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Sent: 23 August 2022 20:39
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Berden Hall Farm (Pelham Solar)

Objection to Berden Hall Solar Farm Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/22/0006 and UTT/22/2046/PINS (Uttlesford)

As a frequent visitor to the area, I am writing to object to the application to install a solar installation on 177 acres of farmland outside the village of Berden near the town of Newport, Essex.

There are several compelling reasons to oppose this proposed development, in my view. The most important are:

- I do not believe the use of high-quality farmland for solar energy is necessary or sustainable. Our need to feed our growing population has never been greater, and the war in Ukraine has underlined the danger to our national food security of relying on imported food. Solar energy is inefficient, and any carbon savings from producing energy in this way will be cancelled out by the need to import food to compensate for the loss of highly productive arable land.
- The solar technology proposed for this development is very likely to be superseded within a few years, and if the development goes ahead and the technology becomes obsolete it will leave behind a large area infested with pernicious weeds, as well as carpeted in concrete pads – a brownfield site where once the land was used for growing wheat, barley and beans.
- As mentioned, solar energy is vastly less efficient than, for example, offshore wind energy, and in any case, Uttlesford already produces far more solar energy than any other rural district in Essex.
- National Planning policy states that planning decisions should protect and enhance valued landscapes. There are listed buildings and a scheduled monument visible from the proposed site, which is a peaceful and historic landscape of open views and ancient hedgerows. I value the countryside around Newport for walking and cycling, as do my family, friends and neighbours. If large areas of it are developed for solar farms we will lose an important public amenity.
- Investing in renewable energy is obviously vital in the context of climate change, but solar panels should be installed on all new housing, on commercial roofs and retro-fitted to existing housing stock, as well as being placed along motorways and on brownfield sites. Using greenfield land should be a very last resort.

Avril Berrow