

From: Katherine Armstrong [REDACTED] >

Sent: 28 August 2022 19:04

[REDACTED]

Subject: Berden Hall Solar Farm - Proposed solar development 62A/22/0006

[REDACTED]

August 28th 2022

Dear Mr McHale,

S62A/22/0006 Development of a solar farm, Berden Hall Farm, Dewes Green Lane, Berden

Please note that I am copying this email to the Planning Inspectorate as they are considering the application for the above proposed solar farm. I am also copying in Uttlesford DC Planning Department and other interested parties.

I am writing with reference to your recommendation in the document below: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1100077/Hertfordshire County Council - Highways Redacted.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1100077/Hertfordshire_County_Council_-_Highways_Redacted.pdf) that if the above proposed development is approved by PINS, construction and maintenance vehicles should travel to and from the site not through Stocking Pelham and Ginns Road as the developers are indicating but from the east (e.g., from the direction of Stansted) through the village of Berden.

As you rightly emphasise in your report, the roads from Albury through Stocking Pelham to Berden are completely unsuitable for what the applicants, Statera, estimate will be c. 20 HGVs per day during the main construction phase.

As you point out, these are narrow, twisting, country lanes, often single-track, with crumbling verges and in many places the surfaces are extremely poor. The HGVs will pass a preschool where there are parking problems four times a day. There is currently very light traffic on this route, partly because this is a remote and peaceful location, partly because the roads are simply difficult to drive, being (to repeat your assessment) narrow, twisting and with numerous sharp bends.

I would like to add to your report the fact that the roads through Berden are equally unsuitable for construction vehicles.

1. HGVs entering Berden via Chapel Hill (past the village hall) would have to navigate a pinch point at Forge Cottage next to the tiny village green. This is already an accident spot such that residents have recently instituted the use of community speed checks here as traffic tends to descend from Ginns Road above the speed limit of 30 mph and risks colliding with traffic turning right onto the extremely narrow foot of Chapel Hill from The Street. This road

too is narrow for some distance. Please find attached to this email two photographs of the pinch point at the foot of Chapel Hill.

2. Alternatively, the lane through the hamlet of Little London is a single-track road with only two unmetalled passing places between Little London and Berden. I measured it in several places this weekend and found it to be c. 10 feet 6 inches wide for most of its length (approx. 1 mile between Berden and the Manuden road), though only 9 feet 6 inches in some places. There are many twists, several pinch points where residential buildings abut the road, no paving anywhere, and two blind summits.

Due to its rural location and probably the difficulty of passing other vehicles, there is exceptionally light traffic on this road, which meets The Street at the southernmost edge of Berden via a relatively steep sharp bend.

Please find attached an iCloud link to a series of photos taken today showing the narrowness of the road through Little London.

<https://www.icloud.com/photos/#012Ilv38eYvrFhTqUgDSwdFYA>

It may also be worth pointing out that Statera have made their application on the basis that traffic to and from the site would use the Stocking Pelham route. I am concerned that the route via Little London would bring them directly to a field entrance at the Berden end of a very narrow No Through Road, Brick House End. The field in question includes part of the proposal site.

While the current application does not show plans to allow access to the site from this field entrance (opposite Easingwell Pond), it concerns me that in future this would be a possible additional entry point for vehicles. This would impact very adversely on me and other residents in this currently quiet and little disturbed part of Berden.

More significantly, which ever way construction traffic came through Berden it would impact very adversely on many, perhaps, most residents, since The Street is the main thoroughfare and many properties front it and the majority lie close to the road. In your report you suggest that this traffic would come either through the village of Manuden or through Rickling.

The Manuden route is a narrow, twisting road with sharp bends and a primary school with associated parking problems and exactly the same applies to the Rickling route which would also involve a long single track route to Berden. Along this road the passing places are in extremely poor repair and in some cases frankly dangerous, particularly in wet weather when the depth of the pot holes is not obvious to drivers.

I have no doubt that the communities in these villages would be horrified if they knew of these suggested routes to the construction site in Berden, and those of us in Berden opposing the solar farm development (which includes the vast majority of the residents here) have informed them of this via social media though they have scant chance to object before September 5th when objections must be made to PINS.

I would be grateful if you could append the above information to the report you submit to PINS in relation to the proposed development, since it contains local knowledge and is based on a real time

survey of the roads rather than on images from, e.g., Google Earth, which do not always faithfully represent conditions on the ground.

In summary, there is simply no suitable, safe route to the proposed construction site, either from Hertfordshire or from Essex.

Yours sincerely,

Katherine Armstrong