

[REDACTED]

From: Bojan Ivanovic [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 June 2025 17:07
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Q1.5.8 'Botley West Solar Farm Project' - Objection

Q1.5.8 'Botley West Solar Farm Project'

Dear Sir/Madam, BWSF Inspectorate,

I write as a registered Interested Party in the Botley West Solar Farm proposal. I, along with my family and several other families, reside at Jericho Farm, directly adjacent to the proposed development zone. Our homes lie [REDACTED] in close proximity to multiple sub-parcels of the proposed solar industrial zone.

I submit this letter as a formal objection to the development, particularly with respect to:

a) The unacceptable flooding risk posed by the development; and

b) The developer's application for compulsory acquisition of rights over Green Belt land, which represents a strategic and dangerous attempt to circumvent planning protections.

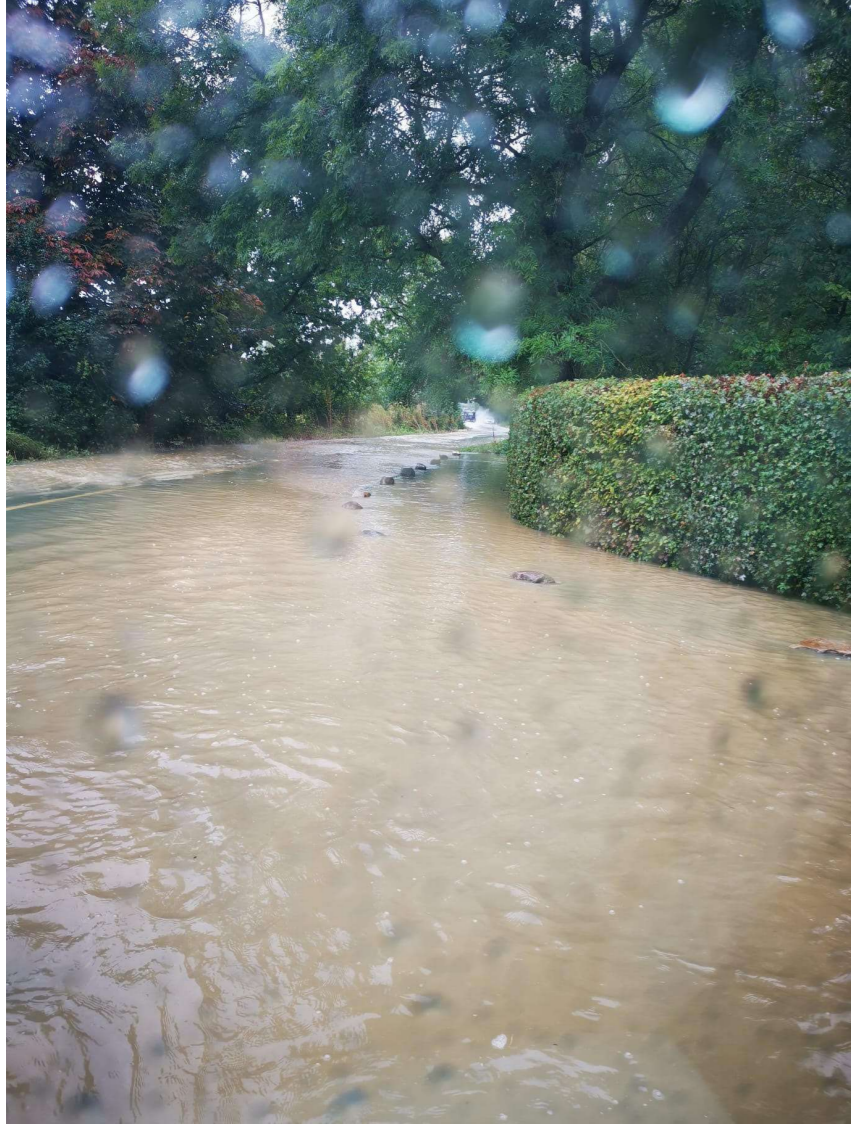
1. Flooding Risk: A Known, Recurrent, and Ignored Hazard

The area surrounding Jericho Farm and Worton Farm is subject to frequent and significant flooding, particularly along Yarnton Road. Despite numerous submissions from myself and others, there has been no meaningful engagement from the developer, the Planning Inspectorate, or the relevant authorities on this critical issue. I am compelled to reiterate and expand upon the facts.

The developer proposes large-scale solar installation across sloped agricultural fields (including 9-08, 9-13, and 9-16) that directly funnel water down towards Yarnton Road, exacerbating an already precarious drainage situation. These fields, under current agricultural use, already contribute to existing runoff that overwhelms local infrastructure during storm events. **When the land is compacted under solar infrastructure, it will lose its natural infiltration capacity—the soil will cease to act like a sponge—converting moderate rainfall into high-velocity surface runoff.**



Photographic evidence I previously submitted demonstrates the impact: flash floods have led to the closure of our community foul water treatment facility, which must be shut down to prevent reverse flow and mechanical failure. This renders basic residential functions—such as using toilets, showers, or washing machines—unavailable for extended periods.







The issue is compounded by Oxfordshire County Council’s chronic under-maintenance of local drainage infrastructure. The culvert on Yarnton Road, in front of Jericho and Worton Farms, has not been serviced and cleaned in years. Ditches are overgrown, culverts are clogged, and vegetation now obstructs essential water channels. Flash floods, once occasional, are becoming commonplace, yet **OCC continues to understate the hazard, presumably due to financial constraints.**





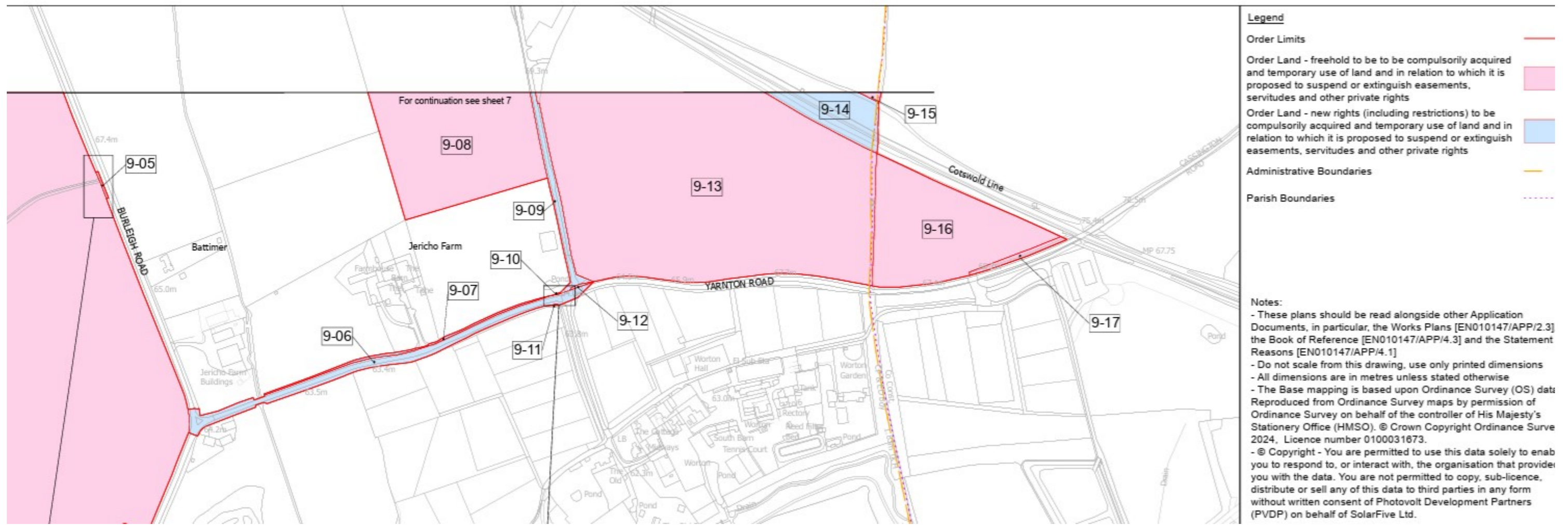
In such conditions, the Botley West development would be recklessly aggravating an already hazardous situation, posing foreseeable and material risks to:

- a) Public safety on Yarnton Road;**
- b) Critical foul water infrastructure at Jericho Farm;**
- c) Residential habitability and health;**
- d) Vehicle access and infrastructure resilience.**

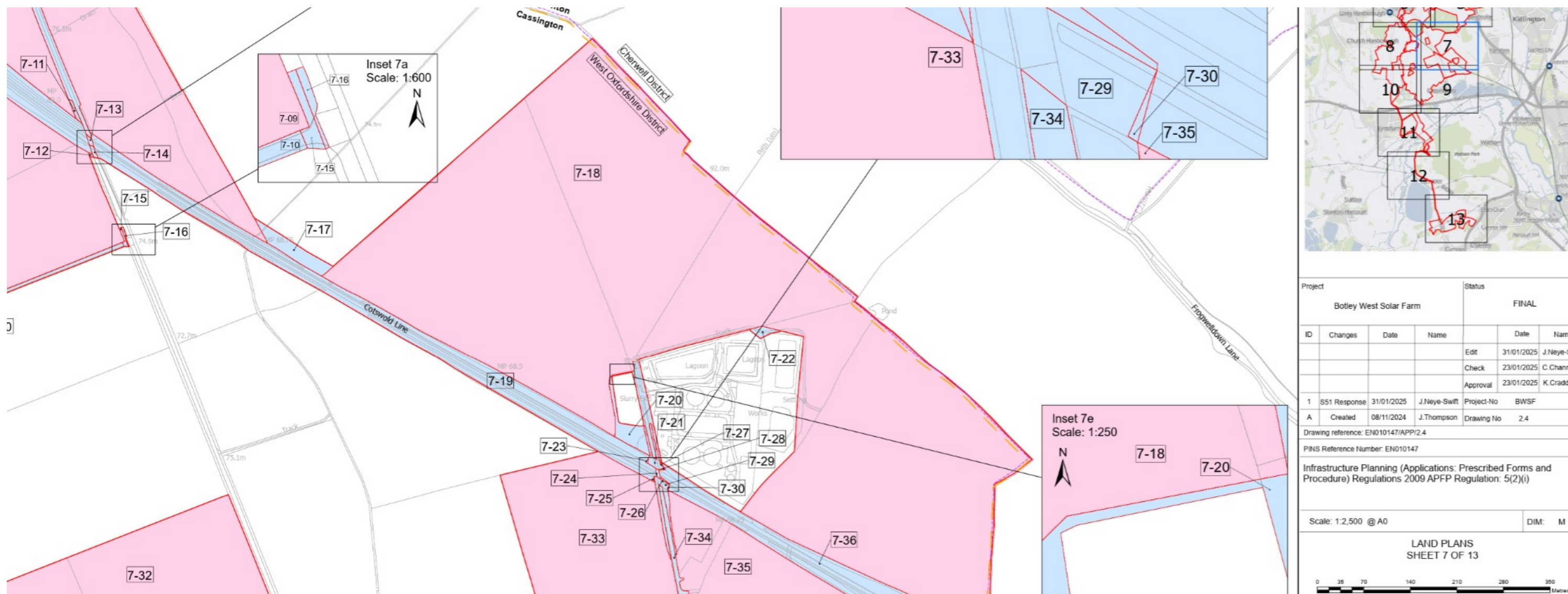
Accordingly, I request from the Inspectorate clear confirmation of whether the photographic evidence already submitted suffices to establish the seriousness of this risk. If additional documentation is required, please specify what form it should take and when that determination will be made.

2. Objection to the Compulsory Acquisition of Rights over Flood-Prone Order Land: A Strategic Attempt to “Grey the Green Belt”

I also submit a strong and reasoned objection to the developer’s attempt to obtain compulsory powers over Order Land parcels 9-06, 9-07, 9-09, 9-10, 9-11, and 9-12. These rights include temporary land use and permanent new rights, as well as the suspension or extinguishment of easements, servitudes, and private access rights—all ostensibly to facilitate underground cabling.



This request is neither necessary nor proportionate. A viable and safer route exists via path 7–17, which avoids residential property, avoids flood-prone zones, and does not conflict with established private rights. The developer's refusal to adopt this option suggests a strategic motive beyond efficient energy transmission.



The land over which these new rights are sought lies within a designated Green Belt, in a known floodplain, adjacent to residential homes. During flooding, the access drive to Jericho Farm and Yarnton Road become submerged (see above photos). Installing high-voltage cabling in these ditches and culverts is not only unnecessary, but positively hazardous. It introduces the real risk of electrocution for residents navigating the area during floods, especially when the communal foul water treatment system is also impacted and access is already restricted.

More broadly, developer's tactic reflects a pattern of Green Belt erosion by stealth. Compulsory acquisition of new rights over multiple land parcels under the NSIP regime serves not as a functional necessity but as a strategic land transformation mechanism, enabling the incremental conversion of protected rural land into permanent infrastructure corridors.

In this context, it is important to note that while the Prime Minister purports to uphold Green Belt protections, his own actions betray a calculated strategy of erosion by stealth—what one might describe as a death by a thousand cuts. **Central to this is the politically convenient reclassification of land as “grey belt,” a term not recognised in planning law, but coined by his party in late 2023 to circumvent established safeguards.** This so-called grey belt—encompassing disused car parks, industrial plots, and, crucially, any land deemed of “poor quality” within the Green Belt—serves as a deliberate loophole, expanding the range of developable sites under the guise of pragmatism.

It is not a legal reform grounded in statute or policy coherence, but a rhetorical device to reframe what is plainly an incremental dismantling of Green Belt protections. Far from preserving the countryside, the Prime Minister’s planning strategy, masked in euphemism, invites councils and other government agencies to redraw boundaries and reinterpret long-standing principles, ultimately enabling widespread development by administrative sleight of hand.

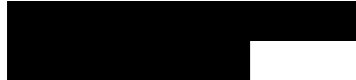
In this case, the developer appears to be exploiting the NSIP process to create a permanent new infrastructure corridor in the Green Belt under the veil of renewable energy development. This constitutes an abuse of the statutory process, a clear threat to both planning integrity and public safety, and an unacceptable precedent for future Green Belt degradation.

Conclusion

I therefore urge the Inspectorate to:

1. Give full weight to the well-documented and foreseeable flooding risk posed by the development in the Worton area;
2. Reject outright the developer's proposed compulsory acquisition of rights over B-6 through B-12;
3. Recognise the strategic nature of this application as part of a broader pattern of Green Belt erosion ("Greying" of the Green Belt) by stealth;
4. And uphold the principle that Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects must not be used as a legal workaround to override legitimate local concerns, public safety, or environmental integrity.

Sincerely,
Bo Ivanovic

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of Bo Ivanovic.