

The Planning Inspectorate, Major Casework Team,
Room 3J Kite Wing, Temple Quay House,
2 The Square, Bristol, BS1 6PN

Dear Sir or Madam

Consultation 62A/22/0006 – Proposed development of a ground mounted solar farm with a generating capacity of up to 49.99MW, together with associated infrastructure and landscaping in Berden, Essex

Uttlesford Reference – UTT/22/2046/PINS

I have written to you previously (18/8/22) on this subject and I would like you to consider this second letter as an addendum to the first; which is also attached to this covering email.

Only yesterday evening I returned from a journey that took me by rail through France, Belgium, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria and Hungary; but my purpose in writing is not to tell you about a holiday.

Travelling by train across Europe allows one to see hundreds of thousands of acres of open farm land, countless villages, industrial estates, farm buildings, towns and a reasonable number of cities. But what was so obviously missing from the rural elements of the journey were vast acreages of solar panels. There is no doubting their presence (in great quantity) on housing, blocks of flats, farm buildings, railway stations, commercial estates, south facing railway embankments, near motorways and a few remote odd parcels of land that were probably far too small to be of much agricultural use.

There were wind turbines, a much more effective way of harvesting renewable energy, aplenty on both low land and hills but these of course probably do not offer the landowner the financial return that vast acreages of farm land do in the U.K. as the base footprint, surrounded by crops, is much smaller than is required for many thousands of solar panels.

In my original letter I said that developments, such as that proposed for Berden, and several other places both locally and throughout the U.K., were not in the interest of the environment but had more to do with the financial interests of developers and landowners and I am now even more convinced of this. Good quality farmland should be used for farming only to help ensure our national sustainability at a time of rising shipping costs, a major disrupting European war and environmental problems threatening food production in several areas of the globe.

If already wealthy landowners dabbling in solar farm proposals, at the behest of what are basically investment companies, were seriously interested in doing their bit to protect the environment they would have already found ways of installing panels on the roofing of their farm buildings and done their best to look for suitable, away from community, corners for wind turbines.

The United Kingdom has got it wrong through a lack of intelligent renewable energy leadership that has allowed developers to run away with their ill-founded aspirations and I urgently request that the Planning Inspectorate reject consultation 62A/22/0006.

Yours Faithfully

John Burton



2ND September 2022

C.C.

Uttlesford Planning

Janice Laughlin, Uttlesford District Councillor

Kemi Badenoch, Member of Parliament for Saffron Walden