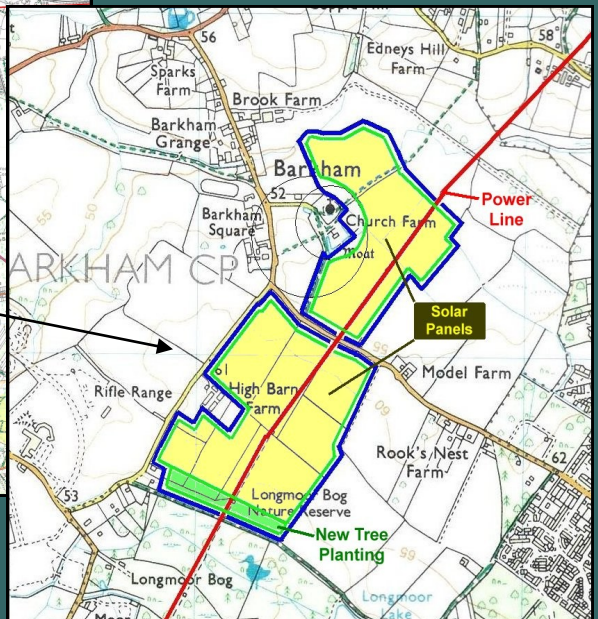
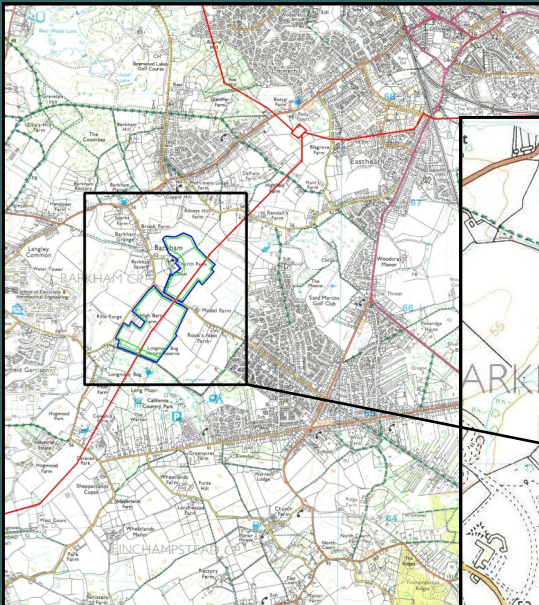




BARKHAM
PARISH COUNCIL

Barkham Solar Farm Have Your Say



Please Return Survey by 05 March, 2021

BARKHAM SOLAR FARM

As a result of Wokingham Borough Council (WBC) declaring a climate emergency, in July 2019, they are committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2030.

See more information at: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/open-data/climate-emergency/>

To help achieve this WBC have identified 4 solar farm sites each with the capacity to generate in excess of 20 MW of energy. One of these is in Barkham on WBC owned farm land in the area of Barkham Street, Barkham Ride, Commonfield Lane and close to St James Parish church and the Village Hall.

The total agricultural land area proposed for the solar farm is 40 Ha (99 acres) across High Barn Farm and part of Brook Farm, taking up 35% of the available farm land owned by WBC. To put this into perspective, the gross area of the site is equivalent to 57 full size football pitches and represents 6% of all Barkham Parish land.

The energy generation potential of this site is more than 20 MW depending on the final layout. The solar farm will be more than twice the size of the one just approved in Arborfield and around 4 times the size of an existing solar farm site in Swallowfield, making it one of the largest (if not **the largest**) in Berkshire.

Barkham Parish Council (BPC) believes this to be one of the most important land use projects affecting Barkham for many years. It would be unfortunate if we were to lose much of Barkham's valued agricultural farm land and countryside views. There are however pro's and con's to this project and ways in which to partially mitigate the impact on the land and amenity.

BPC needs to independently understand your views in order to achieve the best possible outcome for the Parish. To do this we are asking all residents and interested parties to complete the survey form on the back page or online.

To help brief you with this, here are some key points for your consideration:

REASONS IN FAVOUR

- This is a move away from the use of carbon based energy.
- Will serve to protect the land from housing development (and even more local traffic) through making it unavailable for the next 40 years.
- Provides the Borough with a significant revenue return on their land asset and income to fund WBC's ongoing services to the community.

REASONS IN FAVOUR (contd.)

- Existing public bridleways and pathways will be retained and improved.
- New hedgerows and trees will be planted to screen the solar panel visual impact.
- Possible new footpath to the south of the site.

REASONS AGAINST

- This conflicts with the Neighbourhood Plan which states that new developments should blend into the landscape, by recognising the distinctive character of the area and outstanding views.
- The site encroaches on separation areas between urban settlements.
- Compromises the significance and setting of heritage assets around and including the Church.
- May set a precedent to further undermine the Neighbourhood Plan against other green field development e.g. Barkham Square.
- May impact biodiversity, wildlife and landscape if, by converting agricultural land to a solar farm without mitigation, the character of the area could be changed.
- Loss of green land that has been used for farming for over 1,000 years.

Have your say by completing the accompanying survey electronically on <https://forms.gle/UoyJvwqh8k9UVZe39> or completing the form on the rear page and dropping it off at the special post box outside the Barkham Post Office and Newsagent on Bearwood Road.
Please do so ASAP and by 05 March,2021

This QR code will take you to the online survey form on your iPhone or Android smartphone



If you are unable to use the online survey form then please detach this page , complete the form on the back and post it into the collection box at the location listed above or post it to: Parish Council Office at Barkham Parish Council, Arborfield Green Community Centre, Arborfield, Reading, RG2 9ND, or scan and email it to: clerk@barkham-parishcouncil.org.uk

BPC Solar Farm Survey

1. Broadly speaking, are you? (only tick one)

- ☐ In favour of the Solar Farm Proposal?
☐ Against the Solar Farm Proposal?
☐ Neither for nor against the proposal?

2. Which are your main areas of concern and strength of feeling? (no matter your answer to Q1)

Main Concerns	Unconcerned	Neutral	Concerned
Visual impact	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effect on wildlife	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Effect upon Footpaths & Bridleways	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Construction and maintenance traffic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Proximity to Barkham Parish Church and a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loss of important landscape separating settlements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Urbanisation of Green Spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Undermines Neighbourhood Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Do you have any other comments? (please write them in box below)

Name: (optional)

Postcode: (to help us understand the range of feeling across the parish)

Email address: (optional)

Tick the box to opt in for the Parish Council to contact you directly by email with further news on this application ☐ Yes I'd like more information

Information supplied will be aggregated and individual data will not be shared with third parties. Any comments made may be published, but without attribution. Designed & published by Barkham Parish Council, Barkham Parish Office, Sheerlands Road, Arborfield RG2 9ND.