

Report to Botley West Solar Farm Planning Inspectorate

From Michael Gorick Registration ref [REDACTED]

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In this project there are more than enough “red flags” to justify refusal let alone insufficient or timely evidence and cooperation with The Planning Inspectorate by the developers which can surely only lead to a catastrophic government mistake if it is approved.

Please note the following risks in relation to the proposal, which in addition to all that has gone before, do not appear to have had sufficient due diligence.

Germany’s domestic intelligence agency, the Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz (BfV), and the Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) recently warned that Russian cyber threat actors are surveying photovoltaic systems that are not sufficiently protected and connected to the internet. Solar farms need high level security measures to prevent them from cyber-attacks that can disrupt power generation or compromise operational data. There does not appear to be any thought given to this or information that there is any awareness by the proposers. This is a threat to National Security which should be noted by the SOS.

Large solar farms are easy targets for enemy attacks due to their interconnected systems and critical infrastructure status. There are already incidents in Poland and no doubt elsewhere.

I have still not seen any answers or explanations fully detailing the method of funding. This is unacceptable. It has been noted previously on more than one occasion that financial information was redacted from accounts without explanation. When asked, a member of the so called original consultation team at Woodstock said that funding would be “by the shareholders”. This was clearly an incompetent or divisive response. However, neither Blenheim or PVDP have fully stated where and specifically from whom the funding is to be created. This is very dubious. Can PVDP finance Botley West project?

Note Energy Voice article as follows:-

Botley West. Supplied by PVDP. Project developer PVDP is looking to finance the cost of building the project by bringing investors on board through a bond structure or equity investment, Botley West project director [REDACTED] said in an interview near the project site. He said debt would be “preferred, but there may well be equity”.

How can that be sufficient to justify a circa £1 billion project?

If the source of capital and operational control is not from within the UK, again this is surely a matter of national security and is of very serious concern. It is insufficient to merely say, as has been reported, that the scheme would not have proceeded this far if it hadn't been affirmed by their firms of accountants.

PVDP has entered into discussions with a few of the 5 main Chinese language photo voltaic panel suppliers, together with Jinko Photo voltaic, which just lately offered its enterprise in Xinjiang the place Uyghur Muslims have been detained and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] This is not acceptable. (source Energy News 247)

A significant project of national infrastructure should not be at any risk to National Security no matter how minimal. There are clear "red flags" relating to ownership and control in this project which should be noted by the SOS and The Minister of Defence. These in themselves are sufficient to refuse this proposal.

PVDP are now proposing that precise buffer sizes (between 100m and 250m) will not be finally decided until after the Development Consent Order (DCO) is granted. This creates a serious risk for residents, as it would prevent us from being consulted or having any meaningful role in the final decision. This is simply an exercise by PVDP to push their Application through despite its many shortcomings.

There is still no clarity on issues such as avoiding tree damage, protecting habitats, skylark mitigation strategy. Blenheim Estates appear to have double standards since so much care is alleged in respect of Blenheim Park around the palace but not the same standards for the surrounding area of farmland land owned by Blenheim Estates. If this laxity is allowed then the approaches to the palace from the surrounding area are affected and this is contrary to the stated objectives in their own Management and Conservation plan.

From the beginning PVDP and Blenheim have described the farmland as poor. This is clearly misleading and has been proved to be so. In simple terms any farmer or resident living by or near the farmland will know this to be outrageously untrue. It is very clear even to the untrained eye that the annually rotated crops of wheat, Barley, Corn, maize, and rape are very productive. The retention & maintenance of ALL farmland, especially in increasingly uncertain times, is of national importance for food security. There are alternative sites for solar power which need to be further investigated perhaps to establish if they are still needed for the future. The UK does have a surplus of stand-alone renewable energy projects that can connect into the electricity grid. In March 2025, there were [727GW](#) of export and storage projects in the transmission connections queue, which are currently being connected on a first come, first served principle. (source RICS 06.June 2025). So the question is, Is this project unnecessary anyway especially given the time it would take for implementation and completion is not wholly agreed by the different parties?

PVDP or Blenheim Estates have never visited my property, or as far as I am aware that of my neighbours, to determine the effect on visual amenity. There have been no answers to questions about the closeness of the screening barriers behind housing in Manor Road Bladon and as far as I can see the exact location of panels and screening or buffer zones is still vague and unclear from the plans provided. Actually the fact that it is admitted that screening is necessary is an admission that the project is too close to housing and human habitation generally which will have effect on wellbeing and quality of life. Hardly any, if any, mention is made in regard to the effect on the surrounding communities in relation to the energy storage cabinets, the high caging surrounding the panels, and the use of concrete and building materials in their construction. Avoidance of information on the foregoing is alone sufficient to place the project under suspicion.

There remains the unacceptable perverse inference that walkways through high metal fenced corridors between panels placed over open fields and permitted registered rights of way, footpaths and byways following the Government Countryside Code, is creating a new benefit! It is stating the obvious but The SOS is urged not to be fooled by any claims or that community paths have been created for the benefit of the communities implying that they offset the loss of countryside when they were already there in the first place, albeit in a natural form. E.g. "community path" from Bladon to Begbroke, or Long Hanborough to Bladon (The Lince). This may not be apparent at central government level but it is very apparent to local inhabitants.

To offer food producing areas for residents at first looks to be a good proposition and would be to those who do not know the area until it is realised that local residents already have plenty of allotments which have existed for many years. In Bladon for example they are simply not needed or wanted. . It is a 'red herring'.

It is observed that there are seven types of possible hazards from airport-based solar PV systems. (source [Environmental Impact Assessment Review Volume 84](#), September 2020, 106418) The panels proposed in the surrounding fields are a risk which cannot be avoided in their entirety. The risk index is highest for glare occurrence from PV modules (4B), strike from birds in PV site (4B), and interference to communication systems. It is concluded that most of the risks need management implementation such as glare assessment in the feasible sites, periodic monitoring of bird's activity in the PV array and follow safety distance between PV array and communication aids. Engineers must work along with aviation and airport officials to mitigate possible risks from solar PV installations. Although I understand that London Oxford Airport challenged this element and that there were some measures and changes offered, such as moving the site of the panels further away, I have not seen a clear and conclusive proposal as to how ongoing mitigation would be implemented and monitored. There would be a longstanding expense and financial commitment which I haven't seen explained. In the

light of the foregoing there is a an obvious unacceptable risk if the application is not refused.

There have been far too many unanswered questions by the proposers. Given the negative report from the Planning Inspectorate, the clear opposition by MP's, the CPRE, Woodstock Town Council, and others, the failure of the proposers to engage properly with the authorities, it is time to put an end to this matter and refuse the application in the common interest.

MJG