

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 May 2025 19:02
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Written Representation following Botley West Solar Farm Open Hearings 13-15 May

Dear [REDACTED]

My ref: 20055016

I would like to bring to the attention of the Inspectorate for the assessment of Botley West Solar Farm that the Examining Authority's Questions at the conclusion of the Hearing on 15 May unfortunately did not include the issue of lighting required for the operation of the Solar Farm, and of its possible impact on the whole site proposed for the Botley West Solar Farm.

In the Application Documents submitted by Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd, there is no Appendix specifically covering the inclusion of lighting systems that will be required for the installation and protection of the Solar Farm.

The only place reference to lighting is included is in APP-043, Chapter 6, the Environmental Statement for the Project Description, where it is relegated to the last item, 6.4, under Other Infrastructure.

Other Infrastructure

6.4.38

Fencing, lighting, and security systems are also proposed to enclose and secure the main Project infrastructure components. The fencing will be for operational security purposes and may be up to 2.1 m in height. Lighting and CCTV will be installed too, but only within limited areas of the development, generally around the high voltage infrastructure for safety and security. Table 6.4 below provides more details.

Table 6.4: Other Infrastructure Parameters

CCTV No. of CCTV cameras – 14 (two on each of the 6 no. Secondary Project Substations, and two on the Main Project Substation). Support Column Details - 100 mm box section galvanized steel column or wooden pole

Camera Height (m) – 3.0 m to 4.0 m

Camera Position – 1m to 2m inside the fence boundary

The CCTV cameras can operate as infrared, without the need for visible lighting, but also have emergency lighting fitted.

Lighting For Solar PV Array and Transformers – combination of manually operated lighting and PIR motion sensor activated security / emergency lighting.

No lights will be permanently switched on. Operated manually.

*Electrical Compound(s) - combination of
Manually operated lighting and
Passive infra-red (PIR) motion sensor activated security / emergency lighting.
No lights permanently switched on.*

The impact of so much lighting required for the industrial 24-hour operation of a solar farm covering 1000 hectares, stretching from Wootton to Farmoor, a site larger than London Airport, is massive.

The proposed site will be centred, isolated, in countryside, and it is not possible to estimate the effect of the amount of light that it will have on the surrounding landscape.

6.4.28 indicates:

- a) Lighting (emergency/motion sensor activated) on all the fencing protecting the main Project infrastructure components (neither number of units nor locations specified, presumably across the whole site)
- b) Lighting (emergency/motion sensor activated) on the 156 Power Converter Stations and 12 Project Power Stations, (number of units not specified, and locations given in the 10 Illustrative Masterplans).
- c) Lighting (emergency/motion sensor activated) on CCTV cameras (number of units and location not specified, presumably located across the whole site)

All the many lighting installations will be triggered by external movement close to them, be that human, or, much more likely and frequently through the night, that of wildlife in the immediately adjacent and surrounding countryside.

Because of the proposed location for Botley West Solar Farm, in countryside, this will result in instances of Dark Sky Pollution, and impact light pollution on the landscape, countryside, and environment. This will potentially affect an area of 1000 hectares that is traditionally and historically free of artificial light and is meant to be dark at night.

The light pollution can damage wildlife and their habitat, and affect astronomy.

Further, not only will such light pollution significantly impact the setting of the **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, which in evidence presented to the Open Hearings, stretches well beyond the walls of Blenheim Palace, but also the immediately adjacent countryside of the proposed solar farm lies in the **Cotswold Area of Natural Outstanding Beauty**.

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) are protected from light pollution through various measures aimed at preserving their dark skies and natural landscapes. An adjacent industrial site using emergency and motion sensor activated lights for protection and security clearly fails to preserve the dark skies and natural landscape of the area.

It is beyond belief that Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP), on behalf of SolarFive Ltd, have selected this site for what is potentially the largest solar farm in Europe.

I'd be grateful if you would bring this matter to the attention of the Inspectorate

Yours sincerely,

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[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 June 2025 15:59
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Inadequacy of visual representation for the assessment of Botley West Solar Farm

Dear [REDACTED]

My reference: 20055016

I would like to bring to the attention of the Inspectorate for the assessment of the Botley West Solar Farm application the total inadequacy of visual representation supplied by Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) on behalf of SolarFive Ltd, for the recognition of the impact of the solar panels by anyone being near them, or even seeing them from afar.

The project proposes between 1.8 million and 2.2 million panels, each 1.1-1.4m w x 2.1-2.4m l x 0.03 x 0.04m d., dark blue, dark grey, or black in colour, and in height from 0.8m to 2.20m-2.30m above ground. (BWSF Environmental Statement, Table 6.3, Project Component)

It is frankly astounding that the applicant believes that merely **31** photomontages of single views of fields covered by panels could be sufficient for assessing the impact of so many of these solar panels located on a site of 1000 hectares, or that the impact on the site could be characterised by a few of what they apparently consider typical vistas.

This is not flat desert country, but a dramatically changing landscape of rolling uplands and valleys, and the site is immediately adjacent to the Cotswold Area of Natural Outstanding Beauty.

Further, that for any of the selected views, the photomontages show the view in either the winter or summer (autumn), but not both. Obviously, the views of the landscape change dramatically according to the season.

However, equally astounding is that the applicant has relied on single-shot photographic images for the presentation of proposal, and not considered other forms of visual presentation.

The medium of film has been available since 1888 and using it would have enabled the applicant to present walkers' or drivers' experience of the cumulative impact along a road or footpath.

Instead of merely producing plans, which do not visually represent fields, there has been no attempt to use drone images, which would give a full, wide view of the targeted landscape. Similarly, there are no superimposed photomontage on drone images.

The applicant has not offered 3-D models for showing the impact of the solar panels in the landscape, nor conceived of presenting interactive 3-D models for the experience of being close to fields of solar panels, 1.1-1.4m w x 2.1-2.4m l x 0.03 x 0.04m d., dark blue, dark grey, or black in colour, and in height from 0.8m to 2.20m-2.30m above ground.

Too much of the information and documents presented by the applicant has been the results derived from working at a computer and not examining the fields.

The failure to use available technical resources to present full and accurate evidence of the impact of an industrial project does not meet the requirements of PINS Guidance 8/8/24: *'The information and documents that the applicant provides for consultation need to be clear and informative so that the project can be understood by anyone looking at it.'*

The impact of the Solar Farm on 1000 hectares of Oxfordshire countryside has not been sufficiently presented for consideration by the National Inspectorate. It fails Gunning Principle 2: 'there is sufficient information to give 'intelligent consideration'.

I'd be grateful if you would bring these matters to the attention of the Inspectorate.

Yours sincerely,

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