

**From:** Brian Aitken [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 06 September 2022 00:00  
**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Berden Hall Farm (Pelham Solar)

Application number on 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.

As with the vast majority of respondents to this proposed development, I do not object to solar farms in principal, quite the reverse; it is clear that as a nation we absolutely must reverse and eliminate our dependency on carbon-intensive fuels and the resultant increase in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions that are so catastrophically altering our climate and endangering the future of the planet. Current geopolitical events also serve to underline the need to move away from our dependency on oil and gas, most of which is imported, and develop home-produced sources of renewable energy. Clearly, solar power has a role to play in that alongside onshore and offshore wind farms, hydro-electric and even nuclear.

However, as a local resident, I find it extremely concerning and disheartening to read the plans put forward for this development. In particular:

- The land itself: the proposal does not recognise the importance of the category of land intended for the development (prime agricultural land) and the topography of that land (very undulating). The latter is far from ideal for a solar farm and makes it far more difficult to screen, given the ups and downs of the countryside, however the loss of prime agricultural farmland is unforgivable. Again, current events have served to highlight our dependency on food imports and our inability to feed ourselves as a nation; it therefore seems madness to further undermine that by reducing the prime agricultural land available to us.

Moreover, we have to consider the proposed duration for such developments. While I understand the business case for long contractual durations, we are effectively talking about jumping forward an entire generation. Who will be left to farm what is left? How many of the current farmers will have sons / daughters whose own children will be interested in farming? And that presupposes the land will be fit for a return to its current use but there is no guarantee of that. The risk must surely be the land is then further developed and the agricultural land we have now is permanently lost.

It would be far better to look at the thousands of new houses being built, existing commercial and industrial properties that could easily be fitted with panels and of course encouraging retro-fitting where possible in existing residential housing stock. Effectively, if every building had its own solar panels, each would be contributing substantially to its own demands and significantly reducing the need for developments of this nature.

- The wider scale of this and other developments: there are a number of developments currently being proposed for this area. Incrementally, combining solar farms and battery storage, they would blight the local countryside and bring untold damage to our wildlife. The local infrastructure is also not capable of supporting the volumes of heavy traffic this would bring. The main through route (which is also the route proposed for two other developments at Green's Farm and Crab's Green) would be from the A120 at Little Hadham through to Stocking Pelham. Aside from generally having a number of pinch points, it is already in particular disrepair at the point between Clay Chimneys and the Wash

with evidence of the road subsiding. There is also the risk of traffic coming through Furneux Pelhams where again the roads are narrow with the stretch from the village centre (at the Brewery Tap) down to the Wash (Lower East End) already heavily pot-holed.

There is much more that can be added to the above and indeed other arguments as to why this development should not go ahead however I have focused on the ones above as I think they are the most important both in terms of local impact of the development and the flawed basis on which it is put forward.

Yours sincerely,

Brian Aitken

