

Dear Sir/Madam

Botley West Solar 'Farm' (a.k.a. solar powerstation on greenbelt land)

CLOSING STATEMENT

I'm writing again to reiterate and reinforce my concerns about this proposed major infrastructure project and in particular the fact that the developer has FAILED to fully undertake comprehensive, accurate and meaningful assessments prior to the satisfaction of the Examiner.

I am concerned that the developer has given only superficial assurances, made vague comments or **completely ignored** serious issues impacted by the scale, the construction works, the destruction of the natural environment, the harm caused to thousands of local residents or indeed any reasonable justification for such wanton destruction of this rural location and the devastating impact on designated greenbelt and productive agricultural land.

PVDP's whole attitude makes a mockery of the Planning system by failing to respond in a timely manner to or, in some cases completely ignoring, the Examiners' questions or requirements. This leaves a significant gap in the knowledge and data available on which the ExA is required to make a **robust** recommendation.

As Secretary of State Ed Miliband has publicly stated *"There has to be a proper process that we follow" and "each project is decided on merit"*.

The Examiners cannot recommend the application be accepted when so much evidence is missing and the SoS should come to the same conclusion when considering the proposal on merit.

Some of the questions that still haven't been answered and the assessments that still haven't been completed are:

1. Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA)

One of the most serious issues for the Local Community has been the failure to carry out an RVAA until the very last minute to determine whether the project would have an unacceptable visual impact on residents' enjoyment of their homes and gardens. PVDP has hurriedly cobbled together an RVAA containing many errors and omissions, poor photography and mapping and comes to the same conclusion as before.

This is clear evidence that PVDP are treating this serious matter with disdain and are unwilling to provide the information rightly necessary to support their application.

The ExA have issued a further letter of 23/10/25 pointing out the many shortcomings of PVDP's RVAA and suggesting a requirement that *"there shall be a distance of no less than 250 m between the edge of any part of the proposed solar array and any residential dwelling house"*.

I fully endorse this recommendation.

2. Loss of productive farmland

I am particularly concerned about the industrialisation of the UK countryside.

This issue needs addressing by government. When development of land is proposed for residential property, it is assessed against the requirements of national planning policies and local plans. Issues such as population growth and movement, education, transport networks etc. are fundamental to the decision-making process. Because of this consideration, those affected by it (farmers, landowners, developers, local authorities, central government etc.) are not caught unawares by what is proposed nor do they consider such applications in isolation.

The position is very different regarding large scale ground mounted applications for solar developments. The country does not have a policy for solar developments - what factors should be important, how many developments should be allowed, how local applications should be viewed in the context of national need, brown-field / roof-top developments etc. The proliferation of thousands of solar applications across the country leaves tenant farmers wide open to exploitation.

The developer has provided **No evidence** to prove the assertion that they aren't taking productive land out of food production. Loss of such land cannot be allowed on a whim, and **any** loss must be fully justified given the uncertainties around food security for this country.

3.

Again, this is clear evidence that PVDP are treating this serious matter with disdain and are unwilling to provide the information rightly necessary to support their application.

- 3. In addition to the above, our local MP has tabled written Parliamentary Questions as follows, and I fully support this approach to seeking clarity on matters that the developer is unwilling to 'come clean' on.**

Written Parliamentary Questions tabled by Calum Miller, MP for Bicester and Woodstock on November 5, 2025, and due for answer by November 12.

88459: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of Planning Inspectorate and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project processes in evaluating the financial viability of funding commitments made by developers of major energy projects.

88458: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment she has made of the adequacy of the (a) financial structure and (b) governance arrangements of (i) Blenheim Estates and (ii) the Blenheim Charitable Foundation.

88457: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, what assessment he has made of the financial viability of SolarFive Ltd and Photovolt Development Partners to undertake the development of Botley West Solar Farm.

88456: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, whether his Department has sought the advice of the office of the Financial Sanction Implementation on reported Russian-linked funding associated with the proposed Botley West Solar Farm.

88455: To ask the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero, what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of (a) the Planning Inspectorate and (b) Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project processes to safeguard against national security risks from investment by (i) inappropriate or (ii) hostile overseas sources.

My most serious concern is the vast scale of the proposal, located within 1.5km of 11,000 people's homes and taking 1,400 hectares of crop growing land out of production for a minimum of 42 years.

Please use your position to recommend the Botley West Solar Farm is not a viable project. The harms generated by building it far outweighs the purported benefits, including the counterproductive risk of losing 75% of Oxfordshire's greenbelt.

Neil Hyatt

