

From: dermot magee [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 October 2026 14:56
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: Botley West Solar Farm: EN010147

Dear Secretary of State

Botley West Solar Farm: EN010147

We are very disappointed that the Applicant's late submissions have been accepted causing further delay in the decision for Botley West and requesting yet another response from Interested Parties. Your willingness to agree to two extensions after the agreed deadlines will encourage other solar farm developers to expect similar treatment and has, in our opinion undermined confidence in the planning process.

We are supporters of the Stop Botley West campaign and fully endorse the comprehensive SBW submission of 16 July [[C2-161](#)]. We are concerned that despite their new proposals the Application is still irretrievably flawed. Many important questions remain unanswered and the Applicant seeks to defer far too many important decisions until after a DCO is granted when they will be beyond public scrutiny and challenge.

We have no confidence that the Applicant will ever provide the required level of detail to satisfy the ExA or us personally. Our specific concerns are summarised below. It is unquestionably undemocratic to allow the Applicant to submit further documents after the advertised deadlines had expired and more so, given the previous Secretary of State warned against any extension which would create a precedent. Since there are still a significant number of unanswered questions the correct approach would be to refuse the application and have it resubmitted with revisions as a new proposal. We believe the Applicant views the process as a negotiation mechanism, attempting to make as few concessions as possible or resist making any with the aim of securing the best outcome for PVDP and Solar 5 Farm regardless of the impact on all the communities affected. In effect it is they who are controlling the agenda and not the SOS.

1. Residential Visual Amenity Assessment Buffers: We are aware the ExA visited our property to assess the situation but not the Applicant who are relying on desk studies submitted in earlier documents. The view from our kitchen windows looks directly eastward to fields 2.60 adjoining our property and 2.57, 2.58 which are at a raised altitude to us. Whilst we are now aware that field 260 will be exempt from solar panels, fields 257 and 258 will be in full view and the proposed screening will not make visibility negligible within 15 years from when planting occurs. Additionally, the Applicant appears to have overlooked the fact that indigenous Hawthorn, Beech and Dog Rose used to provide the screening, will remove much of the screening effect every year between late autumn - and early spring which will expose the panels to us and the other neighbours at Jericho Farm Barns.

2. Flood Risk - Jericho Farm Barns: In previous submissions we have notified the Applicant that there is a documented history of localised flooding at Jericho Farm Barns - recorded over the last 20 years by Cassington Parish Council and West Oxfordshire District Council. The Applicant has not considered it necessary to carry out any hydrology tests at our site preferring to rely solely on scientific literature from 2013 to support their claim that solar panels will not increase the risk of surface water flooding. Borehole tests which were carried out at a neighbouring property in June 2022 recorded the water table at 1.05m below the surface and inevitably it will be higher than this during the winter period. The Applicant states that vegetation will absorb/slow down the flow of

water and the ground will absorb more into the saturated soil. This directly contradicts our experience and is inconsistent with our knowledge of the site conditions after 8 years of living at Jericho Farm Barns. Since the volume of surface water during winter travels from Spring Hill across fields 2.57, 2.58 and 2.60 (all of which are Oxford Clay) they should not be permitted as they will exacerbate the potential risk of localised flooding. Additionally increased volume of surface water may be too great for the ditches and culvert (the only entrance to properties at Jericho Farm Barns) to absorb and again result in localised flooding. It is worth noting that presently all these fields are used for farming and still flood on occasion.

3. **Impact on Wildlife:** We are very fortunate to live in a wildlife friendly location and are conscious of our responsibility to ensure the wide array of wildlife that frequents our property and the surrounding fields are not disturbed unduly by our presence. We are, however, very concerned that if approval for the installation of solar panels in the adjoining fields is given what provision will be made for protecting their food chain and their survival. I have noted that the arboricultural impact assessment is still outstanding and the Skylark compensation strategy is unworkable which suggests there is a lot of unfinished work required of the Applicant. What exactly therefore is the Applicant proposing to put forward for consideration or is it another of the usual default approaches that these will all be addressed once approval has been given. I hope the SOS will not agree to this and stand firm in the interests of the whole community.

4. **Decommissioning Fund:** I fully support the note that the ExA has recommended that the DCO should ensure there is a **plan** and a decommissioning **fund** in place before construction starts but this **is not yet done**. Since there is disagreement between Oxford County Council and the Applicant over this important issue, I would like reassurance from the SOS that approval will be contingent on this matter being addressed and finalised so that the burden of any decommissioning costs does not fall on the residents within the affected area and they do not find in the future their council tax rising to meet any or all of the cost, which will be significant.

5. **Compulsory Acquisition of Roadside Verges:** We are extremely concerned that there appears to be a plan to compulsorily acquire the verges bordering along the Cassington-Yarnton Road which may include the entrance to Jericho Farm Barns. On page 53 of The Revised Master Plan Assessment design a line in red ink suggests trenches may be dug at the entrance of Jericho Farm Barns so that cabling can be installed. This route may put at risk the integrity of the culvert over which traffic accesses the properties at JFB. The ditch and culvert are also vital for the flow of surface water from the surrounding fields to Battimer Brook and onwards to The Thames. From the corner of Burleigh Road to field 2.60 a line of long established trees (Willow, Chestnut, Ash etc) border the highway on the side of Jericho Farm Barns and these provide valuable screening from traffic pollution and noise pollution. The Applicant must be ordered to find an alternative route for cabling should the DCO application be approved.

We respectfully request the Secretary of State to refuse outright the grant of a DCO for this Application.

Names: Dermot Magee & Jennifer Dimmer

Interested Party Registration Nos: [REDACTED]