

[REDACTED]

10th November 2025

Unique Reference number is: [REDACTED]

REF: EN010147 Botley West Solar Farm Representation: Final Feedback

Dear Inspectors

Further to my submission on 11th September 2025, I would like to feedback on the Inspectorate hearings in October.

My overall view is that PVDP struggled throughout the 3 days and seemed ill-prepared for many of the key questions the Inspectorate asked and failed to answer many of the points the community is concerned on, leaving significant gaps in the knowledge and data required to make proper judgements. My conclusion was, despite assurances from PVDP that 'this is normal', i.e. missing deadlines and promising last minute submissions, is that PVDP are out of their depth for the size and complication of the project, with what seems is a shallow desktop plan. With no history of delivering any solar farm, let alone one of the world's largest within the setting of a world heritage site, I have concerns over PVDP giving fully researched answers by the deadlines, and longer term delivering a successful project.

I support green energy but believe each green project must be decided on merit. Despite the length of time PVDP have had, with generous overseas funding, they have failed the opportunity presented to them. They have not engaged positively with the local community and key stakeholders; Oxford Airport and local companies, have ignored concerns of over the local environment and wildlife, and have not presented a case that can be approved, against other projects competing for Government approval.

My main concerns leading from the hearings

1. The PVDP funding questions was not answered. Over the period of the consultation PVDP has remained surrounded in controversy over its funding and the source for £900 million pounds to build the development. This is the elephant in the room which overshadows all else and has corrupted the process. Trust by the local community of Blenheim and the PVDP is vital for the long-term success of any green energy development.

In June 2023, the Repurposing Russian Assets to Rebuild Ukraine was debated in the House of Commons. In [REDACTED] (Lib Dem spokesperson for Foreign & Commonwealth Affairs) speech, she raised Private Eye's report that the developers behind Botley West Solar Farm in Oxfordshire are potentially backed by dubious Russian money. The company behind it, Photovolt Development Partners, is registered in Germany but owned by Cyprus company Cranssetta Investments Ltd. The sole shareholder is a [REDACTED]. A New York court case in 2022 revealed that [REDACTED] husband, [REDACTED] was the primary beneficial owner of a goldfield development company that borrowed \$58 million from Uralsib bank. The litigating company said that there was never any goldfield to be found. It looked for infrastructure but did not find it. It alleged that the company was, in fact, a front to syphon off assets. It further said that it was not the only one, and that there were dozens of such companies, of which Photovolt was one. The Minister was asked: how can we know that Russian money is not still being greenwashed through our economy here in the UK? Companies House shows at least 12 'Solar' businesses have been set up by [REDACTED]

Using Crown Estate, at the home of Winston Churchill, to invest Russian originated monies would be an embarrassment for the Government, and the UK. This risk must be flagged as part of your report.

There are also reports that the management team at Blenheim have received multimillion pounds share incentive payments from PVDP. This questions any evidence given by Blenheim:

- They have overturned their previous position stated in the Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site Management Plan 2017: 5.04 which states:

The importance of maintaining and enhancing local distinctiveness and the high quality environment, can perhaps best be understood by considering the implications of not protecting them:

- *Tall developments on the skyline, or large-scale development (particularly those of a non-residential nature which tend to be bulkier and non-vernacular, for example industrial development; wind turbines; solar farms etc) could detrimentally influence the character of the adjoining rural areas.*
- Blenheim has supported PVDP unsubstantiated statements on the poor soil quality of their land, to benefit the application. No adequate evidence has been given to prove this assertion.
- At the Blenheim/ Woodstock Dialogue meeting 27th October 2025, Dominic Hare criticised Oxford Airport for delays in the process, versus my understanding from the hearings where PVDP had failed to communicate with Oxford Airport.
- There seems a clear conflict of interest by having the CEO responsible for both the charitable and business sides of Blenheim, and forthright support of the PVDP application.

I understand the focus of the Inspectorate is the planning rules, but bias in the evidence being provided to you must be recognised. For the local community all we ask is for transparency and honesty in this process.

2. Community Fund. At the Blenheim/ Woodstock Dialogue meeting 27th October 2025, the PDVP proposed figure was put at £525/MW. During this debate the Great North Road Solar and Biodiversity Park (1,765 hectares) at Newark, Nottinghamshire, where the developers are offering £1,200/MW in their application, assuming this will increase through negotiation. If BW is approved it is vital, before approval, that the local community affected by the impact of the solar farm share in the wealth of the project, over the term of the project, index linked. For the sheer size and impact of the project on the local community, this needs to be substantial.
3. There should 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 and unique prominent listed churches and houses. PVDP has cobbled together an RVAA which contains many errors and omissions, which it is impossible to make a professional judgement on.
4. I am unclear as to what PVDP have now offered in terms of food growing behind Grove Road, in Bladon. This has moved from an allotment for the local community to a commercial enterprise for food growing. I require clarification for the land use and how it will be maintained, and detailed plans as to how it affects the privacy of the land.
5. Airport concerns. At the hearing PVDP stated that there was little bird activity in the surrounding fields. This is clearly untrue. The fields behind Gove Road, leading up to the woods, are an annual meeting place for hundreds of Canadian Geese. These fields are close to the airport. This oversight is a concern. PVDP feedback around the airport from the hearing is a concern. Oxford Airport needs to be fully assured of safety for themselves and the local community. This will most likely require removal of solar panels from all surrounding fields to the airport.

All the very best

David Foster

Resident of Bladon, Oxfordshire