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3 October 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 Miatta Fahnbulleh

Botley West Solar Farm (BWSF): EN010147

As a long-standing resident of one of the many communities that would be devastated by this gigantic development, I urge you to reject this proposal.

There are so many reasons why it is the wrong thing, in the wrong place, for the wrong reasons. The apparent irregularities in the planning process – allowing the applicant extra time, then accepting still more late submissions – only compound the sense of injustice.

No-one here denies the crucial importance of tackling climate change. But especially with so many options emerging for solar and other installations across the UK, the balance must surely tip against this application on account of the widespread harm it would cause. For example:

1. **population:** 25,000 people live within 1.5 km of the sites, in 2 towns and 15 villages, with more than 150 properties lying within 25 metres; the sheer number of people affected is unprecedented
2. **landscape:** the valley locations for the Central and Southern sites are steeply contoured, and the applicant's deceitful visualisations cannot disguise the fact that the panels would be highly visible, dominating an area of prime, classic English countryside
3. **heritage:** this is the setting for an internationally renowned UNESCO World Heritage Site (and a hotspot for the UK tourist industry); concerns raised by ICOMOS as the UNESCO advisory body have not been addressed
4. **agriculture:** on the applicant's own figures, 42% of the site is classified as Best and Most Valuable farmland, and the majority of the whole site is actively producing crops or livestock
5. **leisure and amenity:** more than 100 km of public footpaths pass through or run adjacent to the site
6. **conservation:** the majority of the site (70%) is within Oxford's Green Belt, and there remain unaddressed particular concerns for ancient woodlands and skylark habitats
7. **flood risk:** the applicant denies that the installation would increase flooding in this vulnerable area, but this is contradicted by evidence from hydrology experts
8. **grid connection:** despite the claims made for the strategic location, no substation exists to connect to, and no planning application has been submitted; it is not even a prerequisite of the construction that a connection should be approved in advance

9. **decommissioning:** despite the bizarre description of the installation as ‘temporary’, there is no plan or funding for eventual return to farmland
10. **air safety:** there is official concern for the safety of trainee pilots and their instructors at the UK’s largest pilot flight training airport
11. **community benefit:** the applicant’s various schemes have proved unworkable or irrelevant, leaving the best offer as a possible £20 per head per year

Furthermore, how could such an enormous project be awarded to a tiny foreign company that has no track record of delivering any solar farm, and whose source of funding has been shown (via detailed investigations published in Private Eye) to depend on highly questionable Russian money?

The applicant has left so many questions unanswered, or has proposed to answer them only after a DCO, that a responsible government surely cannot approve this application as it stands.

And finally, to understand the true impact on the community, I recommend *Forever Fields*, the book of the open art exhibition of the same name: [REDACTED]

John Corlett, reference number [REDACTED]

[sent by email [REDACTED]]

cc:

Calum Miller, MP

Layla Moran, MP

Stop Botley West