

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 16 October 2025 15:54  
**To:** Botley West Solar Farm  
**Subject:** Financial Uplift to Landowners (Blenheim & affiliates) from the Proposed Botley West Solar Farm (Blenheim and Affiliates)

The Planning Inspectorate  
National Infrastructure Planning  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square  
Bristol BS1 6PN

Subject: Financial Uplift to Landowners from the Proposed Botley West Solar Farm (Blenheim and Affiliates)

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing to express serious concern, as an interested party, regarding the substantial and unacknowledged financial uplift that would accrue to the landowners (Blenheim Estate and its affiliates) if the Botley West Solar Farm were approved under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) route.

### 1. Scale of the Site

The Botley West proposal covers approximately 2,471 acres (around 1,000 hectares), making it one of the largest solar projects in Europe.

### 2. Agricultural Land Value (Current Use)

According to Savills Farmland Market Survey (2024) and FarmingUK (2024), average arable farmland values in England range between £8,500 and £12,000 per acre, with a mid-point of around £11,100 per acre.

Total current (agricultural) land value:  $\approx$  £27.4 million

### References:

Savills Rural Research, Farmland Market Survey Q4 2024

FarmingUK, Average Farmland Prices in England 2024

### 3. Industrial or “Energy Infrastructure” Land Value

Market reports such as Knight Frank Industrial & Logistics Land Index (2024) and Carter Jonas Industrial Land Values Report (2024) show typical UK industrial land values around £1.8 million–£2.0 million per acre, rising to £3.8 million per acre in prime regions.

Using a conservative midpoint of £1.95 million per acre:

Total industrial-use land value: ≈ £4.82 billion

References:

■■■■ Industrial & Logistics Land Index, UK Q3 2024

■■■■ Industrial Land Values Report 2024

#### 4. Residential Development Land (for comparison)

Local authority viability evidence and national averages indicate £200,000–£330,000 per acre for greenfield residential land.

Using a midpoint of £250,000 per acre:

Total residential-use land value: ≈ £618 million

References:

Savills, UK Residential Development Land, 2024

Oxfordshire Local Plan Viability Study (2023)\*

#### 5. Uplift Calculations

Land Use Type   Estimated Value per Acre   Total Value (2,471 acres)   Uplift vs. Agricultural Multiple

Agricultural   £11,100   £27.4 m   —   1×

Residential   £250,000   £617.8 m   +£590.4 m   22.5×

Industrial   £1.95 m   £4.82 bn   +£4.79 bn   176×

#### 6. Implications

If the project results in re-designation of this land from agricultural to “energy infrastructure” or effectively industrial zoning, the land portfolio’s paper value could rise by several billion pounds. Such a windfall would accrue almost entirely to the private landowners and is unrelated to either renewable-energy generation costs or wider public benefit.

This financial benefit would come in addition to the rental income expected over the 40-year operational life of the project — a further guaranteed revenue stream for the landowners, underwritten by the project’s long-term nature and grid connection agreements.

Furthermore, once approved, the re-zoning effect created by the NSIP consent would likely become effectively permanent, given the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero’s quasi-judicial

powers in determining and enforcing such designations. This permanence amplifies the financial advantage conferred by the project and entrenches the loss of agricultural land and local control.

It should also be noted that the figures above are not indexed for inflation. Over a 40-year project lifespan, even moderate inflation would significantly compound these gains. The result is that the uplift would be realised not only in nominal terms but as extraordinary real returns, cementing a long-term financial transformation of the Blenheim land portfolio — effectively underwritten by public policy and planning powers.

## 7. Request

I respectfully request that the Planning Inspectorate:

Examine the land valuation and long-term financial implications of the Botley West proposal;

Require the applicant to disclose and quantify both the expected rental income and the projected uplift in underlying land value, adjusted for inflation over the project term; and

Consider whether such an arrangement constitutes an undue private financial benefit inconsistent with the principles of fair planning, transparency, and local accountability.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours faithfully,



The Granary Jericho Farm  
Worton OX29 4SZ  
Oxfordshire