



The Rt Hon Edward Miliband MP
Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero
1 Victoria Street
London SW1H 0ET

Our Ref: FN/LM63672
29 April 2026

Secretary of State's post-Examination questions – Botley West Solar NSIP

Dear Secretary of State,

I am concerned by the sheer extent of the gaps in information highlighted by your formal response to the applicant on 14 April 2026 in relation to the Botley West Solar proposal.

Most worryingly, the fundamental viability of the grid connection of the proposed National Grid substation at Farmoor is brought into question.

Given the scale of the project, significant transmission capacity is required, and the project's reliance on associated National Grid infrastructure was a concern raised repeatedly during the Examination without a satisfactory response.

I welcome the careful attention you are giving to this application and the seriousness with which you are approaching what is a significant decision for local communities. Throughout this process, local communities have diligently engaged with the Examination process. It is clear from the questions you raise that the Applicant has not engaged with the same level of forensic detail.

Many key issues remain unresolved, and key parties are being cut out of the post-examination process.

Matters that were examined at length during the Planning Inspectorate's Examination, including alternative site selection, grid connection and deliverability, impacts on the Blenheim World Heritage Site, landscape and visual effects, ecological mitigation, flood risk, aviation issues and compulsory acquisition, have had to be re-visited as evidence remains disputed or is incomplete. There is a complete lack of clarity on some of the most sensitive issues for my constituents, including site selection and the Landscape and Visual Impact and Residential Visual Amenity Assessments.

Local residents are especially concerned about transparency at this stage of the process. Unlike during the Examination itself, the Planning Inspectorate's website currently provides no clear information about how this extended decision-making phase will operate after 9 June, nor how the substantial volume of additional information you have requested will be assessed.

Layla Moran MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

By way of example, Cumnor Parish Council currently has no information about whether, or for how long, it will be given the opportunity to review and comment on further evidence submitted by the applicant after 9 June. Residents have already raised concerns with me about transparency, procedural fairness and public confidence at this stage, particularly given that much of the material now being sought was not fully tested during the Examination.

One resident said “Like many others I have completely lost faith in the examination process. If there are 70 different points outstanding for the applicant to answer, why was this application not refused.”

The lack of opportunity for engagement with the process now seems to me to be a deficit in democracy. To remedy this would you:

- Meet with Bicester and Woodstock MP Calum Miller and myself as MPs for the affected constituencies.
- Recognise Calum and I as “interested parties”.
- Confirm how constituents can make make representations at the post-examination stage.

Your requests for further information from Botley West implicitly acknowledge wide-ranging concerns. Given the clock is ticking on the 8 week timetable set out in the 26 March statement, clarity is urgently needed on how this next stage will be conducted. Affected communities need the opportunity to engage, so that confidence in the fairness and robustness of the process can be restored.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Layla Moran'.

Layla Moran MP

Liberal Democrat Member of Parliament for Oxford West & Abingdon