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The Rt Hon [REDACTED] MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

10 July 2026

Dear Secretary of State

Botley West DCO Application

It has come to the attention of Stop Botley West (SBW) community group that the Applicant is now openly talking about their intention to make some substantial submissions to your Department by the 16 July deadline with a revised masterplan and updated assessments for Landscape and Visual Impacts and Residential Visual Amenity.

This appears to go against the instruction in your “refusal to extend” letter that clearly states:

*“The deadline of 23:59 on 9 June 2026 for response to the RFI therefore remains”
This decision does not preclude the Applicant from providing further information in response to the other matters in the RFI, or specifically to LVIA and RVAA, within the existing RFI timetable.” [ie by 9 June]*

It is well evidenced (eg. ExA Scoping Opinion 24 July 2023, ExA written questions 1 and 2 [PD-008 and PD-012]) that the Applicant has been many times called upon to complete an RVAA since July 2023 and had ample opportunity to complete and submit an RVAA during the Examination well before the June 9th deadline. This is the case with much of the information requested in your letter of 28 April 2026 but missing from the Applicant’s 9 June submissions.

Your Department’s letter to the Applicant on 8 June, denying an extension, said;

“The Secretary of State considers that maintaining discipline within the statutory framework established by the Planning Act 2008 (“PA 2008”) is of fundamental importance to the efficient and fair operation of the development consent regime.

Agreeing to an extension of the duration sought, and at a late stage within the RFI response period, could create an undesirable precedent and risk undermining confidence in, and the integrity of, the planning process. It may also give rise to concerns of fairness, as other respondents are working to the existing timetable and would not have benefited from an equivalent extension.”

While SBW are mindful that all decisions are at your discretion, we do not believe ongoing ‘concerns of fairness’ will bolster or enhance ‘confidence in, and the integrity of, the planning process’ should the applicant be allowed to make new submissions 8 months after the end of the Examination phase having not taken the opportunity to do so by 9th June as requested.

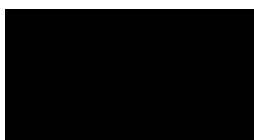
The Oxfordshire Host Authorities and all other Interested Parties have kept rigorously to the deadlines provided throughout the Examination and beyond. Making further significant changes so late in the process does not comply with your guidelines.

Additionally, a further round of consultation would require an extension beyond the current 10 September decision deadline set by your Department whose letter of 8 June clearly stated that;

“an extension would have significant implications for the statutory decision-making timetable which has already been extended from 10th of May 2026 to 10th of September 2026.”

For the reasons above, SBW respectfully request that you do not accept submissions of new material now that the original deadline imposed by you has passed.

Yours sincerely



For and on behalf of Stop Botley West

Copy to  MP Bicester and Woodstock and  MP Oxford West and Abingdon





Department for
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[REDACTED]
contact@stopbotleywest.com

Our ref: TOB2026/09721
Your ref:

July 2026

Dear [REDACTED],

Thank you for your letter of 10 July, regarding the Botley West Solar Farm. Your correspondence has been passed to me for response.

As I hope you will appreciate, the Secretary of State receives significant volumes of correspondence on a daily basis, and, regrettably, is unable to respond to each one personally. Therefore, I have been asked to respond.

I can confirm that your email will be treated as a representation and will be carefully considered alongside all matters that are relevant to the decision-making on the application for development consent in accordance with the Planning Act 2008.

Given the Secretary of State's quasi-judicial role in taking decisions on applications for development consent for energy infrastructure proposals, it would not be appropriate to comment on specific matters related to the proposals, as this could be seen as prejudicing the decision-making process.

Yours sincerely,

Bareen Shahid
DESNZ CORRESPONDENCE UNIT