

Item: 06	Application: S.21/0465/FUL
Address: Land Parcels A & B, Near Whitminster, Gloucestershire	

Public Comments

17 further comments of support have been received. To summarise they:

- Support the development of the solar farm, green energy production
- Seek community support, with improvements to footpaths
- Impacts to residents should be reduced as much as possible
- Challenge of rapidly rising demand for electricity, need a local and a reliable supply to reduce the impact of factors abroad
- Biodiversity enhancements on site, soil quality will improve, no artificial fertilisers or chemicals applied
- Ensure clean energy security for our future

2 further comments object to the application. To summarise they:

- Query the supporting comments. Advise that the principle is not in question, but queries the siting of the development near a village and a school and the fire risk of the proposal.

Community Benefit

The applicant has provided the below short statement in relation to community benefit:

‘As part of the consultation process with the local community JBM Solar has proposed a community benefit fund to both Whitminster and Moreton Valence Parish Councils. Our initial offer was for the fund to provide rooftop pv installations for local community buildings, reducing electricity bills and providing more green energy to the UK. We understand this is not always possible particularly in rural communities, so we have offered the parishes to propose alternative initiatives which the funding can help. As it stands we are still open to suggestions, but the most progressed ideas include the following:

- Rooftop PV installation for Whitminster Village Hall
- Donation towards the redevelopment of Whitminster Sports Pavilion
- Resurfacing/Redesign of the footpath running along the A38 from Moreton Valence to Hardwicke

The above is still up for discussion and subject to parish council approval.’

As addressed in the main report this is noted but any finance obligation has to meet the tests. Officers do not feel this does therefore this remains a separate discussion

for the Parish Councils and cannot be given weight in the consideration of the planning balance of the proposal.

Cumulative Impact

The applicant has provided a drawing entitled 'Cumulative Solar Farms Map' which indicates solar farms within the wider area.

Update to recommended conditions

The date within Condition 1 is absent within the report and this is amended below.

Condition 1 – Time Limit

The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Two drawing numbers have been amended in condition 2

Condition 2 – Approved Plans

The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in all respects in strict accordance with the approved plans listed below:

Site location Plan submitted on the 23.02.2021

Proposed Site Layout and WPD Control Room Drawing Number GCS0020-2 Rev 4 submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Acoustic Timber Fence Rev: A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Battery Station Details Rev: A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Battery Station Details Rev A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Customer Switchgear Details Rev A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Fence, Track and CCTV Details Rev A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Inverter Building Details Rev A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Single Axis Tracker Table Details Rev A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Spares Container Details Rev A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Typical Trench Sections Details Rev A submitted on the 23.02.2021

Landscape Strategy Revised Drawing Number: P18_2617_13 Rev L submitted on the 24.12.2021

Construction Signage and public rights of way plan submitted on the 23.02.2021

Reason:

To ensure that the development is carried out in accordance with the approved plans and in the interests of good planning.

The Construction Traffic Management Plan and Method Statement has been revised to reflect the Saturday construction hours (08:00-13:00) requested by Environmental Health. Condition 9 below has been amended accordingly.

Condition 9 – Construction Traffic:

The Construction Traffic Management Plan – Revision A reference P18-2617/TR/01 and the Construction Traffic Method Statement reference P18-2617/TR/02 submitted on the 16.03.2022 shall be fully complied with at all times during the construction and decommissioning stages of the development.

Reason:

In the interests of safe operation of the adopted highway in the lead into development both during the demolition and construction phase of the development and subsequently during the decommissioning of the site.

Condition 18 has been slightly amended below to omit the first three words 'monitoring tree protection'

Condition 18 – Monitoring Tree Protection

Prior to commencement of the development hereby approved (including any ground clearance, tree works, demolition or construction), details of all tree protection monitoring and site supervision by a qualified tree specialist (where arboriculture expertise is required) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development thereafter shall be implemented in strict accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To preserve trees and hedges on the site in the interests of visual amenity and the character of the area in accordance with Stroud District Local Plan Policy ES8 and with guidance in revised National Planning Policy Framework paragraphs 15, 170(b) & 175 (c) & (d).