

From: Stop Botley West [REDACTED]

Sent: 12 December 2023 14:01

To: Elliott, Trudi [REDACTED]; Morrison, Paul

Cc: michael.gove.mp@parliament.uk

Subject: Why isn't PINS investigating serious allegations about SolarFive before its Botley West application is lodged?

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [REDACTED]

Why isn't PINS investigating serious allegations about SolarFive before its Botley West application is lodged?

Dear Ms. Elliott and Mr. Morrison

I am writing as co-chair of the Stop Botley West community action group to ask you to provide a formal explanation of your continued refusal to investigate serious allegations about SolarFive Ltd. before its application has been lodged for the development of the Botley West solar project, which would be the one of the largest solar power stations in the world if implemented.

You are aware of the mounting body of corroborated evidence, including extensive coverage in Private Eye since July this year (attached), that one of the SolarFive Ltd. co-owners, [REDACTED], used the false name of [REDACTED] in the application, and that she failed at the time of the application to disclose the ultimate beneficial ownership of SolarFive Ltd.

You will also be aware of clear evidence that the business activities of SolarFive are in breach of the UK's Russian sanctions laws. In our view, given this mounting body of evidence, it is imperative that you initiate an immediate investigation into the suitability of SolarFive and its parent company, PhotoVolt Development Partners GmbH (PVDP), a company owned by [REDACTED], to participate in the NSIP process.

We understand that you suggest you would be acting beyond your remit to investigate an applicant before an application is submitted. In our view, common sense dictates that there is sufficient evidence to persuade you to start investigating now and avoid wasting vast amounts of time and money, given that the publicly available evidence will still be there after an application is submitted.

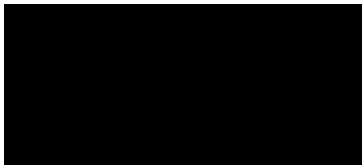
We find it confusing and contradictory that you have already had an initial meeting with PVDP, that you have received its Scoping Report, that you have contacted all your consultees and issued your Scoping Opinion – in effect giving the green light to the applicant to lodge the application. You have taken these steps without investigating corroborated evidence that casts serious doubt on the suitability of the applicant to apply for an NSIP scheme.

If you choose to stick with the line about 'no investigation before application', then please give us the commitment that the Planning Inspectorate will investigate as soon as an application by PVDP/SolarFive has been submitted.

In view of the serious implications and consequences of this issue, I have copied this letter to Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, and we urge him to take immediate action. Given its importance to the public, who are your highest priority stakeholder group, I will also be making the letter available to local, national and international media who have shown an interest in the Botley West application.

Please confirm receipt of this letter by return, and we look forward to receiving your response in a timely manner, given that the second phase of public consultation into the proposed scheme has just started.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Alex D Rogers