Darke & Taylor
Connected Excellence

Project profile

Buscot Park, Faringdon,
Oxfordshire, SN7 8BU

The two completed GRP enclosures; existing (left-hand side) and new (right-hand side).

Brief Information

Buscot Park is a country house and estate located near the town of Faringdon in Oxfordshire. The present Lord Faringdon lives in the late 1700's Palladian-style mansion and administers the estate on behalf of the National Trust.

Darke & Taylor (D&T) was called in by Lord Faringdon to implement energy-saving measures, most notably the electrical installation enabling work for a solar farm in Buscot Park.

Challenges

National Trust protocols - additional planning and scrutiny was required before any works could begin, to ensure that materials used and working practises complied with both listed building and National Trust standards.

Distance was an issue – the solar farm had to be sited away from the listed mansion for Health & Safety (H&S), aesthetic, and solar positioning reasons. Also, Buscot Park's electricity infrastructure required upgrading to cope with the extra power demands.

A working estate – being open to the public with, extensive grounds, and a tea room, there was little scope for any downtime in the electricity supply.

Solar Technology – a considerable investment in time and resources is necessary to keep up to date with the fast-moving world of Renewable Energy with its cutting-edge technology – this is not something that can be undertaken by an electrician without specialist training.

Solutions

Approved contractor – having worked on other National Trust sites (e.g. the Cliveden Spa refurbishment) as an approved contractor, D&T was well accustomed to the planning detail and rigour required by the National Trust.

Upgrades required - D&T arranged for the District Network Operator (DNO) to divert the mains supply into a newly built GRP (Glass-fibre Reinforced Polyester) enclosure. New trenches were then dug to run the heavy mains cables 120 metres to a connection point for the solar park, whilst a separate supply was run to a new mains panel that D&T installed in the mansion.

Sensitive planning – after notifying all affected parties, it took D&T an 8-hour day to reconfigure the mains supply. Wherever possible, all the infrastructure works were undertaken in advance.

Renewables Team – D&T's specialist electricians are in constant contact with manufacturers to keep up-to-date with new technology. They undertook all the electrical work on this project.

""Darke & Taylor's depth of knowledge and experience in both renewables and mains power distribution was the key factor in their appointment as the electrical specialist for these works."

Hugh Taylor, CEO of Roadnight Taylor, Independent Power & Energy Consultancy

Technical Overview

D&T was not involved in installing the solar farm itself but worked closely with the Renewables Consultant (Roadnight Taylor) throughout the project.

D&T also had to liaise closely with the DNO to ensure minimal downtime for the changeover in supply, and with the groundwork contractor to install the new cabling trenches.

Client	Buscot Park
Design Consultant	Roadnight Taylor Ltd

Project Duration	April - June 2019
Project Value	£60,000

D&T Project Personnel

Project Director	Julian Butler
Project Manager	Mark Adams
Site Supervisor	Joel Thomas
Health & Safety Officer	James Thompson

Commissioning Engineer	Brian Smith
Quantity Surveyor	Stuart Mcnaughton
D&T Site Operatives	Jason Elford, Michael Martinez

Gallery

▲ BEFORE: The newly built GRP enclosure (right-hand side) to house the new MCCB Panel board. Note: the old existing enclosure is on the left-hand side.

▲ AFTER: The new MCCB Panel board being installed within the new GRP enclosure.

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