

From: Stewart Thompson [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 November 2025 16:40
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Cc: [REDACTED]@parliament.uk
Subject: Closing statement

Inspectorate

I offer the following by way of concluding observations in relation to the Botley West Solar application. I will keep them brief as I have already made the majority in previous communications. This does however raise a major concern - that the applicants have repeatedly ignored or attempted to dilute requests for information made throughout the overall consultation process.

The likelihood of an increase in flooding levels and rates has not been adequately addressed by the applicant. Their assertion that the solar arrays will not influence flow rates was thoroughly and vigorously rebutted on the grounds of previous studies undertaken elsewhere globally. The applicants failed to undertake any appropriate modelling of their proposed mitigation, thus providing no evidence based assurances that flood risk will not increase. It is my understanding that the Examiners and the SoS have a legal duty to refuse any development which imposes increased flood risk to any residential properties and I would urge that the precautionary principle be invoked.

The issue of alteration/damage to field drains, which was brought to the attention of the applicants, was ignored by them. This has bearing upon my point above as alteration will almost certainly result in an increase in surface run-off, thus elevating flood risk.

Concerns remain surrounding the financing of the development - it is my understanding that they form the basis of a series of parliamentary questions to be tabled.

The 25m buffer zone around residential properties is far too narrow and not in keeping with distances used in other (much smaller) solar farm developments..

Despite numerous representations/evidence presented, the ecology of the overall development site has been disregarded by the applicants throughout the consultation process. The applicants continuously downplayed the ecological impact of the development, despite clear and concise evidence indicating the regional/national importance of key wildlife populations present.

The direction of travel of the RVAA within the consultative process, or rather the lack of it, beggars belief.

The applicants assertion that the development will not remove good standard food-producing land has been clearly demonstrated not to be the case

The definition of "temporary" in the UK plan-decision making process needs revisiting - I personally think that four decades cannot be construed as "temporary".

In conclusion, and to reiterate, I strongly urge that the precautionary principle is deployed wherever the evidence-base indicates its utility.

Stewart Thompson