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Your ref: RF33724

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Dear Richard,

Thank you for your letter dated 3 February, regarding the use of agricultural land for solar projects.

There has been no change to the policy on the weight attached to the use of BMV land. Planning policy and guidance makes clear that, wherever possible, developers should utilise brownfield, industrial, contaminated, or previously developed land. Where the development of agricultural land is shown to be necessary, lower-quality land should be preferred to higher-quality land (including 'Best and Most Versatile' land). This was the policy of the last government, There are no plans to change this policy.

As you point out the proposed NESO connections reform also requires projects to demonstrate 'readiness' and 'strategic alignment' before receiving a firm connection offer. These criterion will be used for the purpose of allocating grid capacity.

Thank you for taking the time to write. I hope this reply is helpful.

Yours ever,

**RT HON ED MILIBAND MP**  
Secretary of State for Energy Security & Net Zero