

Simon Raywood

From: Harry st john [REDACTED]
Sent: 04 October 2026 18:27
To: Botley West Solar Farm
Subject: response to Sof S letter of 4th September 2026
Attachments: final rep to SofS re BW Oct2026.docx

Dear Simon

I hope you are well and have had a good summer.

I wonder if you could ensure to point out to NZ team that my previous rep was given two numbers C2-179 and C2-157.

It is important to ensure they are read together as the attached email to the Applicants director was referring to the plans in C1 -179 which the Applicants used in their consultation.

I attach my letter and Annex for the SofS's consideration.

can you acknowledge receipt tomorrow morning or asap.

Many thanks

Harry St John

**Representation from Harry St John
Interested Party and Resident in Eynsham.
Retired rural Chartered Surveyor.
(Former West Oxfordshire District Councillor for North Leigh)**

Dear Secretary of State

Botley West Solar Farm: EN010147

Thank you for inviting us all to comment on your decision to include the Applicants additional raft of documents **delivered to you almost a month late**. I am disappointed that you decided to allow them to be included in the evidence, when all of it should have been available for Examination by the Inspectors and the other Interested and Affected Parties, between May and November 2025.

Throughout this whole NSIP/DCO process, the Applicant has failed to provide a fully documented application; then, to an almost cavalier degree, has ignored or resisted measured input from the Host Authorities, other expert consultees and the local community first during in the Consultation period in 2023/4, leading up to the application in late 2024; the applicant continued this same (“we are right you are wrong”) approach throughout the Examination, with the Inspectors and interested parties/consultees asking numerous questions that in many cases were not properly addressed.

It was clear the Inspectors, appointed to examine the application, became increasingly frustrated with this delay and obfuscation that appeared to most the “golden threads” of the applicants performance. I have been through many public enquiries (CPO and planning related) in my career as a rural Chartered Surveyor, and have seen other applicants consult, listen and amend schemes in an orderly way - but not in this case.

After the Inspectors reported to you in February 2026, it must soon have become clear to your team how much essential information was still lacking - that is the moment the application should have been refused and the Applicants simply invited to reapply when

they had got all their facts in place to be examined in an orderly fashion.

The 2008 Act sets a very precise timetable, with clear deadlines for to all to adhere to - including the Secretary of State. So it was surprising that the SofS initially extended the deadline for decision from 10th May to 10th September 2026, whilst then seeking the **answer to 75 questions of fact or clarification from the Applicant, who in practice, should have provided all that missing information by the end of the Examination back in November 2025, but had utterly failed to do so.**

We have yet to hear what the Examiners actual recommendation was to the SofS in February 2026, but we suspect it was to refuse the application.

If we are right in that assumption, after the SofS received some of the requested responses from the applicant in June, the NZ team decided to extend the decision period for a second period to 10th Nov 2026 because the Departmental team had decided to accept a raft of additional information - despite it having not been provided by the original deadline in June - in fact it was received almost a month late.

It is this acceptance of the Applicant's late submissions that has in effect caused this **second further delay** in the decision on Botley West.

Granting the first extension might, to some, appear as preferential treatment of the Applicant.

However, the second extension looks, to the wider public, more like favouritism. The 2008 Act procedural rules are clear to all and in this case the Applicant has simply failed to meet the standard required on so many accounts - their application should have been refused for failure to meet them, let alone all the other material planning reasons out weighing the need - which can be served by other solar or wind power schemes in more suitable locations with fewer constraints - and as you will be aware there are many such candidates in the NSIP pipeline.

I support what the Stop Botley West campaign have said throughout their campaign and fully endorse their comprehensive submission of 16 July [[C2-161](#)].

I also agree with the many hundreds of other interested or affected parties who have made so many material points that weigh heavily against this proposal in the “planning balance”. I have myself made a number of representations at each deadline.

I am convinced that, despite the last minute changes, the Application remains fundamentally flawed. I feel sure you will be too.

Too many questions remain unanswered and the Applicant seeks to defer too many important requirements, criteria or conditions until after any development consent is granted - when they will be beyond public scrutiny and challenge - the most obvious example being the buffer zones distances to protect residential amenities and views.

From the documents accompanying the application to the latest version, there have been so many changes even the applicants documents still contain contradictions of fact. I attach a list of them in Annex HSTJ1

In the light of all the above, the many powerful arguments in favour of refusing this proposal made by so many expert folk at National and local levels, I respectfully request the Secretary of State to refuse the grant of a DCO for this Application.

Annex HSTJ 1

Is the site area 1418 ha or 1328 ha? (see the covering letter C1-094 and compare to figures quoted in C1-095 paras 2.1.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3.C1-100 paras 1.3.1 and 1.3.3; C1-094 conclusion; I hope you are not as confused as I am.

Will the electricity generated power 330,000 or 275,000 homes?
The figures vary in C1-094, C1-095 (see above paras), C1-099, C1-100.

So which is it, one asks, especially as there are only 260,000 homes in Oxfordshire?

If the original scheme had a licence to deliver 840MWe and connect to the Grid in October 2027, how can that now be possible **if the area to be covered with solar arrays has been reduced by 130 ha and the power output reduced accordingly by something in the order of 200MW; was the applicant hoping to generate far more than the original stated 840MW, despite the licence being limited to that figure? If so it looks like asking for consent to build 1000 houses and then building 1200!**

As to connecting into the National Grid in late 2027 that is now clearly impossible, especially since there is no planning consent in place for the NGET substation - which NGET now say are hoping to complete it in 2031.

In C1-108 - a new document authored by Icení Consultants recently employed by the Applicant (but way after the Examination ended), the picture of sheep grazing on page 11 is wholly misrepresenting as the lowest edge of the panels are much higher than proposed here.

In the subject case the lower edge is circa 0.9m off the ground so that mature sheep would struggle to move under them and the struts underneath the panel supporting tables.

The Applications project timetable and key facts appear to be still in disarray.