

BOTLEY WEST SOLAR FARM

Closing Statement, from Giles Lewis

The Botley West solar project, potentially the largest solar project in England, was fundamentally flawed in its selection, resulting in unprecedented cumulative impacts:

- It will cause serious harm to one of the most important historic sites in the UK.
- It will cause the largest single loss of Oxford's Green Belt as well as being the first NSIP solar project on Green Belt land.
- It will cause harm to other important heritage sites within the proposed order limits.
- It will remove a significant area of prime agricultural land from cultivation, being at least 42% on BMV.
- It will affect what is undoubtedly the largest number of households of any previous SF application in the UK.
- It will raise serious safety concerns for the airport with the most significant flying school activity in the UK.

All of this is being promoted by an Applicant which has:

- no previous experience of utility scale developments;
- a poor track record of simply assembling sites and leaving residual problems for their development;
- no financial credibility;
- opaque sourcing of project funds, from a Russian national.

Other solar projects might have some unwelcome impacts. The overwhelming combination of all of those that would be caused by BWSF is clearly without precedent.

I urge the ExA not only to recommend the project should be refused, but that this recommendation to the SoS should be made in terms that ensure the unprecedented cumulative harm that would result from approval is well understood.
