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**Sent:** 29 August 2022 22:59  
**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>;  
[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Application number : S62A/22/0006 (and UTT/22/2046/PINS). Berden Hall Farm

[REDACTED]

29th August 2022

FAO :

THE PLANNING INSPECTORATE AND  
Laurence Ackrill (Uttlesford District Council)

**Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/22/0006 Berden Hall Farm, Ginns Road, Berden and UTT/22/2046/PINS | Consultation on S62A/22/0006 - Development of a ground mounted solar farm with a generation capacity of up to 49.99MW, together with associated infrastructure and landscaping. | Land At Berden Hall Farm Dewes Green Road Berden**

I would like to object in the strongest possible terms to the proposal by Statera to construct a solar farm on 177 acres of land at Berden Hall Farm, between Berden and Stocking Pelham.

Here are three examples of how this proposal contravenes policies of Uttlesford District Council's Local Plan, the examples alone justify a resounding rejection of the planning application :

**1. Policy ENV3 - Open Space and Trees sates :**

*"The loss of traditional open spaces, other visually important spaces, groups of trees and fine individual tree specimens through development proposals will not be permitted unless the need for the development outweighs their amenity value."*

This proposal would result in the loss of 177 acres of countryside which provides a vital landscape and visual amenity to several local communities, particularly Berden and Stocking Pelham. The Uttlesord Landscape Character Assessment states that the area is of "moderate to high" sensitivity to change. Positive attributes include (i) small patches of woodland; (ii) the open nature of the skyline; (iii) the overall sense of tranquillity; and (vi) a sense of historic integrity and continuity.

How can stripping of topsoil and imposition of thousands of solar panels, 2.5m high deer fencing, CCTV cameras with infrared sensors and the installation of inverters the size of shipping containers be seen

as outweighing the amenity value of this unique landscape. In reality, this development would bring about huge and potentially irreversible “change”.

Policy ENV3 is clearly being breached by the developers so the application should therefore be refused.

**2. Policy ENV5 - Protection of Agricultural Land states :**

*“Development of the best and most versatile agricultural land will only be permitted where opportunities have been assessed for accommodating development on previously developed sites or within existing development limits.*

*Where development of agricultural land is required, developers should seek to use areas of poorer quality except where other sustainability considerations suggest otherwise”*

According to the Agricultural Land Classification report, 45.8ha (72%) of the site is Grades 2 & 3a and 17.7ha (28%) is Grade 3b. Therefore, most of the land within this planning application is classified as Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land. The land is therefore deemed highly inappropriate for an industrial development of this type.

Statera have actually put in writing in the FAQ after their presentation to the local community in March 2022 the following statement :

Question : “What other locations did you consider?

Answer : None. Statera Energy has selected this site on its merits alone and believes it is a good site to promote.”

I need say no more. The Developers have confessed that they have not assessed other opportunities for this application so Policy ENV5 is clearly being breached.

**3. Policy ENV2- Development affecting Listed Buildings states :**

*“Development affecting a listed building should be in keeping with its scale, character and surroundings.”*

I have already described how the 177 acre industrial solar development will, by default, utterly and significantly change the landscape character of the area between Berden and Stocking Pelham . This will of course include the setting of several listed buildings such as St Nicholas Church (Grade I) , Berden Hall (Grade 2 \*), The Granary (Grade 2) and The Crump (a Scheduled Monument). Several of these structures are of the highest designation and of national significance and the proposals will result in a detrimental impact on the significance of these unique structures.

Policy ENV2 is yet another policy clearly being breached by the development.

This letter highlights how Uttlesford District Council Local Plan Policies on Open Spaces, Agricultural Land and Listed Buildings are clearly being breached and therefore the planning application should be refused on these grounds alone.

Kind regards

Sara Yarrow