

From: Rupert Hodson [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 November 2025 17:56
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Formal Objection – Botley West Solar Farm Proposal

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Dear Planning Inspectorate,

I am writing to register my strong objection to the proposed **Botley West Solar Farm**. While I fully support the need for renewable energy development, this particular proposal is wholly inappropriate in its current form. It raises serious concerns in terms of landscape integrity, heritage protection, food security, and procedural transparency, and should therefore be **rejected in full**.

I have a **deep personal connection to this landscape**, having **grown up in the area now proposed to be covered in solar panels**. This is not an abstract planning objection but a lived concern about the loss of a rural environment that has shaped generations of local families and communities. The area's open character, heritage value, and agricultural function are intrinsic to its identity — all of which would be irreversibly damaged by this development.

1. Scale, Landscape and Visual Impact

Covering approximately **1,400 hectares**, Botley West would be one of the largest solar projects in the UK. Its vast scale would **industrialise the rural landscape** of West Oxfordshire, erasing the open character that defines it. The project's proximity to the **Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site** and to extensive **Green Belt land** compounds the visual and cultural harm. Despite requests from local authorities and professional landscape architects, the applicant has refused to make meaningful reductions in panel coverage beyond minor adjustments near Blenheim Palace.

2. Inadequate Consideration of Heritage Assets

The applicant's focus on Blenheim Palace as the sole heritage concern neglects the wider **network of listed churches, historic farmsteads, and rural settlements** across the area. This narrow assessment fails to comply with the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** requirement to evaluate cumulative and contextual heritage impacts.

3. Loss of Agricultural Land and Food Security

Contrary to the applicant's claims, independent surveys and tenant testimony confirm that much of the site consists of **Best and Most Versatile (BMV)** farmland. Converting this productive land to industrial use would permanently undermine **local food production** and contradict national and local policy commitments to protect high-grade soils.

4. Public Rights of Way and Community Access

The applicant's proposal to limit **Public Rights of Way to 5 metres** between hedgerows is inconsistent with local precedent. Both the **Examining Authority (ExA)** and **Oxfordshire County Council** recommend **15-metre corridors** to protect accessibility, biodiversity, and the visual experience of the countryside. The applicant's continued refusal to adopt these recommendations demonstrates limited regard for community amenity.

5. Archaeological and Environmental Concerns

The recently published archaeological report identified **over 66 trenches containing significant artefacts and deposits**, nearly half without any protective buffers. Proceeding without adequate safeguards risks irreversible loss of heritage assets. Furthermore, **key assessments of flood risk, storm resilience, and aviation safety remain incomplete**, leaving major environmental risks unaddressed.

6. Misrepresentation of Community Benefits and Financial Transparency

The so-called "**community food-growing areas**" lack clear definition, purpose, or management. The applicant's responses conflate tokenistic measures with meaningful engagement. In addition, there remains **insufficient transparency over project funding and long-term financial guarantees**, raising concerns about accountability and the adequacy of decommissioning provisions.

7. Procedural Safeguards Do Not Address Fundamental Flaws

While the ExA's proposed requirements — including the 250-metre residential buffer, design review of fencing, and decommissioning fund — are welcome, they do not remedy the **fundamental incompatibility** of this scheme with its setting. These conditions mitigate impacts but cannot justify a project that is unsustainable in principle.

Conclusion

Having grown up in this landscape, I have witnessed firsthand its ecological richness, agricultural productivity, and deep historical continuity. To replace it with an industrial-scale solar complex would be an act of irreversible environmental and cultural loss. The **Botley West Solar Farm** fails to balance national energy objectives with local sustainability and heritage preservation.

I therefore urge the Planning Inspectorate to **reject this proposal in its entirety** and to promote a more strategic, proportionate, and locally supported approach to renewable energy development.

Yours faithfully,

Rupert Hodson

[Redacted Signature]

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Rupert Hodson



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From: Rupert Hodson [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 November 2025 16:33
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Refuse consent for Botley west

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find below my response, which I have sent to my mother's local MPs, regarding the development of Botley West, directly impacting the home where I grew up and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

1. Introduction

I am writing to urge the Planning Inspectorate to **refuse consent for the Botley West Solar Farm**. This is not a rejection of solar power or of the clean-energy transition — far from it. I want Britain to lead the world in clean energy, to deliver cheaper bills, good jobs, and energy security.

But leadership demands integrity. The drive to net zero must rest on projects that are transparent, financially sound, and publicly trusted. The Botley West proposal fails that test. It raises serious and unresolved questions about its developers' financial viability, its governance structures, and the origin of its funding.

Before we cover fields in solar panels, we must ensure those building them are credible, accountable, and operating in the national interest.

2. Financial Viability and Developer Credibility

Written Parliamentary Question **88457**, tabled on 5 November 2025, asks the Secretary of State what assessment has been made of the financial viability of **SolarFive Ltd** and **Photovolt Development Partners**, the developers of Botley West.

These companies have not demonstrated that they have the resources or the experience to deliver and maintain a project of this vast scale. Clean energy needs long-term, reliable partners — not shell companies or speculative investors. The Planning Inspectorate should not be asked to take financial promises on trust. It should insist on independently verified proof of funding, credible financial guarantees, and a clear plan for long-term stewardship.

3. Governance and Accountability

Written Parliamentary Question **88458** asks the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport to assess the financial structure and governance of **Blenheim Estates** and the **Blenheim Charitable Foundation**.

These bodies play a central role in the scheme, yet questions remain about the relationship between their commercial and charitable functions. Transparency here matters not only for propriety but for public trust. Communities deserve to know that decisions affecting their landscape are made in the public interest — not to serve opaque or conflicting interests.

Until these governance concerns are resolved and the Charity Commission is satisfied, it would be wrong for the Planning Inspectorate to allow the project to proceed.

4. Funding Transparency and National Security

Written Parliamentary Question **88456** asks whether the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero has sought advice from the **Office of Financial Sanctions Implementation** about reported **Russian-linked funding** associated with the project.

It is vital that our clean-energy transition is not compromised by money from sources that are inappropriate, opaque, or hostile to our national interests. If any doubt remains about the provenance of this investment, the only responsible course is to pause and investigate fully. Clean energy must never come at the cost of national security.

5. Safeguards in the Planning and NSIP Process

Written Parliamentary Questions **88455** and **88459** raise broader concerns about the effectiveness of the **Planning Inspectorate** and the **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP)** regime in safeguarding against these very risks — financial weakness, hostile investment, and insufficient scrutiny of developer commitments.

The Botley West proposal exposes gaps in that system. To wave it through now would not only risk this particular landscape but would also send the wrong signal: that Britain's clean-energy transition is open to those who cannot demonstrate accountability, transparency, or security. The Planning Inspectorate has the opportunity — and the duty — to set a higher standard.

6. Conclusion

The choice is not between clean energy and proper scrutiny. We can, and we must, have both. The British people deserve renewable projects that are well-governed, financially sound, and serve the public good — not private speculation or foreign influence.

That is why I urge the Planning Inspectorate to **recommend refusal of the Botley West Solar Farm** in its current form. Doing so will uphold the integrity of our planning system and show that Britain's path to net zero will be built not only on clean power, but on clean principles.

Yours faithfully,

Rupert Hodson

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Rupert Hodson

CEO • Dianomi



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Additionally, **Dianomi's CPA is nearly 10 times lower** than our benchmark, which speaks to the quality of audiences and contextual relevance the platform offers in generating new clients.

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