

Stock and Bradley Parish Council
Discussion/Meeting via Zoom 7.30pm on Wednesday 5th August 2020

PROPOSED ROUNDHILL SOLAR PANEL ARRAY

ZOOM LINK

<http://us02web.zoom.us/j/87253130090>

NOTES

Background:

There have been rumours of a large solar panel development at Stock Wood/Stock Green for about a year. No planning application has yet been submitted but the developers have submitted a request to Wychavon District Council for Pre-Application Planning Advice. We do not have any information as to the advice given them by Wychavon, but we have been given a copy of their 'Pre Application Advice Request'.

Purpose of the meeting:

The original intention was to invite a representative of the developers, but we have been advised that this might affect the developers' duty to consult.

Unfortunately, we cannot publish the Pre-Application Advice Request as it is copyright.

The application for pre-planning advice is dated September 2019. Pre-planning advice (both the application and the advice given) is confidential, allowing developers to formulate their plans unhindered. Prior to them submitting a planning application there will be a period of public consultation.

After a year of rumours, it was considered time to find out what is actually known. Due to the vagaries of parish boundaries, the development would be entirely in Inkberrow Parish, but it would directly affect far more houses in Stock & Bradley Parish.

This not a protest meeting; the parish council has made no decision as to whether it would support the application, support it subject to resolution of some issues, or oppose it. The parish councils, of course, only advise the District; the decision will actually be made by the District Council (Wychavon).

The purpose of the meeting, therefore, is to inform the residents of the information that we have to date, and also for the parish council to obtain some idea as to the opinions of its residents. The meeting will basically be a simple exchange of information.

The Developers:

The 'Pre-Application Advice Request' has been made by the Pegasus Group on behalf of JBM Solar Projects.

Pegasus are based in Cirencester and are working on a number of projects with JBM. They are one of the largest planning consultancies in the UK.

JBM are based in Dublin, but also have offices in London, and appear to be connected to PP Asset Management.

Documents:

The following documents might be helpful:

- 1) The planning policy for the area is defined by the South Worcestershire Development Plan (adopted 2016). Section 27 deals with renewable and low carbon energy.
- 2) The SWDP is about to be revised. The revised version has not yet been approved, but the preferred options refer to a document called 'South Worcestershire Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Supplementary Planning Document'.

All available at <http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/>

- 3) Upon hearing of this meeting, a Development Manager for JBM (the developers) contacted me and sent me an email correcting some points about the development. Her comments are added where appropriate as '*JBM email*'.

The Site:

The site extends to 118.3 ha (292 acres) as shown on the sketch plan attached (which, because of copyright, I have drawn).

JBM email: 'The final site will be smaller and additional buffers and constraints will be offset to neighbouring houses'.

The Scheme:

As we understand it the scheme has two purposes:

- i) To generate up to 49.9 MegaWatts.
- ii) To store electricity in the batteries taken from the national grid at periods of very low demand, typically overnight, generated by energy sources other than the proposed solar farm, to be released at times of higher demand.

Apparently, the proposals are likely to include:

- Photovoltaic (PV) arrays based on a simple metal framework ('table') which is pile-driven into the ground, avoiding the need for substantive foundations;

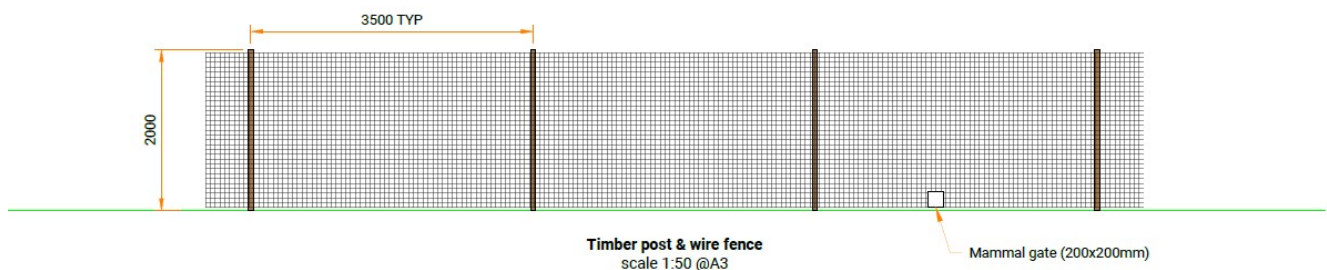
- A number of inverter and transformer blocks at various locations around the arrays;
- Boundary fencing (e.g. deer fencing) around the edge of each development parcel;
- A CCTV system, ether pole- or fence-mounted, located at strategic points around the site;
- Associated access tracks connecting inverter/transformer units;
- Storage container(s) for spare parts etc.;
- Relevant communications and monitoring equipment;
- Creation or improvement of site accesses for construction, operation and decommissioning purposes.

JBM email:

'The fencing will be approx. 2m high and appear more like deer fencing – please see example on one of our other projects below.

There will only be CCTV Cameras where seen necessary for safety. There will in no way be CCTV on all fences.

There will be inverter and battery storage containers (maximum approximately 25) dispersed around the site. Each of which is the size of a standard shipping container. '



Mike Hadley – Chairman, Stock & Bradley Parish Council

3rd August 2020

