



**Botley West Solar Farm: Issues that need
to be considered in Registration of Interest
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Issues that need to be considered in Registration of Interest

Landscape
Heritage
PRoW
Flooding
Greenbelt
Farmland
Biodiversity
Others

Landscape

Botley West Solar Power Station is positioned on the sloping land of the Evenlode, Glyme and Cherwell Valleys

Almost the worst possible scenario for landscape impact as the development is visible for miles (11 miles long and as big as Heathrow Airport)

Mitigation is insufficient to avoid significant adverse impact on the landscape



Heritage

- The setting of Blenheim Palace World Heritage Site
 - Breaking up of estate lands by compulsory purchase?
- The setting of Oxford City and Colleges
- Impacts on Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings
- Impacts on a historic landscape littered with archaeological sites
- Impacts on the gateway to the Cotswolds AONB



Public Rights of Way

- Impacts on views and openness of landscape from Public Rights of Way
- Impacts on amenity
- Impacts on public health
- Disruption during building phase
 - Solar panels
 - Cable routes
- Some extra footpaths?



Flooding

- PVDP have only accounted for “hard” infrastructure
- Avoided the peer-reviewed evidence that solar panels increase rate of runoff through the dripline effect
- Only promise is to add measures to reduce flooding at Cassington (no detail)
- Destruction to land drainage and compression of soil
- Climate changes is driving more extreme weather (rainfall, wind and heat)





Greenbelt

- PVDP contend that any significant adverse impacts will disappear after Year 1
- >70% of Botley West is on Greenbelt land – why? Building opportunities for Blenheim Estate?
- Perhaps why we have not seen alternative schemes for the flatter land in the northern part of the Blenheim Estate.
- Impact on openness of the greenbelt through visual impacts and by virtue of size
- Very Special Circumstances (the current queue for additional capacity is 400GW, *more than five times* the amount needed to meet the UK Government's 2035)

Farmland



- According to PVDP 36% is on Best and Most Versatile Land
- Most of the rest Grade 3B (Good to Moderate Productivity)
- The CEO of Blenheim Estate has consistently claimed in public the land is poor
- Food security in a time of climate change is important
- Import of food is connected with many adverse environmental outcomes (CO2 emissions; land clearance; poor agricultural practices etc.)
- Impact on tenant farmers



Biodiversity

- Biodiversity Net Gain of 70% but this only accounts for changes in habitat type and condition
- Likely significant adverse impacts on red-listed farmland birds
- Almost certainly severe adverse impacts on the currently diverse bat population (peer-reviewed scientific evidence)
- Effectiveness of planting hedgerows will likely take years to realise and also will be dependent on management practices
- Questions around runoff from the site during construction on water bodies



Other Issues

- The proposal has changed little as a result of the multiple consultations (many inadequacies)
- Buffer zone of 25m
- Within 1.5km of 11,000 homes
- Disruption to roads during construction
- Noise during construction
- Thermal effects, vulnerability to storms, fires etc.
- London Oxford Airport and Brize Norton – glint/glare/radar
- Questions over the source of funding for this scheme
- Questions over the governance of the Blenheim Palace Charity and Blenheim Estate companies



<https://stopbotleywest.com/home>