

14th June 2025

F.A.O Botley West Solar Farm Planning Inspectorate.

REF: Botley West (Blenheim) Solar Farm development

Dear Inspectors

In my submission to the Inspectorate (Unique Reference number: 20051823) I have outlined my concerns of the Botley West Solar Farm proposal. My property backs directly onto the proposed Solar Farm, so I would like to request an **Accompanied Site Inspection** to my property to give you a clearer picture of the impact of the development. These concerns are shared with residents of Grove Road and Orchard Field Lane, around 20 homes have signed a local petition for an increased buffer zone as they are directly impacted by the solar farm proposal.

The impact on local wildlife habitat and our day to day lives will be great. The current proposal as I understand the PVDP plan is to start the panels 80m from my boundary, which has panoramic views of the fields up to Worton Heath Woods around 2,500m away from my garden and kitchen, as well as a view from my upstairs office. Due to the rolling nature of the land, the panels will be seen even with hedge rows. The imposition of any high hedge rows to block views to the woods I would view as detrimental.

There are many public footpaths running by the field that the property looks out on. The lane leading from Orchard Field Lane up to the woods, has 3 further footpaths leading from it across the fields, which again criss-cross the fields. The nearest to my property is around 275m from my boundary. I have proposed this as the minimum line for any revised buffer zone. My concern is the number of walkers who use these footpaths will be diverted to the small buffer zone areas proposed close to our properties once the industrial nature of the solar farm is exposed.

I along with many local residents, walking groups, and tourists, many staying at the Blenheim Lodges, local B&B's and day travellers, use these footpaths daily. Blenheim's promotion of its heritage and the surrounding countryside, including Bladon Church and Churchill's grave, encourages tourists to walk the fields that Winston Churchill once did. The line from the new Lodges to the Church goes directly through the fields described. It is a stunning walk to the church, and to the 'bluebell' woods and surrounding countryside. From my observations, the current location of the solar farm section around Bladon would severely affect tourism to the area.

The local wildlife is a special part of the area. The area supports a diverse range of wildlife: deer, hares, farmland birds, small mammals and bats, all of which I have observed from my property. With specific reference to my outlook, I attach a picture I recently took of a deer by my fence. This image also shows the local landscape and Worton Heath Woods. The loss of their natural environment, the removal of mature hedgerows and the large-scale industrialisation of the landscape poses long-term risks to local biodiversity. The removal of local habitats will also have an impact on the surrounding areas due to the migration of these animals seeking alternative habitat.

Having seen two plane crashes in the surrounding fields since my time in Bladon, I am concerned about the increased risk of a fatal crash as raised by the London Oxford Airport, with solar panels restricting an aborted landing. I am also concerned about the volume of birds which use the fields and their migration to the airfields.



A further point on the aviation risk is the flightpath of the balloons from Oxford airfields in the summer months. I have observed Balloons crash landing nearby. My concern would be to the occupants if landing within the solar farm panels and fencing.

I fully support the West Oxfordshire District Council's Botley West Solar Farm Written Representation as it aligns to my feedback for properties in Grove Road and Orchard Field Lane. The report rates the area as being most impacted for both *Significance of Heritage Impact*, where development would have a direct impact on the setting of the heritage asset, and *Landscape and Visual Impact* indicate, whose areas of exposed, elevated and sloping land where the proposed development will be more prominent in the landscape. The council requests that these areas land parcels should be excluded from development to minimise harm to the landscape character of the area.

I am deeply concerned about the impact of this industrial energy site could have on our homes and our community. I welcome a visit from your team.

All the very best

David Foster

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Ariel view of 118a Grove Road to Worton Heath Woods



Garden View

