

From: Kemp, Frances [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 September 2022 22:53
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: [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.

My name is Frances Kemp
[REDACTED]

As a person that has always lived in the countryside, was born and brought up in Manuden and owned my house in Berden for over 20 years I am devastated that such a proposal is being considered. I have many reasons for objecting – my main ones are as follows:

The solar farm is inappropriate development in the countryside

- The development proposed by Statera can only be described as industrial.
- In addition to large numbers of solar PV panels (the exact quantity is not specified) the development will include containerised inverters and a substation.
- I do not understand how a massive solar farm which is an industrial development can possibly enhance the natural environment.
- The development is not compatible with Uttlesford's policy S7 which says that the countryside will be protected for its own sake.

The size of the development simply too big!

- Uttlesford's Policy ENV15 says that small scale renewable energy development schemes to meet local needs will be supported providing it can be demonstrated that they do not adversely affect i) The character of sensitive landscapes; ii) Nature conservation interests; or iii) Residential and recreational amenity
- This is not a "small scale" scheme.
- The area covered by solar panels is even larger than the area which was contemplated at the time of the application to Uttlesford District Council for a Screening Opinion.
- The land identified by Statera as the site for Berden Hall solar Farm extends to 177 acres of productive farm land.
- The visual impact of such a huge solar farm would fundamentally change the character of the area.

The visual impact of this huge development cannot be satisfactorily mitigated

- The land to the South of Ginns Road (between Berden and Stocking Pelham) slopes upwards.
- The majority of the site comprises 3 huge open fields – there are no existing hedgerows and the visual impact will be stark!
- The Planning Inspector must visit the site to understand the full impact that this development will have
- The proposed development cannot be effectively integrated and assimilated into the surrounding landscape.
- The planting around the existing battery plant adjacent to the Substation at Stocking Pelham demonstrates that hedges do not provide adequate screening.
- The RHS says that it will take between 20 and 50 years for hawthorn hedges to achieve their full height – this is more than half of the life of the solar farm

I work in the agricultural sector and my family farm, so I believe that farmland should be used for farming!

- Statera suggest that the majority of the land on the site is Grade 2 or Grade 3a agricultural land which is “best and most versatile” agricultural land.
- This is productive farm land which should be used for farming.
- We currently import more than 40 per cent of our food, and recent threats by countries to ban exports of vaccinations have highlighted the threat that similar bans could be imposed on food if countries are themselves short of supplies in the future.
- It is predicted that we will need to produce 56 per cent more food by 2050 due to increasing populations. We have not increased food production by 56 per cent in the last 30 years, and if we continue to build on farmland we have no hope of achieving it in the next 30 years either.
- New research from the CPRE has found almost 14,500 hectares of the country’s best agricultural land has been permanently lost to development in just 12 years. The research has found that there has been a huge rise in BMV agricultural land set aside for housing and industry between 2010 and 2022, from 60 hectares to more than 6,000 hectares per year.

I am keen walker – I don’t want to walk through a solar farm

- There are multiple local Public Rights of Ways within and immediately adjacent to the site.
- As a local resident I walk along these footpaths everyday which will now be surrounded by solar panels and bordered by fencing. I do not want to walk along a corridor!

Statera have not considered using roof tops

- The Building Research Establishment announced in 2016 there were around half a million acres of rooftops facing in the right direction for solar panels. Why haven’t these been considered?
- It is no longer credible to argue that solar panels on industrial roofs can’t be used because they are too heavy
- Solar panels thinner than a pencil have now been invented and which will revolutionise renewable energy.

I strongly urge you to turn down this application as entirely unsuitable.

Regards

Frances Kemp