

## Briefing Note

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**Our ref** 64194/06/MS/OW/OC  
**Date** 9 June 2026  
**To** Secretary of State, Department of Energy Security & Net Zero  
**From** Oxford Aviation Services Limited

### Subject **OASL Response to SoS Request for Information**

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#### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This response has been prepared on behalf of Oxford Aviation Services Limited (“OASL”), operator of London Oxford Airport (“the Airport”), to the request for information by the Secretary of State (letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> April 2026, ref: EN010147) concerning the application by Photovolt Development Partners (“PVDP”) for an Order Granting Development Consent for the Botley West Solar Farm project.

#### **2.0 Questions where the SoS has requested comment from OASL**

##### **Aviation**

##### Glint and Glare - Paragraph 45

*The Secretary of States notes the glint and glare study undertaken by the Applicant [APP-128] and subsequent revised study which includes the reorientation of one field of solar panels [REP4-012]. The ‘current position’ of OASL in the Statement of Common Ground [REP7-038] pre-dates the revised glint and glare study. OASL has not expressly endorsed the Applicant’s position on this matter. The **OASL** is therefore requested to comment on whether the revised study satisfactorily resolves the concerns raised, including the direct effect on air traffic control operations at London Oxford Airport.*

2.1 OASL welcomes the changes made by the Applicant to reduce glint and glare, together with the redrafting of the study. The revised assessment indicates a lower potential impact on airport operations and operators. On that basis, OASL does not consider the proposed development likely to have an unacceptable effect on London Oxford Airport. OASL nevertheless wishes to record that a residual risk of unforeseen glint and glare effects will always remain where ground-mounted solar arrays are installed close to an airfield.

##### Thermal Turbulence - Paragraph 46

*With regard to heat-induced turbulence/thermal plumes, the Secretary of State notes that OASL has not had the opportunity to review and verify the two reports addressing thermal plume impacts - Thermal Impact - dated 16 October 2026 (Nova Fluid Mechanics) [REP6-066] and Thermal Plume and Primary Radar Refraction (Page Power Urban and Renewables) [REP6-067] submitted by the Applicant, due to the lateness of the submission to the Examination. **OASL** is requested to confirm that the thermal plume*

*modelling is satisfactory and whether there would or would not be an impact on operations or communications infrastructure at London Oxford Airport. If this position is not agreed, OASL is requested to set out their position, with supporting evidence, together with details of any appropriate mitigation to address the identified and evidenced harm.*

- 2.2 OASL has been unable to identify suitable technical expertise to independently peer review the reports on thermal plume impacts. In those circumstances, the Secretary of State will need to rely on the Applicant's own studies when reaching a conclusion on this issue. As with glint and glare, there remains a residual risk of unforeseen impacts. In the absence of independent peer review, OASL must therefore reserve its position on the thermal plume assessment.

*Bird Strike - Paragraph 47*

*The Secretary of State notes that OASL stated that they are content to remove their previous objection to the matter of bird strike, conditional on the funding of an additional bird scaring unit at London Oxford Airport by the applicant [REP7-188]. OASL's Statement of Common Ground [REP7-038] records that a letter of understanding has been agreed between the Applicant and OASL on the provision of an additional bird scaring unit. The **Applicant** and **OASL** are requested to provide evidence of a signed agreement securing the bird-scaring unit for the operational lifetime of the proposed development, excluding the caveat that "this is subject to the reasonable costs". In addition, the **Applicant** and **OASL** are requested to provide further clarity on the details of the additional bird scaring unit, the monitoring of its effectiveness, and a suitable mechanism to secure its delivery*

- 2.3 The agreement between the parties provides for funding from the Applicant to OASL in relation to bird strike risk at London Oxford Airport. The funding covers an independent assessment of any increase in bird strike risk attributable to the Development, together with the planning, implementation, operation, and maintenance of a Wildlife Hazard Management Unit at London Oxford Airport. The agreement remains in draft and is awaiting finalisation and signature.

## **Socioeconomics**

*London Oxford Airport – Paragraph 48*

*NPS-EN1 paragraph 5.13.5 acknowledges that socioeconomic impacts may be linked to other impacts. The Secretary of States notes the representations from OASL [RR-0788], [PDA-002] and [REP1-107] where it was confirmed that the airport is one of the UK's pre-eminent training airports, specializing in the training of commercial airline pilots. On all aviation related matters, **OASL** is requested to confirm that there are no objections to the proposed development. If any objections remain, these should be clearly set out in relation to the specific aviation matter, together with details of the reasons why the objection remains and what impacts the development would have on the overall operations and viability of London Oxford airport and aviation operators.*

- 2.4 London Oxford Airport is home to numerous small and medium-sized aviation businesses. To properly assess the proposed development's potential economic effects on the Airport, the Applicant should have engaged with those businesses during the DCO process, particularly the flying schools. As previously noted, London Oxford Airport is one of the UK's leading pilot training centres, and flying schools account for approximately 80% of total movements at the Airport. If those operators consider the operational risk posed by the proposed development to be too great, they may seek to relocate, to the detriment of their businesses and the Airport. OASL does not seek to raise a new objection. Its purpose is to draw the Secretary of State's attention to the fact that the Applicant should have undertaken an economic impact appraisal in consultation with those businesses. In the absence of that work, the economic impact cannot be properly quantified.