

**From:** Kirsty [REDACTED] >  
**Sent:** 30 August 2022 17:59  
**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fwd: Agenda item 6: Consultation on S62A/22/0006 Objection to Berden Hall Solar Farm

Objection to S62A/22/0006 Berden Hall Farm, Ginns Road

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to object to the application to construct a solar factory comprising ground mounted solar arrays together with (among other things) battery storage inverter cabins, a substation, fencing and CCTV cameras on land near Berden Hall Farm, Berden.

My name is Kirsty Gunn [REDACTED]

I have many reasons for objecting to this proposal, but I will mention only a few of them below.

1. Building a solar farm on grade 2/3 Prime agricultural land is inappropriate.

We are aware of the need to reduce our carbon footprint to tackle climate change, however, building a solar farm in the proposed position will not only destroy beautiful, fertile agricultural land, but will also reduce the amount of food produced, leading to us presumably needing to import more food. It appears to me that importing more food from abroad will increase, not decrease our carbon footprint, thus negating any benefit from the proposed development. Also, taking into account the current situation with Russia and Ukraine, food security is becoming more important than ever and we should therefore surely be increasing the amount of farmland available, rather than reducing it. This is entirely leaving aside the catastrophic effect this industrial development would have on the surrounding areas and wildlife. I have no faith that any measures taken can possibly “enhance the environment” or make up for the amount of wire fences, CCTV and other damaging and unsightly additions to what has hitherto been an area of natural beauty. The whole proposal goes against the government’s stated aim that all such developments should be “in-keeping” with the surrounding area.

I am a keen runner and often use the footpaths in this area for recreation and exercise. Running through a field of solar panels will destroy my enjoyment and have a very negative effect on my quality of life and mental and physical wellbeing.

2. The local roads are unsuitable for the kind of vehicles which will be used to deliver materials required for the site.

Our local roads are entirely unsuited to HGVs and other construction traffic. The condition of the roads will be negatively affected by such traffic and is already in a less than good condition in some areas. The construction traffic will pass along

roads entirely unsuitable for large vehicles and make them increasingly more dangerous for residents and the surrounding wildlife.

3. No other sites have been investigated or considered before choosing this location.

Government policy states that brownfield sites should be considered before applying to build industrial developments on agricultural land. The meeting held for Berden and Pelham residents recently made us aware that **NO OTHER SITES** had been considered or explored for this development. This is totally unacceptable. The company must be refused planning application until they have explored alternative brownfield site locations of which there must be plenty.

4. The rural community will be placed in danger by this development.

The lithium battery sites constructed as a necessary companion to the solar panels have a poor safety record. The local Fire Service says that, should the battery catch fire, there is both insufficient water pressure, and no other available source of water in the area to effectively extinguish it. The only alternative would be to evacuate the residents and wait until it burnt itself out. The noxious gases would be a danger to both human and local wildlife and would place residents in a dangerous situation. This is wholly unacceptable from an environmental health and safety point of view.

5. There are no benefits to local residents.

The residents (many of whom have chosen to live in this area specifically because of the range and beauty of the footpaths) will lose the paths where they currently walk their dogs, run and walk. The views will be completely spoiled, whatever measures are put in place to “screen” the affected areas. If we are to judge these measures based on the “wildlife reserve” near the Stocking Pelham Power Station and screening for the recently constructed lithium battery complex, these measures also will be inadequate and not worthy of being called screening. The construction traffic and process will unavoidably create additional noise and dirt in this otherwise very quiet and peaceful area.

The majority of residents to whom I have spoken since the construction of this solar development was proposed are entirely opposed to it. There are far more suitable sites available, for instance around Stansted airport, on which the solar farm could be constructed if it is absolutely necessary.

The devastation caused by the extraction of the necessary materials to build the panels and the ethical problems caused by their manufacture in China, where they continue to use coal fired power stations leads me to ask the question of how “green” these solar “farms” actually are. This, plus the likelihood that when the solar panels have reached the end of their useful life they will be crushed and thrown into landfill surely makes the entire project untenable if your aim is to become greener and to “save the planet”. The entire net zero policy of this government is all but pointless when you take into account that the UK produces less than 1% of the worlds’ carbon emissions. The strain the green levy is putting on ordinary household’s income and finances is unacceptable and should be scrapped forthwith.

For all these reasons, and many others, I must therefore register my very strong objection to every aspect of this proposal.

Yours sincerely,

Kirsty Gunn