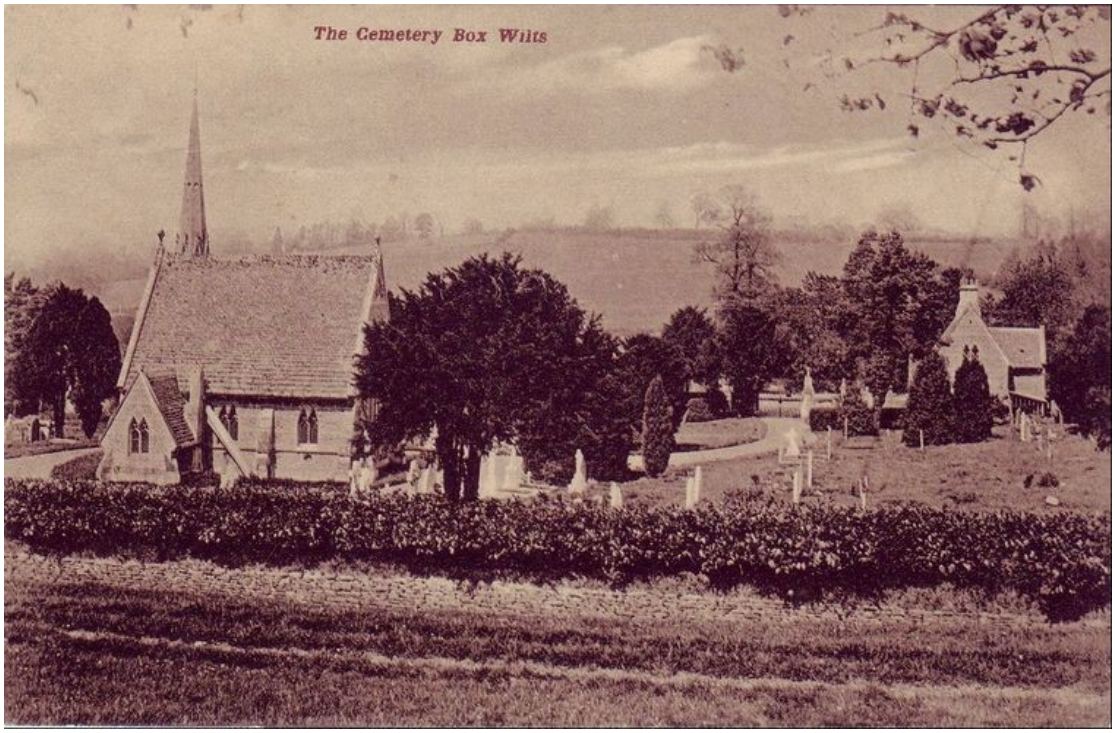
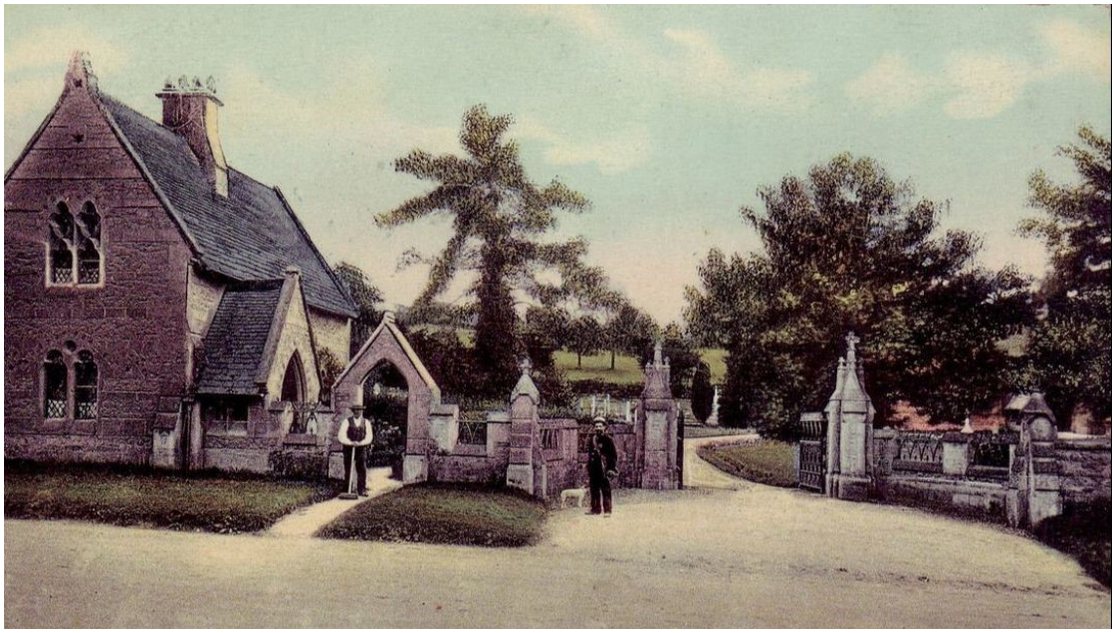
OBJECTION TO PLANNING APPLICATION.PL/20323/07741

LAND AT ASHELY GARAGE, BATH ROAD, BOX.





Historic photograph and postcard of The Cemetery, Box. Courtesy of Box Parish Council. Survival of all three listed buildings, The Lodge, Chapel and Gates with wall and their associated group value should not be underestimated. A full complement of original historic buildings set within the historic cemetery they were constructed to serve increases the interest of the buildings and the cemetery.

Objection. Planning application.PL/2023/07741 Proposed development of a solar PV array, battery energy storage system (BESS) and EV charging station, Land at Ashley Garage, Bath Road, Box

Dear Victoria Davis and Wiltshire Council

Please find below my objection to the above Planning Application

Summary

I recognise the benefits of renewable energy proposals but such schemes do not automatically override environmental protection and the guidance given by Central Government, Historic England, Policies in the Cotswolds A.O.N.B Management Plan and relevant saved policies of North Wiltshire's Local Plan and Wiltshire Core Strategy Plan.

Proposals cause harm to the Green Belt, Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the setting of Grade II listed buildings in Box Cemetery, The Lodge, Chapel, Gates and wall, curtilage listed monuments, historic Box Cemetery, Box Conservation Area, St Thomas a Becket Church Grade I, Middle Hill Tunnel Portals Grade II*, and the setting and enjoyment of the public right of way, Box 79, and 71. Harm caused by proposals, contrary to the view of the applicants supporting statements which also identifies harm generated, outweighs the claimed benefits of developing the site for renewable energy. The application should be refused.

Public benefits identified by the applicant are very limited as the renewable energy is provided to only one garage and a charging point that can serve two cars. It is uncertain if the battery storage facilities supply any surplus electricity to the National Grid but even it is does this would appear a modest contribution.

Onsite car charging facilities can be supplied by the existing electric supply without the need for the development proposed and the consequent harm caused. If solar panels could be placed on the hipped roof of the shop this would help ongoing electricity costs.

The claimed habitat benefits do not outweigh harm. Habitat improvements could also be achieved without the need for the large solar array and the harm it causes. It appears that no ecological survey has been undertaken to establish the importance of the stream and the western boundary of the cemetery which has veteran trees. This area potentially provides habitat for animals which may be adversely impacted by the proposed development.

The Planning and Design Statement notes the development is expected to last for 30 years .This is still a significant period in people's lives and not a reason for approving the application.

Alternative less sensitive sites outside the Cotswold National Landscape for solar array sites in Wiltshire should be explored.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes three categories of harm substantial harm, less than substantial harm and no harm to the setting of heritage asset .It does not refer to the need to provide a level of harm on the continuum between no harm and less then substantial.

It is considered that the level of harm to heritage assets identified is less than substantial bearing in mind the strong test for substantial harm.

If the local authority wishes to attach levels of harm under less than substantial it is considered that harm to heritage assets are at the higher end of less than substantial .

It is emphasised that less than substantial harm is still harm and that this still needs to be given the great weight it deserves in the assessment of harm against the claimed benefits of proposals.

The local authority are reminded also of the need to give great weight to harm to the A.O.N.B.

I note that strong objections have already been received to the development proposed by Box Parish Council and objections raised by the Council for the Protection for Rural England, Archaeology, Environment Agency and the public. I am also aware that an objection to proposals has been made by the Cotswolds National Landscape Board but at present this does not appear to be on the Council on line web site.

<u>Harm to Green Belt and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</u>

Harm to Green Belt has already been accepted by the applicant. However, a special case has not been made taking into account harm to other material planning considerations.

The conclusion of the Landscape Visual Impact Assessment, para 16.213 states, " It is the overall conclusion of this landscape and visual impact assessment that the proposed development is anticipated to result in moderate adverse impacts to the landscape baseline and major/moderate adverse impacts to the visual baseline within the site boundary at a residual stage.

Notwithstanding the above conclusion the LVIA incorrectly assesses the overall character of the site and its context as urban fringe. Para 9.1.5 Overall Character of the Site and Context states," The character of the site and its context may be summarised as urban fringe, with the local built form that follows the A4 and sits to the west visible…."

The character of the site and its context is clearly not urban fringe but rural. The field forms a valuable break in development along the A4 between the settlement of Ashley, Box Cemetery and the village of Box.

Cumulative harm to the A.O.N.B is also caused by the appearance of the existing garage and its proximity to the proposed development. Cumulative harm does not appear to have been borne in mind in the LVIA assessment.

Heritage Assets

Setting the scene. St Thomas a Becket Church, Churchyard. Box Cemetery.

Churchyards and cemeteries are valued as quiet places for reflection, as green spaces with often trees planted in them, for their wildlife and habitat interest. They provide also a combination of architecture, landscape and a record of the social history of an area which make them unique. An important aspect of their 'sense of place' is their setting.

In addition to the statutory list which refers to the cemetery buildings, Box People and Places (a local community history web site) provides further insight into the historic and architectural importance of the above burial sites and their historic association.

http://www.boxpeopleandplaces.co.uk/box-churchyard.html

http://www.boxpeopleandplaces.co.uk/box-cemetery.html

http://www.boxpeopleandplaces.co.uk/pictor--sons.html

The Parish of Box is fortunate to have a historic Church, St Thomas a Becket, Grade I, with its churchyard which has some fine Georgian monuments, many of the monuments in the churchyard are individually listed Grade II, and Box Cemetery. Box Cemetery is a relatively short walking distance, no longer than 10 minutes, from the Church via a historic footpath, now public right of way Box Footpath 11. At the end of the footpath, turning right, you pass by Box House (c 1810 -1820) and its garden, a Grade II listed building with separately listed Gate entrance and walls, Grade II, once the Vicarage, and then onto Box Cemetery.

The Church and Box House, with its listed gate piers and wall, lie within Box Conservation Area, however, despite the close proximity of the cemetery to the Conservation Area and its historic association with buildings in it, the cemetery at present is not included within its boundary.

The mid-19th century Victorian cemetery has three historic buildings listed in their own right, The Lodge, Chapel, Gates and cemetery wall. The buildings are also identified as group value in the statutory list. The cemetery buildings are described in the statutory list as being constructed in 1857, the Chapel and Lodge in a Gothic style .The Chapel noted as," Unusually elaborate Gothic with highly carved window tracery and virtuso display of contrasting stonework …"

The cemetery has also interesting Victorian monuments which enhance the setting of the cemetery buildings and may be regarded as curtilage listed. For example, in one of the above articles the monuments to the Pictor family are discussed. The Box Cemetery article by Vaughan Hill notes that they were also builders of the listed

cemetery buildings. It is also likely that the stone for the buildings was sourced from one of their quarries in the area. David Pollard in his book, 'Digging Bath Stone A Quarry and Transport History' notes, "The Pictor family became the most powerful of Bath Stone quarry masters"

The land for the cemetery is noted above as given by Mr Northey and that it formed part of a filed, "The land was given by Mr Northey and was described as part of a field adjoining the Turnpike Road know as Nap Stile or Great Lye Mead" The 1844 - 1888 historic map, courtesy of Know Your Place, Appendix 1, shows Box Cemetery and the listed cemetery building's together with their wider and important rural setting.

The surrounding open fields at that time are in fact noted as continuing down from the historic hamlet of Ashely to the site. 2Oth century development now takes development down to the A4 and the site of the garage. However, this is not an argument to continue development along and by the side of the A4 but rather to oppose it and retain this important field undeveloped.

The cemetery buildings and their access drive form an integral part of the overall design for the cemetery. Their immediate setting enhanced by the grounds of the historic cemetery, its historic monuments and planting, in particular the Heritage/Veteran Trees along its western boundary near the stream, their wider setting enhanced by the open fields that still remain undeveloped in the surrounding area.

Survival of all three listed buildings, The Lodge, Chapel and Gates with wall and their associated group value should not be underestimated. A full complement of original historic buildings set within the historic cemetery they were constructed to serve increases the interest of the buildings and the site of the cemetery

Planting proposals for the cemetery may have been influenced by the architects of the buildings, Poulton and Woodman of Reading. Ground plans of historic cemeteries were often by the same hand as the architecture. Regrettably the original architect drawings for the buildings and details for planting in the cemetery remain unfound.

The plan of the historic cemetery, excluding the 20th century extension to the east and up a steep slope, remains very much as depicted in the 1844 – 1888 OS map noted in Appendix 1. A sweeping drive continues from between the attractive listed entrance gates piers and wall past the historic Lodge into the cemetery, it then circles the impressive Chapel, formerly a Mortuary Chapel, with its tall octagonal spirelet.

The 1844 – 1888 OS shows trees in the cemetery and planting was given attention in most cemeteries to help add appropriate character. The Scots Pine, Yews and Lawson Cypress at the western boundary probably formed part of the original planting scheme. The Oak tree in the same area may be self-seeded but nevertheless it is still an impressive Oak in its own right .Main structural planting of trees adds interest to the site and setting of the listed buildings and cemetery.

Scots Pine, Lawson Cypress and Yew trees were often used in planting schemes for cemeteries during the Victorian period

There are further Yew trees behind the listed boundary wall facing the main road and on site. Those nearest the road, apart from the Lawson Cypress, may not be those

originally planted but they still provide historic continuity of their use in the cemetery and enhance its appearance.

The trees on the western boundary, facing the application site, are located above a historic low natural stone wall which faces onto a historic stream which probably flows into the By Brook in the valley bottom. The original western boundary of the cemetery.

The line of the southern and eastern boundary of the cemetery still survives planted with hedges. The historic photograph of the cemetery, in the article from Box People and Places by Vaughn Hill, shows a view from the rear field onto the Chapel with a hedge and a low stone wall directly below it. The low stone boundary wall is the same detail as that found on the western boundary, noted above. An original historic boundary wall

The cemetery appears laid out in an informal manner with views of the surrounding countryside from within the cemetery and from the countryside back to it forming an important part of its rural character when first constructed, as it still does today. It's important setting amongst surrounding open countryside and fields further emphasized by views from the 20th century extension to the east, from its higher slopes panoramic views can be obtained over the historic cemetery and its Chapel onto the application site, garage, and then out to surrounding countryside in the A.O.N.B and the higher valley slopes of the By Brook Valle.

Historic Box Cemetery with its group of listed cemetery buildings, historic monuments and planting is a good example of a mid-19th century public Victorian Village Cemetery, built as a result of the historic churchyard in Box becoming no longer available to accept burials. In addition it is located relatively close to the church and churchyard so that the historic associations between the two burial sites can be readily and easily appreciated. Previously public cemeteries appear to have been concentrated in urban areas

Historic England have confirmed that no thematic study on Victorian Village Cemeteries has been undertaken, if it had this may have enabled a comparison between the significance of Box Cemetery and other Village Cemeteries constructed at the same time. However, in terms of its significance at the County level of Wiltshire it appears to represent the only Victorian Village Cemetery that can boast the unique combination of Listed Lodge, Chapel and Gate with listed boundary wall. Its importance further reinforced by historic planting, monuments, plan form and its location within the Cotswolds National Landscape and A.O.N.B.

In view of the threat to it's setting by the proposed planning application and its historic interest it is suggested that it would merit further consideration by Historic England for Registering as a cemetery of special historic interest on Historic England's Historic Parks and Garden Register. Officers of the Council dealing with this application, including the Council Conservation Officer, could discuss this matter further with Historic England.

At a very quick look at the present public cemeteries on the register it appears that most are urban cemeteries but village public cemeteries also play an important part in the study of the burial history of this country.

Box Parish Council have recently repaired and re-laid the attractive stone slate roof to the listed Chapel and enhanced access to the cemetery from the village of Box by installing two new footpath gates that link into it from historic Box Footpath 71 .The

footpath forms the south western boundary of the cemetery and part of the Long Distance Footpath 'The Palladian Way'. Please refer to the following link for further details of the long distance footpath:-

https://www.walkingenglishman.com/ldp/palladianway.html

In addition the Parish Council are undertaking a project to record the history of Box Cemetery grounds and the individuals buried. (See page 12, extracts from Box Parish Magazine, November 2023)

The Cemetery and its listed buildings are valued community assets and they are also of wider public benefit to the people who visit the Cotswolds National Landscape, Area of Outstand Natural Beauty and the Parish of Box. Visitors to the area who value its special landscape and historic environment which is of a very high quality and walking on the public rights of way in the Parish.

HARM TO THE SEETING OF HERITAGE ASSETS

(See also photographs in Appendix 1)

In assessing the setting of heritage assets special consideration has been given to the guidance given in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and by Historic England. The NPPF states, "The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed (My underlining) and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral" The guidance also confirms that when considering the impact of development on the significance of a designated asset, great weight should be given to the assets conservation and the more important an asset the greater the weight should be given.

PPG notes, "The contribution that setting makes to the significance of the heritage asset does not depend on there being public rights or an ability to access or experience that setting. (My underlining)This will vary over time and according to circumstance."

Historic England, 'The Setting of Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment Good Practice Advice Planning Note 3 (Second Edition) states on page 4 under Cumulative Change, "Where the significance of a heritage asset has been compromised in the past by unsympathetic development affecting its setting, to accord with NPPF policies consideration still needs to be given to whether additional change will further detract from, or can enhance, the significance of the asset. …""

Appeal decisions have established that great weight should still be given to harm to Heritage Assets even if less than substantial.

HARM TO THE SETTING OF BOX CEMETERY LISTED BUILDINGS AND CEMETRY

The Heritage Statement notes that the application site makes a very limited contribution to the Chapel and that its development will be minor negative, at the lower end of the scale. During the summer months the magnitude of impact will be negligible leading to neutral significance and the impacts are considered less than substantial. No harm is attributed to any other heritage asset in the cemetery or in the surrounding area.

The impact of the development on the Chapel in the summer months is not negligible/neutral and its harm in winter months is underplayed. Although harm may still be considered less than substantial it will be higher level of harm than noted.

The development will harm also the setting of The Lodge and listed gate, gate piers and wall and the importance of the group cemetery buildings. Less than substantial harm caused to setting by the development proposed

No assessment has been made of harm to the wider setting off the curtilage listed monuments in the cemetery. Less than substantial harm caused to setting by the development proposed

The Chapel and Lodge can be seen from various viewpoints from within the application site and not only from the public right of way which crosses it in the summer and winter months. The views taken from the application site emphasise the wider context in which the cemetery and its historic buildings and their setting are appreciated and experienced. Less than substantial harm caused to setting by the development proposed

Standing on the pavement on the opposite site of the road near the bus stop and on the pavement near the bus stop views can be obtained into Box Conservation Area to the east, the Lodge, Chapel, listed gate entrance and boundary wall and over to the application site. The view of the application site in the winter months when the trees are not in leaf is clearly shown in Viewpoint 1 .View from Bath Road, page 10 in the LVIA. . Less than substantial harm caused to setting by the development proposed

The field to the south of the Chapel, in Parish Council ownership, also contributes to the rural setting of the Chapel and cemetery. From the advantage of this higher viewpoint views are obtained over the proposed development which lies on lower ground to the west. Less than substantial harm caused to setting by the development proposed

When the Cemetery and Chapel are seen from more distant views such as historic Box Footpath11, to the north on the higher valley slopes and above Brunel's Middle Hill Tunnel, the importance of the open field to be developed in providing an important rural setting to the listed buildings and the cemetery is clearly demonstrated and harm will be caused. Less than substantial harm caused to setting by the development proposed

The veteran trees noted on the western boundary form an integral part of the character of the cemetery and enhance the setting of the listed buildings. Development would detract from the setting of these important trees and thereby also detract from the setting of the listed buildings. At present these trees are viewed from the open field and from the public right of way which leads up to Ashley Conservation Area which crosses it. Harm would be caused to the setting/amenity value of the trees by the development proposed

The attractive open character of the field would be replaced for the most part by rows of solar panels on metal frames. The solar panels with their engineered, regular form and layout will give the site an industrial appearance which will significantly erode its openness and cause harm;

The tall unsightly security fencing in combination with the solar panels will emphasise the visually incongruous nature of the scheme. Planting near the the solar panels, proposed to help screen views of it, will take time to mature and when mature will serve to further compromise the important open character of the site.

The structures and other works associated with the solar panels, the Battery Container, Control / Client Room, CCTV on lighting columns, which are understood to be four meters tall, together with the proposals for onsite car parking with an access road will further detract from the open and rural appearance of the site and setting of Box Cemetery and its listed buildings.

It is likely that due to the comments of Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Authority the proposed access route and layout will require changing. These changes are likely to further urbanise the appearance of the scheme and increase visual harm.

The assessment of harm in the supporting Heritage Statement does not appear to have borne in mind the views obtained from people travelling in buses on the main road to the north. Buses, often double decker's, travel on this very attractive and historic route through the A.O.N.B and onto the World Heritage City of Bath, then back to Box and other locations in Wiltshire. There is also a bus stop at the western end of the cemetery.

The harm caused by proposals will be further emphasised when the application site and its surroundings is seen from elevated locations within buses.

HARM TO THE SETTING OF ST THOMAS a BECKET CHURCH.GRADE I LISTED

A view can be obtained from the application site over the cemetery, roof of the listed Lodge and onto the spire of St Thomas a Becket in the distance which lies within Box Conservation Area. In the winter months this view will probably become more open to view.

The church tower with its spire provides a significant historic and architectural landmark in the Parish. The setting of the church is not limited to its churchyard but experienced from the surrounding countryside. Its wider countryside setting emphasises that it is a village church located in a rural area and enhances its character.

As noted previously the cemetery and its cemetery listed buildings also have historical associations with the Church. The cemetery and its building's constructed because of the need for a new burial ground as the churchyard was full. The Chapel is noted in the 1844 – 1888 OS map, as the Church of England Mortuary Chapel.

Less than substantial harm would be caused to the setting of the church but as Grade I greater weight should be attached to the harm identified.

HARM TO THE SETTING OF BOX CONSERVATION AREA

Box Cemetery with its listed buildings combines with Box House to form historic and attractive gateway features on entering Box from the west and along the route of a historic turnpike road into the Conservation Area. The application site is in the field immediately adjacent Box Cemetery, which with its cemetery listed buildings, forms an important approach into the Conservation Area. The development of the field causes harm to the wider setting of the Conservation Area. Distant views of the approach into the Conservation Area from the higher valley slopes to the north and from Footpath 11 emphasise this. From this footpath panoramic views over the application site, Cemetery, Chapel then onto Box Conservation Area, where Box House and its listed wall is located, can be obtained.

Less than substantial harm would be caused to the setting of the Conservation Area.

CUMULATIVE HARM TO SETTING

Ashley garage is clearly not in an urban fringe location as it is located within a rural area in the countryside. In such location's further development along the A4 should be discouraged to maintain the distinction between settlements, the character of the area and the setting of the cemetery and its listed buildings.

The appearance of the garage with its strident and illuminated advertisements, large visually incongorus flat roof canopy, extensive hard standing and parked cars causes harm to the setting of historic Box Cemetery, its group of Grade II listed cemetery building's, the approach and setting of Box Conservation Area and the A.O.N.B

Harm caused by the garage is less than substantial but this harm must then be added to the harm caused by the development proposed .The cumulative harm then given the great weight it deserves.

HARM TO THE SETTING OF MIDDLE HILL TUNNEL PORTALS .GRADE II*

From the application site and when viewed from the other side of the valley, Box footpath 11 and areas near the Middle Hill tunnel portals, the listed portals can be observed in their broader setting with the field to be developed.

The Brunel Trail identified in, 'The Ringing Grooves of Change. Brunel and the coming of The Railway to Bath with The Story of Box Tunnel' by Andrew Swift, takes you for a walk along the bottom of the By Brook Valley and then up Box footpath 11. Adjacent to the footpath on the higher valley slopes is an informal viewing platform which provides one of the best views of historic railway engineering in this country. Over the stone parapet of the listed eastern Middle Hill Portal the line of the historic G.W.R can be seen continuing onto and under Brunel's listed railway bridge over the A4 and then onto the iconic portal of Brunel's Box Tunnel. On turning round on the viewing platform and looking south west the application site can be seen in the By Brook Valley.

Walking further along the footpath to the west and closer to the Western Middle Hill Tunnel Portal the application site is experienced also in the broader setting of the listed portal. Moving closer to the portal on the field above it and looking down over it and across to the application site the experience of the application site forming part of the wider setting of the portal is reinforced.

When the application site is viewed from the higher valley slopes to the north and Box footpath 11 the A4 in the valley below, near the application site, appears visually for the most part to disappear shielded by surrounding vegetation. However, the application site remains open to view.

Western Middle Hill Tunnel Portal can also be seen from the application site, over the visually incongorus flat roof canopy of the garage. Harm caused by the development in this field on the setting of the portal is therefore increased by virtue of cumulative harm associated with the canopy of the garage.

Despite the distance from the Listed Grade II* portals the surrounding landscape, including the application site forms a part of their setting and how they are experienced.

Less than substantial harm would be caused to the setting of the Grade II* listed portals but greater weight should be attached to the harm identified.

The proposed development would cause less than substantial harm to setting

HARM TO THE SETTING AND ENJOYMENT /AMENITY VALUE.OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY. BOX FOOTPATH 79 and 71

The Parish of Box is fortunate in being well served by public rights of way and walking in the area, which lies within the Cotswolds National Landscape, is popular and promoted.

It is interesting to note that both these rights of way are noted on the 1844 - 1888 historic OS map. The footpaths may therefore be considered as of some historic interest in their own right.

Box Footpath 79

It is agreed that the development proposed does not close footpath 79, however, proposals will clearly causes harm to its setting, enjoyment, its amenity value.

An attractive aspect of Box 79 is that it is located in an undeveloped open field. This field allows views over to the historic Box Cemetery, its listed cemetery buildings, veteran trees and far reaching views to the north across open countryside to the higher valley slopes and also the entrance to Ashley Conservation Area.

The views will be harmed by the visually incongorus solar panels, fence, additional equipment to serve the panels and new vehicular access drive. There is the potential of noise pollution generated from equipment which lies in very close proximity to the footpath.

The noise assessment impact in support of the application notes measurement location points, however, it appears none of these were on the public right of way at its closest point to the above equipment, for example the battery store.

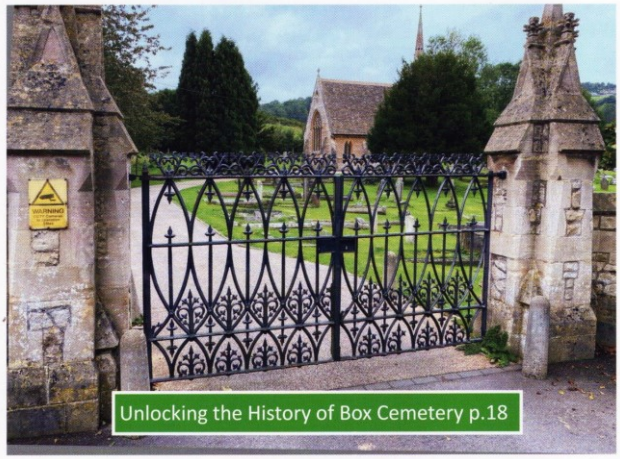
Box Footpath 71

Harm would be caused also to Box Footpath 71 which forms part of the Palladian Way. A very attractive section of this route is the part that drops down from the top of Doctors Hill towards the south western boundary of the cemetery. As you walk down from the kissing gate off Doctors Hill attractive panoramic views over the A.O.N.B are obtained and included in this are the open field, application site, on the lower valley slope. The visual incongorus solar array panels in the field would harm this attractive view detracting from its enjoyment and amenity value. .

The County Councils Pubic Rights of Way Team was consulted on the application and requested the development could fund the replacement of three stiles with kissing gates, contributing to Box being a stile free Parish. A contribution of £2,100 requested. If the applicant is prepared to pay this and claim this as an additional benefit of the renewable energy scheme, this still does not outweigh the harm already identified.

Box Parish Magazine

November 2023 £1





Magic Engineering ?



What Caused This Tragedy?



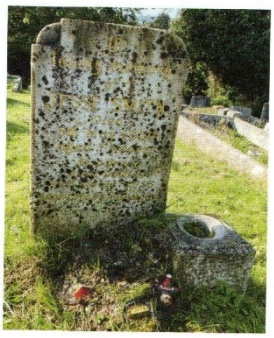
Details of
Box Christmas Choir
Box Christmas Market
Corsham Christmas Concert

plus Clubs & Groups, Mrs Porter's Diary,

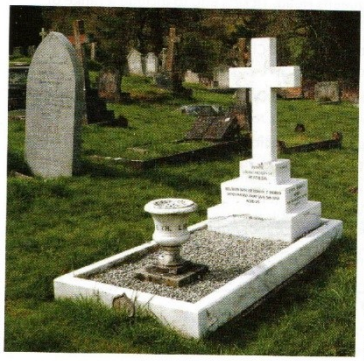
Cemetery Website Memorial Archive Project

Box Cemetery is one of the oldest public village cemeteries in England. It was founded in 1858, a decade or so after the city cemeteries, such as Highgate in London, Arnos Vale in Bristol and Reading Old Cemetery. Our cemetery is a Heritage Listed site with Grade II buildings, including the Lodge and the Chapel.

In 2024, Box Parish Council is launching a new project to record the story of the cemetery's history and the stories of people buried in its grounds.



Every grave has a story to tell, sometimes of national significance and always of family importance. Seven-year-old Jesse Smith was from a traveller family passing through the village. In a touching farewell in 1950, his uncle and aunt organised his burial, together with his favourite toy, a porcelain pony, the remains of which are at the base of the headstone. Near the pink obelisk, marking the unconsecrated area for Methodist burials, is the grave of Sister Lillian Lamb, goddaughter of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army. She worked tirelessly for peace in the inter-war years and was buried in the family grave of her sibling, Mrs Beardwood, in 1938.



Reverend Vere Awdrey (father of the author of Thomas the Tank Engine) was buried in the Box Cemetery in 1928, joined by his wife nearly 50 years later.

The Hobbs Memorial stands out In the middle of the historic old headstones because it is made of white marble. It commemorates one of the oldest families in the village, that of Humphrey Hobbs, who farmed at Cheney Court for most of the 1800s. Humphrey's son, Edwin Thomas Hobbs, married Martha Vezey, daughter of a Batheaston publican and sister of James Vezey from The Chequers. They lived at The Bungalow, Ditteridge, then they moved into The Bear Hotel before taking the farm at Cheney Court, Ditteridge. The grave was erected by their daughter, Lilian Madeleine Hobbs, who set up a trust fund for Box Church to maintain the memorial.

If you have a story about relatives or friends buried in the grounds, please contact the project co-ordinator, Alan Payne, at *boxpeopleandplaces@yahoo.co.uk*. A photo of the person would be helpful, together with your memories.

Alan Payne

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APPENDIX 1



1844 – 1888 Historic OS Map Courtesy of Know your Place

The historic map above shows Box Cemetery and its listed cemetery buildings located in surrounding open fields when first constructed. The application site lies immediately adjacent the cemetery and to the west. Note how the cemetery site also forms an important gateway feature on the approach into Box Village parts of which are now designated a Conservation Area. The pink line on the OS map does not mark correctly the present Conservation Area Boundary.

Many of the footpaths noted on the historic map are now public rights of way. The public rights of way are therefore of some historic interest in their own right.





Box Cemetery and its Chapel from the application site. The surrounding trees and vegetation are in leaf but in winter months these views will become more open. Note the important Heritage Trees either side of the Chapel on the western boundary in the top photograph whose setting will also be harmed by the development proposed,

On turning to the right of the Chapel, bottom photo, wide ranging and attractive views are obtained over the field, application site, and out onto to distant views of the higher valley slopes. The views will be significantly comprised and the setting of the above harmed by the visually incongorus solar panels and associate equipment.





Top photograph. View over application site onto the cemetery, listed Lodge Grade II and the spire of St Thomas a Becket Church, Grade I, which is located in Box Conservation Area .The visual and historical association between the two burial sites, the building's on them and their setting will be harmed by the proposed development.

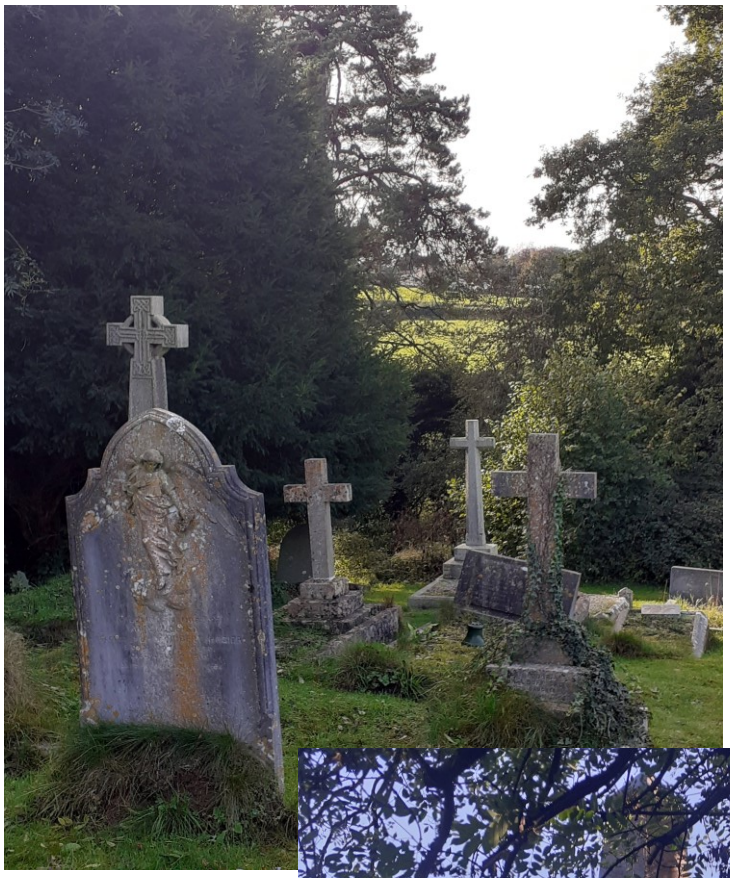
Bottom Photograph. View from the application site over to the cemetery and listed Grade II Lodge and Spire of the Grade II Chapel

The surrounding trees and vegetation are in leaf but in winter months these views will become more open to view.





Cemetery, listed cemetery buildings and application site viewed in a 180 degree view from the opposite side of the road. Note the Gateway feature that the cemetery and buildings present on the approach into the Conservation Area. From both sides of the road views can be seen to the east and onto the listed wall to Box House within the Conservation Area .Turning right views of the cemetery are seen in context with the application site. In the winter months the application site will be more open to view as noted in the panoramic view supplied in the Landscape Appraisal, page 10, to support proposals





Photographs showing the importance of historic monuments in the churchyard and how they enhance the setting of the listed cemetery buildings and are off interest in their own right. The top photo notes views over the monuments into the application site. Views from within the cemetery to the application site will open out when some of the trees and vegetation are not in leaf in the winter months

The bottom photo is a view of the Victorian Pictor Monument, curtilage listed, looking over to the listed Chapel. As noted in Box People and places Pictor and Sons built the cemetery buildings.





Top photograph. Application site (red X) when seen from Box footpath 71and over the rear field to the cemetery. Views from the footpath and the field emphasise harm caused to setting of the cemetery and Chapel. The field is located on higher ground so views over the application site on lower ground from it are also clearly seen in context with the Chapel and its harm to setting emphasised. The yellow X notes that views from the field need to be borne in mind in assessment of harm to setting.

Bottom Photograph. Application site when viewed from historic footpath Box 11, north of the site. This view demonstrates harm would be caused to the setting of the cemetery and the Chapel, seen in the photo in shadow due to prevailing light conditions, and the historic approach into the Conservation Area.







CUMULATIVE HARM

The appearance of the garage harms and detracts from the setting of the historic cemetery, cemetery listed buildings and the wider setting of Box Conservation Area .To this must be added the harm created by the developed proposed on the application site. Cumulative harm to setting given the great weight it deserves.







Top Photograph .Middle Hill Tunnel informal viewing platform off Box Footpath 11 on the northern valley slopes

Middle to the right Photograph. View from viewing panel over the parapet of Middle Hill Tunnel East onto line of the GWR with views of Brunel's listed bridge and iconic Brunel tunnel in the distance.

Bottom Photograph, Still on the viewing panel and turning round to the south west views are obtained of the application site marked with a red X.





Middle Hill Tunnel Western Portal when viewed from Box Footpath 11 and closer to the portal from a field above it .The attractive wider rural setting of the portal harmed by the proposed solar array development on the application site (Marked with an X.) Once gain it is interesting to note the proximity of the application site to the historic Box cemetery and in particular the listed Chapel which can be seen in the above view and located to the left of the application site



View of the Western Portal of Middle Hill tunnel from the application site noting also the visual intrusion to its setting of the garage large flat roof canopy. The development of the field would harm the wider setting of the Portal and this harm must be read with the cumulative harm already established in this view by the introduction of the canopy.