

**Reference: Reference: Botley West
Solar Farm (Ref. EN010147)**

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20 October 2025

Dear Case Team

**Re: Botley West Solar Farm (Ref. EN010147)- Written Summary of Oral
Submission- Open Floor Hearing 3 10.10.2025**

Please find below Oxfordshire County Council's Written Summary of Oral Submission
for the Open Floor Hearing on the 10.10.2025.

Yours faithfully,



Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects Principal Planner

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Overall View of Oxfordshire County Council

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) note the duty of the Secretary of State under S104 of the Planning Act 2008 to have regard to any submitted Local Impact Report when determining an application for development consent. At the time of OFH3 (10.10.2025) OCC maintain that many of the issues raised within the joint Local Impact Report [REP1-072] submitted by the Oxfordshire Host Authorities have yet to be addressed by the applicant. These include (but are not limited to):

- 1) Significant impact on local landscape character and views.
- 2) Significant impact on heritage assets.
- 3) The lack of clarity around ecological impacts and concerns around the adequacy of the proposed mitigation
- 4) Insufficient landscape and Public Rights of Way (PRoW) mitigation for a scheme of this scale.
- 5) Sterilisation of mineral resources.
- 6) Amendments to the scheme and draft DCO are required.
- 7) Lack of clarity on National Grid substation / grid connections

The removal of panels around Bladon and Oxford Airfield is welcomed but further removal is needed to reduce the impact on landscape and heritage assets. In order to make the scheme more acceptable from a Landscape, Heritage and Visual Impact perspective it should be scaled back to the extent shown in the Landscape and Heritage Omission Maps submitted by the OHA at ExQ2 (Appendix 1) [REP4-075].

In principle OCC support proposals for green energy providing there are no significant adverse environmental impacts. OCC recognises there is a climate emergency and that the expansion of solar generating capacity in Oxfordshire is needed as part of the transition to net zero. However, as outlined within the LIR, in its current form OCC cannot support the proposed development due to the significance of its impacts.

Community Benefits

- The OHA's have put considerable effort into working with the affected parishes and negotiating with the applicant to achieve the highest possible level of community benefits.
- Our position on Community Benefits is as set out in our response to ExQ2 [\[REP4-074\]](#) Q.2.15.1 and 2.15.2.
- A community benefit fund figure of £525 per M/W (equating to £441,000) per annum for the duration of the development (index linked) was agreed between the Applicant and the OHA (in consultation with the affected parishes) on 08/05/25. The applicant also submitted this figure in their response to ExQ2.
- By way of update, further discussions are continuing to refine details around the timing of payments (including whether they would cover the construction phase), scope for an additional funding mechanism from year 15, and a potential scheme that offers low-cost solar panels to affected communities in the early stages of the development.
- Consideration is also being given to the future guidance that is likely to be published by DESNZ in relation to Community Benefits for low carbon energy infrastructure following consultation on their working paper in May 2025.