

[REDACTED]

From: Jo Coy [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 November 2025 08:54
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Local MP's tabled written questions to Government

Categories: Deadline, EO

With reference to the above. It is a relief that these additional concerns continue to be brought to public notice. There is an abundance of evidence now in the domain to reinforce the argument that the proposed development, as it stands, is poorly planned with risks to public safety and wellbeing far outweighing the supposed advantages. It is our hope that common sense will prevail over profit.

Sent from my iPad

Final response concerning the proposed Botley West Development.

We approached the proposal with an open mind but concerns have grown over the life of the examination process owing to PVDP's consistent negligible regard for the planning system without which the floodgates would open to indiscriminate development, or a "solar bandwagon". An unacceptable degree of flexibility regarding significant aspects of the project and a comment made by a representative of the company during Part 4 of the Issue Specific Hearing justifies our concerns that PVDP assume that consent for this development is a given as the need for alternative energy far outweighs any other consideration: "residual adverse effects are acceptable on balance of the substantial benefit to be achieved". Their overriding premise is that local communities are naturally against a solar development and flippant comments that suggest residents will cease to be aware of panels in time, or far reaching views won't protect them from climate change are contemptuous. We are very aware of the need for alternative energy solutions but the Applicant is obviously unaware, apparently oblivious, of the very real concerns regarding public safety : the increased flood risk, safety issues at London Oxford airport, damage to foundations of buildings in close proximity to piling and many other concerns all clearly set out in community responses.

Quality of evidence on a number of important matters remains an issue, notably the lack of an RVAA until the last moment and then a flawed document making judgements that bear no relationship to factual evidence. Claims regarding the use of best and most versatile land are not supported by farmers and the community food growing issue is confusing. Surely clear information on funding for the project should be established at the outset?

There is no agreement on the acceptable distance between residences and the edge of the development and little regard given to development consent obligations of the District and County Councils. There is also lack of detail regarding the National Grid Electricity Substation and insufficient planning regarding aspects of decommissioning. All naturally of unprecedented concern. The Applicant continues to insist on 5m PROW which, they contend, supports "characteristic narrow greenways" when this claim is completely false.

The overriding concern is not that communities don't understand the need for alternative energy, as PVDP would have authorities believe, it is that the people who will have to live with the consequences have no confidence of this being a carefully assessed project which duly follows the process required and understands mitigation. Alarming for a national infrastructure development of this size and potential for disruption of thousands of households. PVDP frequently refers to policy that supports achieving Net Zero without, apparently, understanding that there are procedures that need to be followed. Laws are there for everyone to follow. But the Applicant has continually dismissed legitimate concerns raised and failed to meet deadlines for requests from ExA, in addition to lacking positive response to feedback.

Part of the greater feeling of social malaise, and disappointing, is the lack of input from statutory consultees : the Environment Agency and Historic England.

I believe in a recent interview the Secretary of State commented, “ There has to be a proper process that we follow”. It is our view that PVDP have failed consistently to follow the proper process.