



The countryside charity  
Oxfordshire

Campaigning to protect our rural county

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**Project: EN10147**

**Registration identification number is: 20055135**

6<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Subject: Request for additional information on Best and Most Versatile Land, deadline 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2025.

Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I am reviewing the document titled "The Examining Authority's second written questions and requests for information (ExQ2): Issued on 30 July 2025" and the request from yourselves for CPRE Oxfordshire to supply additional information on Best and Most Versatile Land, question 2.11.5, "The ExA notes the comments made by Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) during Open Floor Hearing (OFH) 1 and the written summary submitted into the Examination [REP1-100]. With regard to the concerns raised regarding the use of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land, please confirm what additional information CPRE would expect to see from the applicant which illustrates how harm/avoidance of BMV land has been included in the project design".

Our recently published report "Getting solar off the ground, The problem of mega solar in the countryside" [Getting-solar-off-the-ground](#), July 2025 states that there are choices about how we decarbonise. To date, the deployment of solar energy, particularly larger, so called mega solar, has been problematic in our countryside. Despite planning policy encouraging the protection of our productive farmland, our analysis shows that of the land used by England's largest operational solar developments, nearly two thirds (59%) is assessed as most productive (BMV Grades 1-3b) and one third as best and most versatile (BMV Grades 1-3a). CPRE calls on the government to ban ground mounted solar on our very best agricultural land, especially Grades 1 and 2 due to its scarcity. And instead look to our rooftops to deliver and support the majority of our solar needs. **Therefore, for the purposes of this application and to secure the nation's food production and security, CPRE Oxfordshire recommends that no solar panels be installed on Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural land, or on Grade 3a land where, in addition, it would negatively impact the landscape value.**

I do hope you will assist with this request.

Yours sincerely

Lisa Warne  
Director CPRE Oxfordshire