

From: Bojan Ivanovic <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 21 September 2025 11:30
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Re: Q1.5.8 'Botley West Solar Farm Project' - Objection

Subject: Concerns Regarding Flood Risk and Highway Maintenance on Yarnton Road, Worton (Botley West Solar Farm Application)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing yet again to raise serious concerns regarding the recent changes in Oxfordshire County Council's (OCC) approach to highway and drainage maintenance, and the potential impact these changes may have on flood risk assessments for the proposed Botley West Solar Farm.

OCC has inexplicably and very recently adopted a new approach to verge and drainage maintenance.

A new set of lines now appears to define the limits of cutting, leaving areas that were historically maintained to become overgrown and unmanaged.

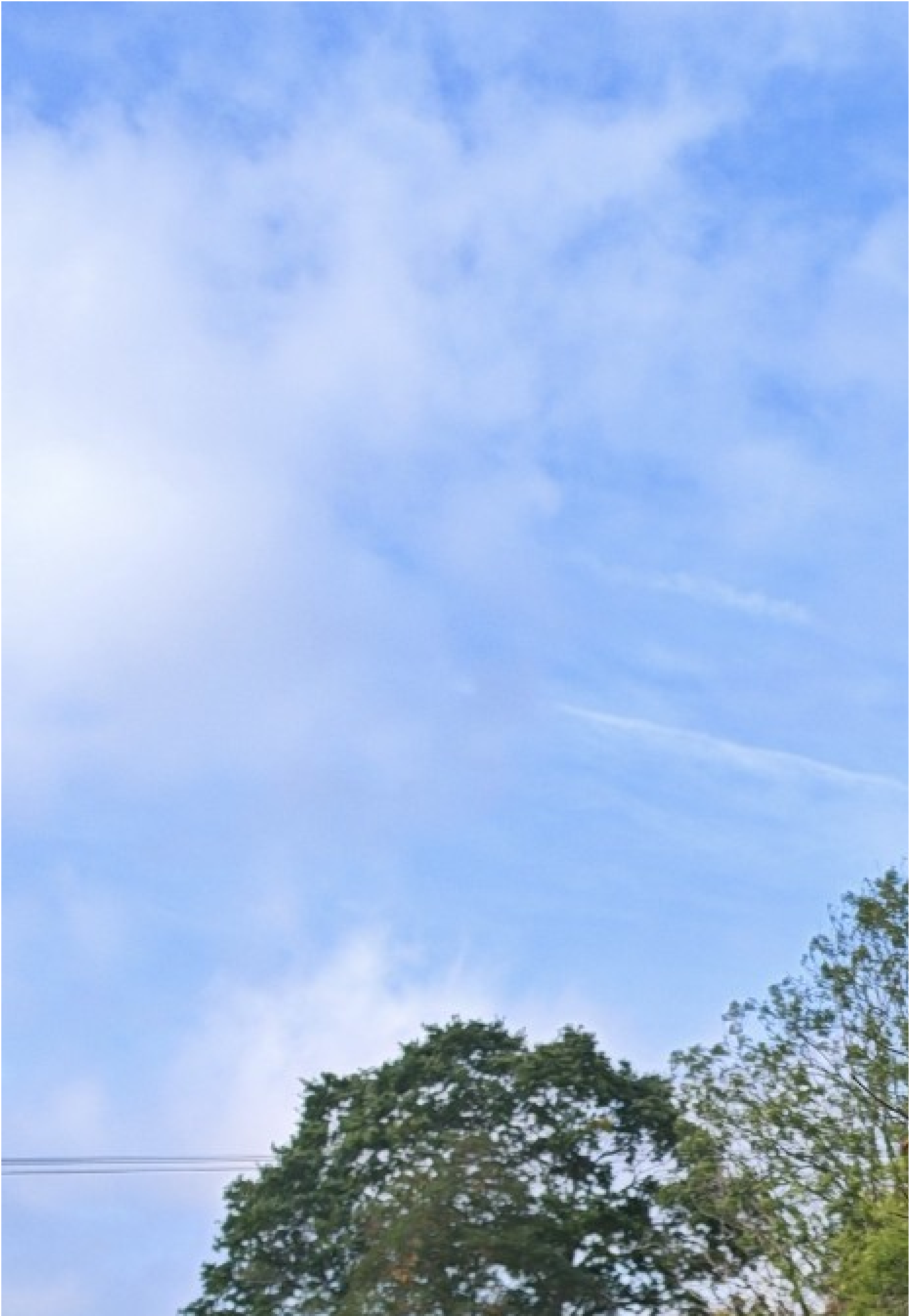
Culverts along Yarnton Road remain uncleared, drainage ditches are increasingly silted, and in some cases vegetation is now obscuring traffic signs — even after “cleaning works” have only just been completed. This not only poses a hazard for road users but also significantly increases the likelihood of flooding in Worton.



The situation is of particular concern given the developer's claim in the planning consultation documents that solar panels do not increase surface water run-off. The most recent technical evidence consistently shows the opposite: solar panels increase peak run-off, total flows and erosion. The developer's flood risk assessment therefore appears to have significantly underestimated the true risks.

In addition, there is a growing perception among local residents that OCC is deliberately allowing unchecked vegetation growth to obscure the fields which are earmarked to become a vast expanse of solar panels and associated electrical and industrial infrastructure.





This uncontrolled vegetation growth risks concealing the true visual impact of the proposed development from the Planning Inspectorate during its visit.

It is also worth noting that the absence of flooding this year is not evidence of safety but simply a result of unusually prolonged dry periods.

The change in drainage and verge maintenance represents a concealed ticking time bomb: once sustained rainfall returns, Worton and its surrounding roads will face an even higher risk of surface water flooding due to uncleared culverts, blocked channels, and unmanaged vegetation.

Taken together, these factors suggest that:

1. Flood risk to Worton and the surrounding area has been underestimated in the developer's proposals.
2. OCC's newly adopted maintenance regime exacerbates that flood risk.
3. The unchecked growth of vegetation may be intentionally obscuring the true scale and visual/other impact of the proposed development.

I therefore respectfully urge the Inspectorate to ensure that a full and independent review of surface water management, flood risk, and maintenance practices along Yarnton Road in Worton is undertaken as part of its consideration of this application.

Sincerely,
Bo Ivanovic

On Mon, 1 Sept 2025, 11:03 Bojan Ivanovic, [REDACTED] wrote:
Dear Sir/Madam, BWSF Inspectorate,

I write yet again as a registered Interested Party in the Botley West Solar Farm proposal. My family, along with others, reside at [REDACTED] directly adjacent to the proposed development along Yarnton Road.

The very fact I must repeat myself is telling. The developer has shown little inclination to engage substantively with local residents, preferring instead to leave questions unanswered. One might conclude they enjoy rather effective lobbying support at the highest levels, since neither the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, DEFRA, nor indeed the Inspectorate itself appear to have taken any meaningful step to intervene. Time drifts on, deadlines approach, and the developer is permitted to proceed untroubled by scrutiny.

My objections are twofold:

1. Flooding Risk (Recurrent, Known, and Studiously Ignored)

The land surrounding [REDACTED] is prone to significant and recurrent flooding, most notably along Yarnton Road. This is well documented. Yet, despite repeated submissions, the matter is treated as a minor inconvenience rather than a material planning concern.

The developer proposes solar installation on sloping agricultural fields—parcels 9-08, 9-13, 9-16 (also described in certain documents as 2.57, 2.58, 2.59 and 2.60). These already direct water downhill towards Yarnton Road. Under current agricultural use, runoff is bad enough. Once compacted by industrial infrastructure, infiltration capacity will all but vanish, and even moderate rainfall will accelerate into dangerous surface flooding.

The evidence, including photographs previously submitted, shows flash floods shutting down foul water treatment facilities, leaving homes without sanitation for days. This risk is further exacerbated by Oxfordshire County Council's habitual neglect of drainage maintenance—culverts blocked, ditches overgrown, watercourses obstructed.

It is foreseeable, it is documented, and it is ignored. I therefore ask the Inspectorate directly: do the materials already lodged suffice to establish this risk, or will some further (and presumably more dramatic) evidence be required? And when, precisely, will that determination be made?

2. Compulsory Acquisition of Green Belt Land (A Transparent Abuse of Process)

The developer also seeks compulsory acquisition of rights over parcels 9-06 to 9-12, along with the power to extinguish or suspend private rights, all under the pretext of laying cabling.

This is unnecessary. A viable route exists via path 7-17, avoiding homes, flood-prone land, and established rights. Its rejection suggests the objective here is not efficiency but the creation of a permanent infrastructure corridor under the cloak of renewable energy.

These parcels lie within the Green Belt, in a known floodplain, adjacent to residences. Cabling through submerged ditches is not merely questionable but dangerous—introducing the risk of electrocution during floods when access is already compromised.

It is difficult not to see this as part of a wider political manoeuvre: the creeping reclassification of protected land into so-called “grey belt”—a phrase without legal foundation, but convenient for those intent on salami-slicing the Green Belt into something altogether less defensible. The NSIP process, meanwhile, is wielded as a blunt instrument to override local objections.

Conclusion

Accordingly, I urge the Inspectorate to:

- 1) Take proper account of the very real flooding hazard in the Worton area;
- 2) Reject outright the proposed compulsory acquisitions over parcels 9-06 to 9-12;
- 3) Recognise this application as part of the wider pattern of Green Belt attrition by stealth;
- 4) Affirm that NSIPs cannot be used as a convenient end-run around local safety, environmental integrity, and long-standing planning protections.

Sincerely,
Bo Ivanovic



On Wed, Jul 16, 2025 at 12:46 PM Botley West Solar Farm
<BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear Bojan,

Thank you for your email and your query.

The applicant has notified the Examining Authority of their intention to make a request for changes for the scheme, but these changes have not been formally submitted. Please note that the proposed changes to the application have not yet been examined. The Examining Authority will decide on whether to accept the applicant's change request in due course and on receipt of further supporting information.

I am not able to comment on the position being taken by the Examining Authority on this matter. However, I would like to reassure you that the Examining Authority considers relevant and important matters as part of the examination process.

Please can I clarify whether it was your intention that your email below should be put forward as an Additional Submission or a submission for Deadline 3, or indeed that it was intended for it not to be treated as a formal submission to the examination.

Kind regards,

Simon



Planning
Inspectorate

[REDACTED]
Case Manager – National Infrastructure

Planning Inspectorate

T [REDACTED]

www.gov.uk/pins

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From: Bojan Ivanovic [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 July 2025 07:07
To: Botley West Solar Farm <BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Re: Q1.5.8 'Botley West Solar Farm Project' - Objection

Dear Sir/Madam, BWSF Inspectorate,

I note that Botley West has made certain adjustments to its proposed scheme.

However, it is apparent that my previous objections — specifically those concerning the demonstrable and material risk of flooding — have not been adequately addressed, nor does it appear that the supporting evidence I submitted has been given due consideration.

In particular, I refer to the significant flooding risk in the vicinity of [REDACTED] and along Yarnton Road, which has been evidenced and raised previously.

I therefore seek clarification on the Planning Inspectorate's position with respect to this specific objection, and whether the matter has been properly assessed within the current iteration of the proposal.

Regards,

Bo Ivanovic

On Fri, 20 Jun 2025, 18:07 Bojan Ivanovic, <[REDACTED]> wrote:

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 [REDACTED] directly adjacent to the proposed

development zone. Our homes lie along Yarnton Road, 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 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] 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 [REDACTED] 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.**



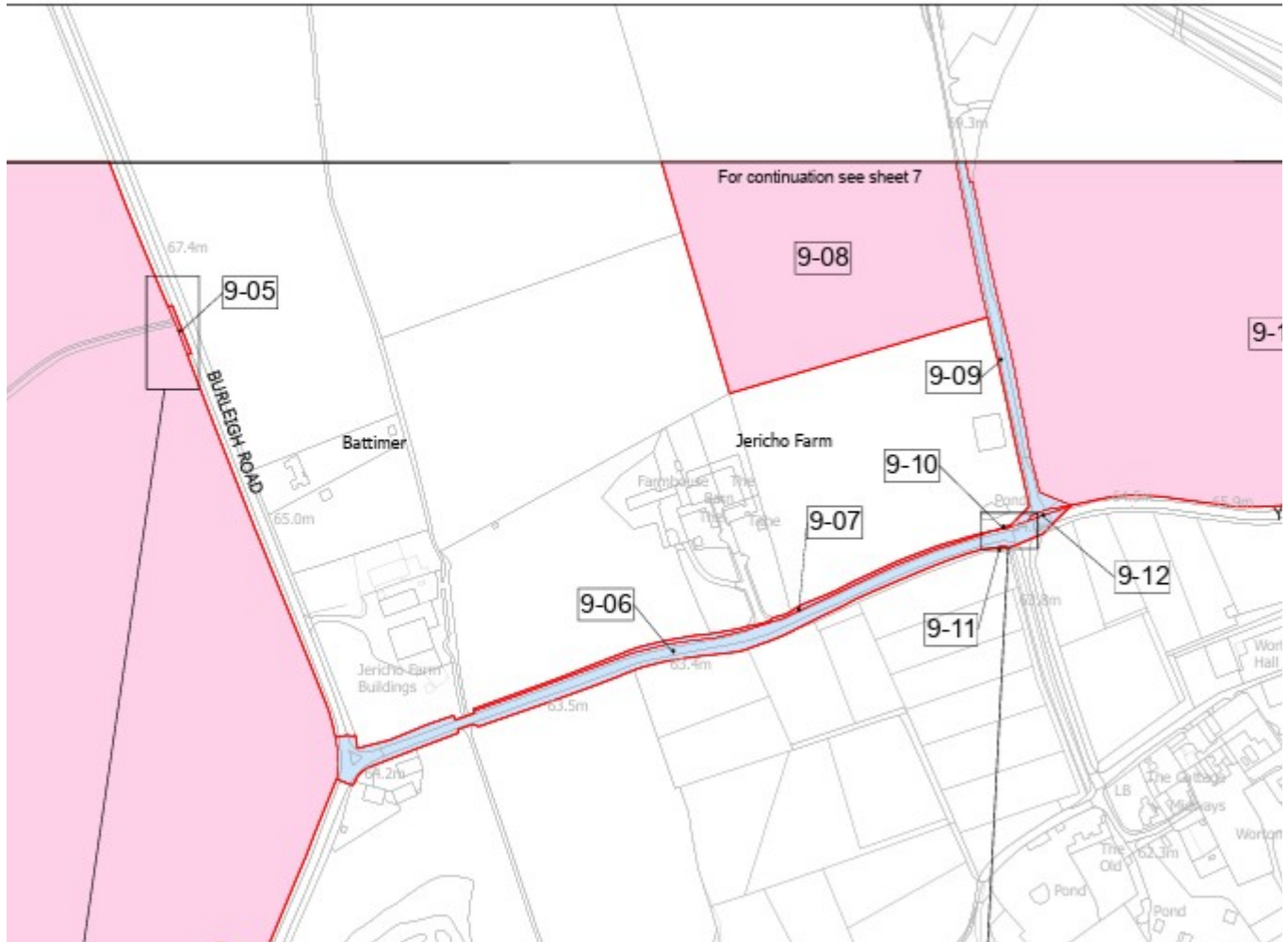
In such conditions, the Botley West development would be recklessly aggravating an already hazardous situation, posing foreseeable and material risks to:

- 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.**

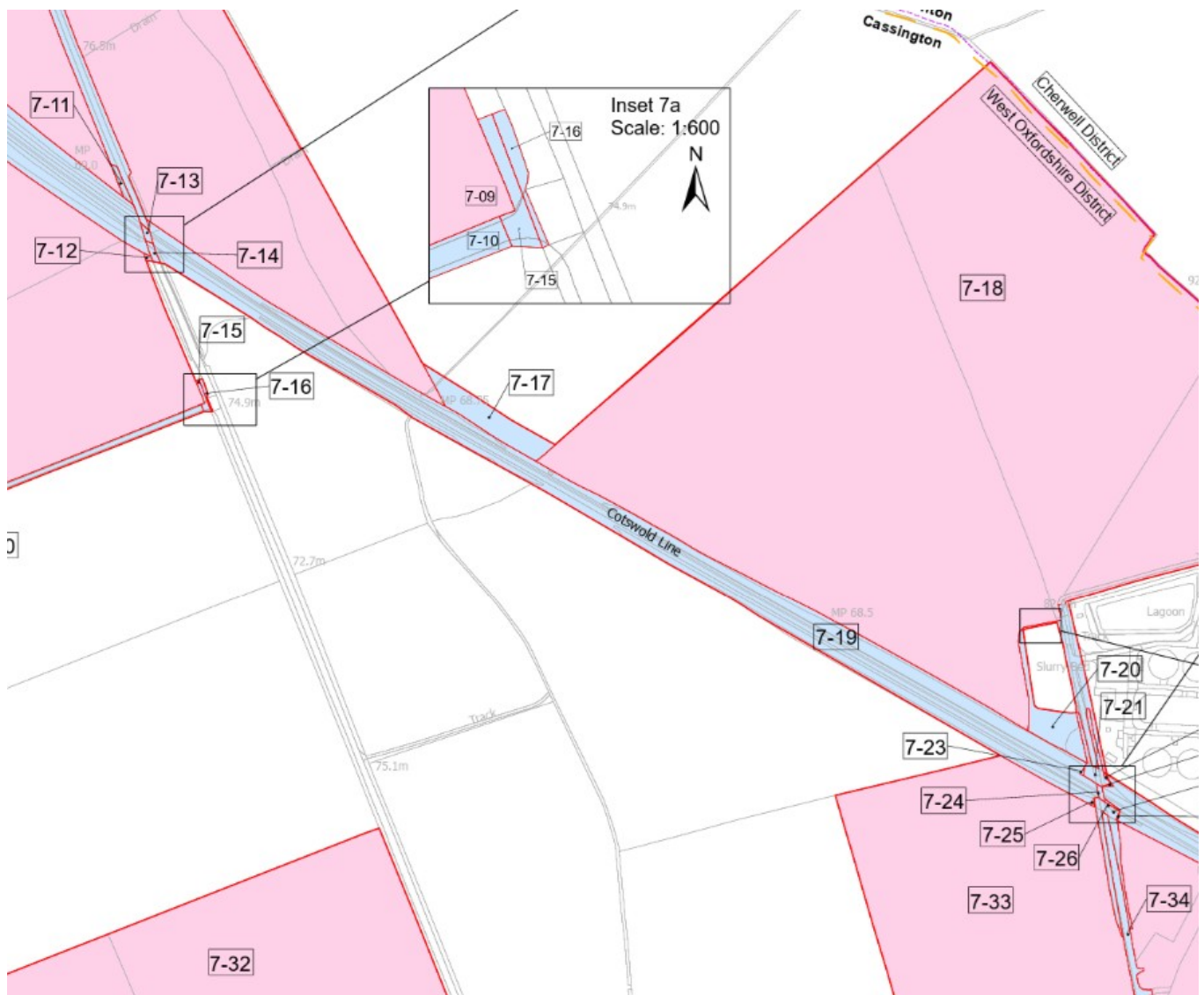
Accordingly, I request from the Inspectorate clear confirmation of whether the photographic evidence already submitted suffices to establish the seriousness of this risk. If additional documentation is required, please specify what form it should take and when that determination will be made.

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

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted contact information]

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