DAUNTSEY PARISH COUNCIL

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Development Services
Wiltshire Council
Monkton Park
Chippenham
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SN15 1ER

For the attention of Peter Crozier

Dear Peter

Application PL/2023/10077 – Full Planning Permission
Construction and Operation of a Renewable Energy Park comprising Ground Mounted Solar Photovoltaics (PV) together with Associated Infrastructure, Access, Landscaping and Cabling
Land West of Lyneham Substation, West of Dauntsey Lock, Wiltshire
For Exagen Development Limited

Thank you for the opportunity of commenting on this Full planning application. My Council met last evening and has asked me to forward the following comments to you.

The Council has no objection in principle to this proposal.

There has been a significant amount of information provided by the applicant, including pre-application local community consultations and the Council acknowledges that alternative energy sources need to be found.

However, in order to gain support developments of this nature need to be situated in the right place.

In this case the development is of a large scale in a highly visual position, within low-lying land, in close proximity to a main road and visible from surrounding higher levels with the potential to destroy the unique character of the rural surrounds.

Council Members noted that there was a considerable amount of technical information submitted with the application that they did not have the expertise to comment on and so rely on your own Council departments and external

consultees/advisors to assess the merits or otherwise. This is particularly important in regard to flooding and drainage and archaeological issues.

The Council accepted that it is often the case for solar farms to be sited on rural land leading to the loss of agricultural uses, albeit that some limited grazing is retained, but the increasing number of ad-hoc proposals destroying the open character is deplored and they feel that a coherent Policy for Wiltshire should be introduced as soon as possible.

It is also often the case that proposals contain suggestions that impact is minimised by the landscaping proposals. The Council has serious doubts that the present proposals to hide this development from the B4069 and surrounding panoramic views for the next 40 years can and will be achieved.

With this in mind the Council, in offering support in principle, need to be assured that the landscaping proposals are sufficient to assimilate the development into the rural scene. This reflects the Wiltshire Local Plan policy that proposes that villages and Parishes should be maintained within their rural setting.

The Council accepts that the creation of renewable energy sources need to be supported but, as mentioned above, this should not bring wholesale changes to the character of the landscape setting to the Parish. The Council felt that on balance this could be a suitable site with the caveat that the quality of the landscaping proposals, including the maintenance of such, is a fundamental requirement.

The Parish Council trusts that their observations will be taken into consideration when the application is determined.

Yours sincerely

Vivian Vines

On behalf of Dauntsey Parish Council