



The countryside charity  
Oxfordshire

Campaigning to protect our rural county

# Botley West/ Blenheim Solar Farm

## What to ask

Thanks for taking an interest in this latest solar farm proposal. Here are a few questions you might like to consider and/or ask about at the exhibitions or via the developer's website - [www.botleywest.co.uk](http://www.botleywest.co.uk):

- The [Pathways to Zero Carbon Oxfordshire](#) report, produced by Oxford University and supported by our local authorities, says that we may need about 1% of Oxfordshire's land for solar energy. Shouldn't that mean it is possible to be selective about which land is brought forward, prioritising brownfield sites and rooftop renewables?
- Why is there so little information available on the project? Essentially there are just a few high level maps. Although this is a preliminary consultation, other similar schemes (such as the [Oxfordshire Strategic Rail Freight Interchange - www.oxsrfi.co.uk](#)) have provided much more information at a similar stage, including preliminary environmental reports. Has Blenheim Estate/PVDP not yet done any environmental assessment work? Or does it just not wish to share this yet?
- Food production and food security is an increasing concern. Can we afford to lose this agricultural land?
- The proposed site at Cumnor would be in clear contravention of local District Council policy, which supports renewable energy provided it does not cause significant adverse effect to the Green Belt. In West Oxfordshire, the Local Plan says 'Applicants will need to demonstrate that cumulative effects do not become a significant or defining characteristic of the wider landscape'. Do Blenheim Estate/PVDP think it would be right to overrule agreed local policy?
- How does this proposal fit in to a county-wide renewable energy strategy?\*

*\*Answer: It doesn't, because there isn't one! CPRE Oxfordshire is campaigning for a county-wide strategy, supported by public consultation and engagement, so that we get the renewables infrastructure we need as quickly as possible but in the most appropriate and least damaging locations.*

## We need renewable energy, but we also need our countryside!

Preserving our countryside is essential for food security, nature recovery, other climate mitigation measures such as tree-planting, and the health and wellbeing of people and wildlife.

At the moment, we are seeing lots of applications for solar farms on agricultural land across Oxfordshire, all driven by commercial developers. You can find out more on the [Solar Farms map](#) on our website.

**We think Oxfordshire communities deserve a better and more strategic approach, with a county wide strategy that can direct what is needed to the areas where it will cause least harm, including rooftops and brownfield land.**

*If you share our concerns, please will you support us?*

**The Campaign to Protect Rural England Oxfordshire works to improve, protect and preserve the landscape of Oxfordshire and its towns and villages for the benefit of everyone.**

### DO ONE THING!

To stay in touch with news about the Botley West Solar Farm and other developments, plus information of countryside events and activities, please **sign up to our monthly e-newsletter**, at [www.cpreoxon.org.uk](http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk)

### JOIN US DONATE VOLUNTEER

Becoming a member is the best way to support a beautiful, thriving countryside for all. Join for as little as £3 a month, including discounted entry to over 100 houses, gardens and attractions across England.

If you could spare a couple of hours a month, why not join our friendly team of local volunteers? Find out more on our website or give the Branch Office a call.

Donate via [www.justgiving.com/CPREOxon](http://www.justgiving.com/CPREOxon) or see our website for further info.

[www.cpreoxon.org.uk](http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk)

**PLEASE HELP US FIGHT FOR A COUNTRYSIDE FOR THE FUTURE, FOR EVERYONE.**

CPRE Oxfordshire, First Floor, 20 High Street, Watlington, Oxfordshire OX49 5PY (Registered office)  
CPRE Oxfordshire is registered in England as Charity No.1093081 and Company No. 04443278.