

I represent Dustin Dryden; a local man who is uniquely and profoundly affected by this proposal. Over the 25 years I have known him, Dustin has worked consistently and successfully to achieve a large aviation business, and a successful agricultural base; he provides careers for over 100 people; 13 years ago his home became [REDACTED] – a family home; a wildlife habitat (including a modest lake), a workplace - and located in the middle of the Central section of the proposal. His home will be wholly encircled at close proximity by solar panels – and this will endure for the entirety of his family life.

Behind the Botley West plan is a business proposal. Mr Dryden is an exceptional business man; he asks that the following questions are diligently pursued by the Examining Authority:

QUESTION 1: Disclosure of Heads of Terms & Options Agreements:

How will the Examining Authority ascertain that the Blenheim and Vanbrugh Estate Trustees have properly executed legitimate and valid Heads of Terms and Options Agreements with the Applicants, ensuring that the majority of the land proposed for development is lawfully acquired?

According to the Land & Rights Negotiations Tracker, *"The Applicant negotiated a Heads of Terms for the development, which was agreed in December 2020. The Parties then worked together to agree an Option Agreement which was signed by both parties in December 2022."* While this material may be confidential on a commercial basis, verifying the validity of these Terms and Agreements is crucial.

Significant taxpayer funds will be spent in this Examination Process - that may be rendered void if there are hidden fatal flaws in the land agreements. It is imperative to clarify the unique and distinct status of Blenheim land at the earliest stage of the Examination.

We respectfully ask the Examining Authority to direct the Applicants to disclose the Heads of Terms & Options Agreements.

QUESTION 2: Funding?

How will the Examining Authority ensure that the Examining Process thoroughly scrutinises the financial standing of the funding streams assertions by the Applicants in their Funding Statement? Reasonable due diligence?

Given the significant concerns regarding the funding of this proposal which the media have linked to Russian investments - and which plainly involves a complex and opaque network of associated shell companies, how will the Examining Authority ensure that Botley West is not a 'zombie project' to use the current Secretary of State's words?

DESNZ has indicated that adopting a strategic and planned approach will eliminate the need for billions of pounds spent on unnecessary grid reinforcement. Energy secretary Ed Miliband added that the changes "will axe 'zombie' projects and fast-track connections for homegrown power".

Botley West would not be home grown power; it is a land grab benefitting obscure overseas interests.

QUESTION 3: CREDIBILITY?

In the Land & Rights Negotiations Tracker document the Applicants inform the Examining Authority that all individuals affected, as listed in the Book of Reference, have been approached for negotiations.

Mr. Dryden's significant interests are indeed mentioned in several parts of the Book of Reference. However, there have been no approaches made to him by the Applicant, which raises questions about the

credibility of the Applicants' assurances or claims. How will the Examining Authority ensure that the Examination Process will facilitate substantive scrutiny of the Applicant's claims made regarding land negotiations?

QUESTION 4: NEED?

How will the Examining Authority verify the Applicants' claims that the UK Government cannot meet its Net Zero target without this project? Considering the scale and environmental impact of this project, it is important that the supporting assumptions are thoroughly fact-checked.

The Applicants appear to believe that by repeating the claim frequently enough, it becomes the truth. Powerful marketing cannot be allowed to usurp accurate data analysis.

We respectfully suggest that the EP should include a comprehensive (independent) review of the total number of projects already approved across the UK.

If the Applicants' insistence that the need for Botley West is in fact a sham, then this Examining Authority – and the Secretary of State – must diligently ensure that the people of Oxfordshire – and the land – are not scarred for life. Unnecessarily.