to the grid substation in Skimmindish Lane, the size of the road trenches will be 1600mm deep by 700mm wide, I understand the roads will not be completely resurfaced when finished, the digging of the village roads has a safety issue as a few roads do not have footpaths with residents having to walk in the road, the proposed works will make the road very narrow putting residents at risk of being hit by oncoming vehicles.

There is also a large Chestnut tree at within the village which is protected by a tree preservation order within the Conservation area, the cable route passes next to the tree situated in Mill Road, digging to the stipulated depth will cut through, or disturb the roots. Electricity enters Stratton Audley across farmland from Bicester, as the crow flies the shortest route for the proposed cable is across fields and not to follow the route through a conservation area.

#### Summary and objections

I agree with sustainable energy, unfortunately solar energy does come with a large fossil fuel debt before arriving on site due to mining for Lithium batteries, production of panels and shipping from China.

The Padbury Solar application is on green belt land which has been used over the years for crops and grazing, and should remain producing domestic food produce rather than import food creating a carbon footprint, yes, we need sustainable energy, wind turbine energy is cleaner than solar and produces more energy, wind turbines account for 4% of World energy against 0.5 for solar.

The units the applicant wishes to erect will certainly have impact the area, the proposed screening using existing hedgerows to hide the development will take time to reach the desired 2 to 3 metres height and will not screen buildings with a height of 3775mm, and a mast of 5 metres tall.

Removal of hedgerows will not make this a nature site but have an adverse impact driving wildlife completely away from the site. The proposed planting of mature and semi-mature trees does not refer to a size, applicable height is required.

The introduction of an estimated 11560 tonnes crushed concrete alone together adding an estimated 900 tonnes of gravel to develop the site will be an environmental disaster for the land and crop production for the future.

The transportation of development materials will have an environmental impact on the surrounding area.

The cable route is not suitable due to tree protection order and public safety issue.

The site is directly below the London Heathrow flight path; panel glare could be an issue.

The application does not conform to Cherwell District Council Conservation policy, the site is very close to neighbouring properties, the site will reduce all landscape views.

I agree with the applicants comment a brownfield site would be more preferable.

**Received Date**

06/02/2023 13:08:22

**Attachments**