

From: Margaret Whitfield [REDACTED]
Sent: 15 February 2023 11:52
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Planning Inspectorate ref 62A/22/0006 Berden Hall Solar Farm CM23 1AY

Dear Sirs

I am writing to express our serious concerns regarding the proposed Solar Farm at Berden, as above, and the harmful effect on wildlife, in particular Skylarks but also other farmland birds such as yellowhammers and brown hares, that this development would cause. Skylarks are red listed birds (Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (2021)) and are protected under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. The RSPB state a measured decline between 1970 and 2001 of 54% in these iconically beautiful resident birds. Skylarks like to nest in open spaces away from perching predators. They will not nest in field margins where their existence becomes under threat. Therefore the mitigation plan suggested by the developer will be wholly inadequate and should this unfortunate development go ahead Skylarks will cease to exist in this location where they have been officially recorded as breeding birds for over thirty years.

In this area of the south east of England there has been a massive decline in all wildlife species over recent decades which is heartbreakingly evident now. Where there used to be dozens or hundreds of a species there is now only one or two or even none. This is due to flora and fauna being squeezed out by overdevelopment in the form of roads, housing estates and business development. During covid the importance to human health of access to open spaces which gave homes to all wildlife became even more essential to the wellbeing of our citizens. This dreadful proposal must not be allowed to go ahead.

Yours faithfully

David and Margaret Whitfield
Members of RSPB, Essex Wildlife Trust, Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust, The Woodland Trust