

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

To: BotleyWestSolar@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Date: 28 September 2026

IP REFERENCE NO: [REDACTED]

PROJECT: Botley West Solar Farm (BWSF) — Application Ref: EN010142

Subject: Formal Objection to Botley West Solar Farm – Response to Applicant's Late Submissions & Procedural Failures

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing as a registered Interested Party and the homeowner of [REDACTED] to submit this further formal objection to the Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the proposed Botley West Solar Farm (BWSF). This submission responds directly to the 25 late files submitted by Photovolt Development Partners (PVDP) and permitted into the examination by the Secretary of State, and should be read alongside my previous objection dated 12 July 2026.

Having reviewed the new material, it is overwhelmingly evident that the application remains irretrievably flawed, incomplete, and procedurally compromised. I fully endorse the comprehensive submissions made by the Stop Botley West (SBW) campaign, the Oxford Host Authorities, and local flying schools, and I set out below my continued and heightened objections.

1. Fundamental Failure of Due Process and Procedural Unfairness

I wish to place on record my profound dissatisfaction with the manner in which this consultation is being conducted. Granting the Applicant permission to introduce a massive volume of complex late submissions past established deadlines has severely prejudiced Interested Parties.

- **Inadequate Review Window:** Giving the public a window of approximately one month to review, digest, and respond to hundreds of pages of highly technical documents is completely inadequate and fundamentally unfair.
- **Piecemeal Information Strategy:** The receipt of critical information in a fragmented, piecemeal manner over time has made it exceptionally challenging for residents and experts to properly assess the collective and cumulative impacts of the scheme. This disjointed presentation obfuscates the true, overall severity of the scheme's spatial, visual, and environmental footprint.

- **Evasion of Public Scrutiny:** By constantly revising masterplans and pushing key mitigation decisions into post-consent outline plans, the Applicant continues to bypass the statutory right of Interested Parties to scrutinise finalized site details during the examination stage.

2. Evasion of Visual Amenity Protections & The Specific Impact on [REDACTED] House

In my previous objection, I exposed the Applicant's factually misleading evidence regarding [REDACTED] (Figure 2.26). The Applicant claimed visual impacts would be "screened" or "filtered" by low garden hedges, wilfully ignoring the vertical reality of our upper-floor windows, which look directly over existing boundary vegetation to reveal unobstructed, dominant views across the rising ground of the Evenlode Valley. Every field in this view would be covered in industrial panels at a catastrophic separation distance of just 50 metres from our home.

Rather than rectifying these site-specific errors or conducting a proper site visit to [REDACTED] which they have still refused to do, the Applicant's late submissions represent a further rollback of basic protections:

- **Substandard Default Buffers (oRAP & Masterplan Rev 5):** The introduction of the outline Residential Visual Amenity Plan (oRAP) [C1-108] and Masterplan Revision 5 [C1-111] establishes a default buffer of just **100 metres** (via amended Schedule 2, Requirement 15). This directly undermines the 250-metre default buffer recommended by the Examining Authority (ExA) to preserve basic living standards and backtracks on previous submissions where the Applicant conceded a 250m buffer remained viable.
- **Egregious 50m Proximity Maintained:** Setting 100m as a "starting point" with a presumption against further increases means properties like [REDACTED] are left entirely unprotected. Standard domestic vegetation cannot screen an industrial development of this magnitude.
- **Democratically Unworkable Post-Consent Delegation:** Deferring final buffer determinations to post-consent private arrangements between the developer and local authorities is procedurally improper. Local host authorities have already confirmed on record that they lack the resources and capacity to manage complex micro-siting decisions post-consent.

3. Irreconcilable Infrastructure Timelines & Unresolved Substantive Flaws

The late submissions fail to resolve, and in several cases exacerbate, the critical technical and environmental failures previously identified:

- **Speculative Grid Connection Timeline:** The application maintains a logically contradictory grid connection timeline. National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) has confirmed that the required substation will not be operational until **Winter 2031 at the earliest**, and NGET has neither finalized a location nor submitted a planning application. The Applicant continues to resist a mandatory Grampian clause to

prevent construction prior to substation consent, forcing the decision-maker to evaluate a speculative asset with uncoordinated impacts.

- **Aviation Safety Risks:** The proposed panel layout continues to pose severe visual and reflection hazards to trainee pilots from London Oxford Airport who regularly overfly the site and rely on adjacent agricultural fields for emergency landings.
- **Heritage, Biodiversity, and Red-Line Boundary Issues:** The scheme continues to encroach on the setting of Blenheim Palace (with requested ICOMOS Landscape Character Assessments still ignored). Furthermore, the Applicant acknowledges that over 300 hectares within the red-line boundary will not be used for panels, yet refuses to contract the boundary to return this land securely to agricultural use.

4. Procedural Unlawfulness and Risk of Judicial Review

I must directly highlight to the Secretary of State that the decision-making process currently being pursued creates severe legal exposure. By accepting voluminous, highly technical late submissions while forcing Interested Parties to digest fragmented filings within an unreasonably truncated four-week window, the process breaches fundamental tenets of procedural fairness and natural justice.

Furthermore, attempting to grant a DCO that systematically defers essential impact assessments and residential mitigation decisions to post-consent mechanisms deprives the public of their statutory right to consult under the Planning Act 2008. Should Development Consent be granted on the basis of an incomplete evidence base, flawed visual assessments, and a procedurally compromised consultation, any such decision would be inherently unlawful and highly vulnerable to being quashed via Judicial Review in the High Court.

5. Conclusion and Request for Outright Refusal

The common thread throughout PVDP's application remains a reliance on inaccurate data, a refusal to meaningfully engage with site-specific visual impacts, and a deliberate tactic of delaying critical assessments until after development consent is secured.

The late submissions do not remedy these deficiencies; they reinforce a process that has deprived the public of adequate time and collective context to evaluate this vast scheme.

Because the application fails basic evidentiary thresholds and relies on active misrepresentations of visual impact, I respectfully urge the Secretary of State to refuse the grant of a Development Consent Order outright.

Yours faithfully,

Russell Tucker, [REDACTED] Registered Interested Party
Interested Party Reference: [REDACTED]