

SUGGESTIONS FOR LETTERS TO SEND NOW !!



TOP PRIORITY

Send an E-mail to your Parish Council by 11th July.
Just make one or two key points that are important to you.
E-mail addresses are on the website: stopbotleywest.com

NEXT PRIORITY

E-mail the Inspector yourself by 25th July.
Send a short E-mail to: support@pinssupport.zendesk.com You will get an immediate acknowledgement containing a link to a response form where you can enter your full message.

Here are some suggestions you may choose to use in your E-mails.

Pick those that match your concerns:

Here are 3 short suggestions about environment and heritage:

1. Please pass on my concerns about the damage to be done to the surroundings of the proposed Botley West Solar Farm. These include protected National Monuments; a protected site of Special Scientific Interest; greenbelt countryside; Churchill's grave and Blenheim Palace itself – a UNESCO Heritage World Site.
2. I'm horrified that 75% of the proposed Botley West Solar Farm will be on Oxford's Green Belt. The Developer is claiming "very special circumstances" as an excuse to cover fields at a time of deep concerns for food security and self-sufficiency in the UK, with 2,663,570 solar panels.
3. The latest version of maps released by the Developer reveal plans to dig a trench through Long Mead meadow to enable their cables to cross the Thames near Eynsham. Long Mead is part of only 4 square miles of original floodplain hay meadow left in the UK and must be protected. It featured in a film produced for Cop26 and it would be a huge embarrassment for the government if this important floodplain was destroyed on their watch. Please ensure this vital point is covered in your response to the Scoping Report.

And some points about carbon debt:

1. I'm worried that the CO2 emissions from the manufacture (in China using electricity from coal fired Power Stations), transportation and installation of the 2,660,570 solar panels will be so high - especially in the early crucial years of the carbon crisis - that Botley West Solar Farm may never make any positive contribution to the reduction of emissions worldwide. Thereafter there remains the additional carbon debt of maintenance and ultimate decommissioning. Nobody has yet produced scientific data for this.
2. I am worried about the **climate crisis "tipping point"**. As solar panels are less than 22% efficient, solar parks need to be large to produce enough electricity be commercially viable. As they are so big, they start life with a large carbon debt, and as they are so inefficient, they pay that debt off slowly. It is therefore likely that Botley West will still be paying off its carbon debt when the tipping point is reached and will therefore have been a net **contributor** to the climate crisis.

A suggestion about due diligence and finances:

I am concerned that insufficient **due diligence** has been conducted by landowners Blenheim Estates and Merton College in respect of the developer PVDP / SolarFive Ltd. Allegations in the press have been made about their corporate structure, sources of funds and financial motivation. There also appears to be little evidence of their development track record and whether they have in fact taken any projects to completion.

Two more detailed concerns about Food Security:

1. I am concerned about the **UK's food security**. Much of the Botley West proposal is on farmland and if it goes ahead, 7,000 tons of food will be taken out of the nation's food supply per year. As an alternative, only 11 offshore wind turbines would produce the same amount of energy as the 2,660,570 solar panels that Botley west proposes to put onto countryside. There is currently 250,000 hectares of unused south facing commercial roofs which, if just a quarter of this was used for solar panels, could generate 25 GW of electricity annually.
 2. I am concerned about the **industrialisation of the UK countryside** and the effect on **tenant farmers and food production**. This issue needs addressing by government. When development of land is proposed for residential property, it is assessed against the requirements of national planning policies and local plans. Issues such as population growth and movement, education, transport networks etc. are fundamental to the decision-making process. Because of this consideration, those affected by it (farmers, landowners, developers, local authorities, central government etc.) are not caught unawares by what is proposed nor do they consider such applications in isolation. The position is very different regarding large scale ground mounted applications for solar developments. The country does not have a policy for solar developments - what factors should be important, how many developments should be allowed, how local applications should be viewed in the context of national need, brown-field / roof-top developments etc. The proliferation of thousands of solar applications across the country leaves tenant farmers wide open to exploitation.
-

Lastly, putting solar panels on roofs not fields:

I am writing to you as a concerned resident of ***** regarding the proposed Botley West Solar Farm.

My concern is the vast scale of the proposal, located within 1.5km of 11,000 people's homes and taking 1,400 hectares of crop growing land out of production for a minimum of 42 years, just as the UK is recognizing essential food security issues.

I support solar power to help with our renewable energy targets, but like the recent CPRE report on solar, I believe it should be on roofs not fields.

There are 250,000 hectares of south-facing commercial roof space in the UK. If just a quarter of this was used for solar panels, it could generate 25 GW of electricity annually. That's the equivalent of 30 solar farms the size of the proposed Botley West Solar Farm and hence why the independent review of the UK's net zero prospects called for a 'solar rooftop revolution' and for the reform of planning rules to enable it.

Please use your position to recommend the Botley West Solar Farm is not a viable project. The harms generated by building it far outweighs the purported benefits, including the counterproductive risk of losing 75% of Oxfordshire's greenbelt.