

From: Martin Oldfield [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 July 2026 11:43
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Refuse permission for the Botley West solar farm

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Dear Secretary of State,

Please refuse approval of the proposed Botley West Solar Farm.

The developers' (PVDP) answers to the questions raised by the SoS were, in most cases, totally inadequate. They have made few changes in response to the many legitimate questions raised in spite of being granted extra time. As the Examiners' inquiry is now finished, PVDP should not be allowed to make changes after this point.

As you will have been inundated by comments on PVDP's answers, I will be brief and just summarise some of the inadequacies in their replies.

Aviation Safety

The triangular fan of land proposed to allow landing in response to partial or total engine failure near London Oxford Airport (LOA) remains totally inadequate. Engines do not fail solely in the line along the runway, but failure can happen anywhere in the circuit, requiring an emergency landing. The whole of the proposed solar farm represents a massive reduction of safe landing fields near the airport.

On the glint and glare issue, they misleadingly seek to minimise the damning evidence of the Schiphol experience and persist with the assertion that pilots only look ahead, in spite of the pilot training mantra "keep a good lookout all around you".

PVDP offers no further analysis of the thermal turbulence concern – surely the precautionary principle applies here?

A further omission by PVDP is the lack of any consultation with the flight training schools operating from LOA. Nor do they satisfactorily address the commercial damage which would follow if the flight training schools were to consider LOA to be too unsafe and withdraw.

I am a pilot living under the Oxford Airport approach path and I am deeply concerned about the aviation safety risk arising from the PVDP plans.

Residential Visual Amenity Assessment (RVAA) and buffers

In spite of the Examiners (ExA) recommending a 250 m buffer around affected residential properties, PVDP persists in clinging to the right to revert to 100 m buffers after the application procedure has finished.

Our house is next to field 2.15, which, with a 250 m buffer plus the required buffer around Bladon Heath Wood, should not have any solar panels in it. However PVDP persist in putting panels in field 2.15.

I can see many fields threatened with panels from our house, yet PVDP made no efforts to arrange a visit.

Loss of Green Belt and good agricultural land

The proposed solar farm would destroy a large area of the Oxford Green Belt, which local authorities have a statutory duty to preserve.

In a future where the UK will need to produce more food nationally, it is undesirable to lose such a large area of good agricultural land. Looking out at the sheep grazing in field 2.15, I do not believe they would be happy under solar panels.

There are many further objections which can be made against this disastrous Solar Farm, which I am sure others will make, but I am keeping this brief, and finish by saying again:

Please refuse approval of the proposed Botley West Solar Farm.

Yours sincerely,
Professor Martin Oldfield