

From: Mark Trapmore [REDACTED] >
Sent: 29 August 2022 21:24
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: STRONG OBJECTION TO Berden Hall Farm (Pelham Solar)

Application number S62A/22/0006 (and UTT/22/2046/PINS)

I am writing to object to the proposal by Statera to construct a solar farm on 177 acres of land at Berden Hall Farm.

My name is Mark Trapmore and [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

I object to the planning application for the following reasons.....

The proposed Solar Farm will

- be sited on high grade agricultural land – NOT brown / low grade agricultural land
 - The farmer currently supplies Weetabix from this land and they are known to only accept the highest quality wheat produced in UK!
 - Liz Truss and Rishi Sunak have both stated that solar farms negatively impact food security. Liz Truss recently said “I’m somebody who wants to see farmers producing food, not filling in forms, not doing red tape, not filling fields with paraphernalia like solar farms. What we want is crops, and we want livestock,” to resolve a key current issue due to the war in Ukraine.
 - The public exhibition held by Statera at the Berden Village Hall on 21st March 2022 was well attended by a large number of local residents from Berden and the surrounding villages who strongly object to the proposals. At this meeting Statera made no attempt to collect feedback from attendees or respond to questions / concerns raised – and they frequently responded that the argument that Solar should not be sited on good quality agricultural land as “nonsense..... absolute nonsense” but were unable to explain their reasons behind this statement.
 - in recent planning reports UDCs case officers stated that “the applicant has failed to assess whether the proposed development could be accommodated elsewhere within the District, which may prove to more sustainable or of a poorer quality of agricultural category”
 - We believe that the applicant should have to meet their statutory requirement and assessed whether there are alternative locations that are more suitable eg sites of poorer quality agricultural land.

- give rise to significant effects on the environment by virtue of its nature size and location. We are very surprised that no environmental impact assessment has been required and believe this should be carried out

- Have negative access and highway safety implications
 - The road network around Berden is not capable of carrying traffic generated by the development safely. There are many sections of single track windy country lanes into Berden – including the current dangerous single track past Berden Village Hall on the blind bend at the village green.

- There are real safety concerns as many people ride horse, ride bikes and walk on these local roads – due to lack of pavements – and this will be increasingly dangerous with the increase in lorries on the roads if permission is granted.
 - The roads in/ around Berden are known to flood in response to heavy rains draining from the fields and this surface run off / water drainage will increase if solar is installed
 - We will lose a large number of footpaths and permitted routes which have been walked, cycled and horse ridden for many years.
- Have significant impact on local heritage and archaeology
 - The Crump and The ringworks, located directly next to the proposed solar farm is a scheduled monument
 - Berden Hall and St Nicholas Church are Grade 1 listed buildings
 - The Local Authorities Heritage Consultant considers “that the proposed development is considered to result in a more industrial character contrary to the prevailing rural character of the site.”
- Have a significant impact on our family and friends enjoyment and pleasure of the countryside where we live.
 - We will lose a number of our favourite dog walks and horse riding routes to the proposed solar farm – which will have a negative impact on our quality of life.
- The solar farm applicant does not have a good track record of success / planning compliance with previous local applications.
 - For example they were given permission for the current battery storage unit at Stocking Pelham – which they revised numerous times, increasing the size / height etc and have not screened / maintained effectively in line with UDCs planning approval conditions – and when this was questioned at the recent solar farm meeting – they showed a real lack of regard / concern to meet their legal obligations and we are concerned they will again fail to deliver.
- The 21 day time period available for consultation, is very short, and has come at a time when many people are on holiday and unable to respond within the deadline.
- PINS has recently approved a 22.5 hectare solar farm at Stansted airport and this is less than 7 miles away from the proposed solar farm in Berden

I really hope that you will consider my comments and decide NOT to approval this solar farm application and decide to put our countries food security first and save our good quality agricultural land for farming and producing much needed crops and reducing food miles – improving sustainability and the climate emergency.

We support the use of alternative sources of energy and support Solar when sited on the right land. We also understand that 1 wind turbine at the Dogger bank site will generate more energy, more efficiently, than the entire proposed solar farm at Berden Hall which will result in the loss of approximately 71ha of grade 2 agricultural land – in a time of increasing food insecurity, inflation and climate change.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our comments

Yours sincerely
Mark Trapmore