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16 July 2026

Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
Department of Energy Security and Net Zero
3-8 Whitehall Place
London
SW1A 2AW

Dear Ed Miliband

'Botley West' Solar Farm application – reference EN010147

I'm responding to the applicant's further submissions of 9 June 2026, focusing on my concerns with Landscape and Visual aspects, and Residential and Visual Amenity.

Like many others at the initial public consultations, I looked with horror at the photographic 'visualisations', purporting through trickery and selectivity to show a minimal impact on the landscape. The situation has scarcely moved on in four years, with the applicant still continuing to ignore local authority advice, Examining Authority requests, professional guidelines and local feedback, and making false claims of mitigation. Their LVIA is totally flawed and should be repeated from scratch in a professional manner. And meanwhile, I refer anyone wishing to know the true impact on the landscape – and the public's true feelings about it – to Forever Fields, the book of the open art exhibition of the same name: [REDACTED]

Meanwhile the required RVAA, despite repeated requests, has simply not been carried out; instead the applicant now proposes to take powers to itself to make buffer zone decisions after granting of a DCO, thereby evading due process and any possibility of democratic scrutiny. It makes a mockery of the planning process, which any Secretary of State must surely reject.

There are many more flaws in the application, but I do not need to repeat the points made so ably by Stop Botley West.

In the end, the technical arguments merely confirm the common-sense view of local residents – and there are tens of thousands of us in this densely populated area - that the location is completely unsuited as a site for Europe's biggest solar farm. We know that this is an area of undulating, productive, attractive landscapes with an exceptionally high value in heritage and ecology. And when we have many options in solar (apparently 10 times our national targets already in the queue for connection?) – we do not need to choose this one.

John Corlett

[sent by email from [REDACTED]]

cc:

John Wheadon, Head of Energy Infrastructure Planning and Innovation, DESNZ

Calum Miller, MP

Layla Moran, MP

Stop Botley West