

Simon Raywood

From: Rosalind Murrell [REDACTED]
Sent: 11 July 2026 12:15
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: EN010147 Botley West Solar Power Station

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]

I wish to state once again my opposition to the proposed Botley West Solar Power Station.

In its rushed answers to the Secretary of State's questions, the Applicant still has not provided adequate, complete and verifiable information for a proper decision to be made, despite being given ample time to produce a considered response.

The Applicant never supplied a full Residential Visual Amenity Assessment to the Examiners, nor a property by property assessment, as the Applicant was required to do. Because of this, the Examiners' suggestion that there should be a minimum 250m buffer for all residences, together with other changes that have occurred since the initial proposal, have caused the Applicant to reduce the proposed size of the development and the number of solar panels, by about one-third. This would appear to be a positive move, but page 143 of the Applicant's responses notes this 250m as the 'worst-case scenario', and it appears they intend a buffer of 100m minimum and to leave the actual width of the buffer to local authorities to decide, and crucially after the Development Consent Order has been granted. This would be completely undemocratic, and leave local people who are the most affected with no say. It would also mean pushing all the costs, labour and need for suitable expertise to carry out this procedure onto local authorities, who are not in a position to do this, when the work should have been done by the Applicant.

There seems to be a two year timing disconnect between when the National Grid thinks the Botley West Solar Power Station's substation will be connected, 2031, and the date of 2029 when the Applicant believes the substation will be connected. It is essential that the grid connection gains consent before any application for the power station is considered, as the Examiners have observed in their Grampian Clause proposal.

The Botley West Solar Power Station, if built, will have major detrimental environmental impacts. Yet again, the Applicant has not completed the studies nor submitted finished reports regarding protection for species, habitat, and, for instance, the damaging effects of cable trenching on tree roots. Where mitigations have been suggested, for example in relation to bat corridors and skylark plots, these are arbitrary, experimental or have been shown not to be effective. The Applicant's lack of serious consideration of the development's environmental impacts is shown by the fact that the Environmental Management Plan is not included in the Applicant's answers to the SoS, and is apparently to appear at some later date.

I am disappointed to see that the Applicant still maintains that the run-off from the Power Station's solar panels will not contribute to an increased flooding risk in the vulnerable areas of the proposed development, for instance Cassington, and in Cumnor parish where I am resident, in the low-lying area around Filchampstead. The Applicant seems to rely on old literature to support its argument, whereas more modern hydrology literature says that solar panels can contribute to increased run-off because of the drip-line effect.