

**From:** Sheila Winterburn [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 15 February 2023 22:36  
**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Planning Inspectorate Ref.: 62A/22/0006 Berden Hall Solar Farm, Ginns Road, Berden

I wish to object to the proposed solar development on the specific grounds that the skylark mitigation plan is grossly inadequate.

Whilst I acknowledge the need for solar power, I am concerned that there seems to be a plethora of recent planning applications for solar farms in this vicinity, which individually and collectively will have a very significant impact on local amenity, roads, and environment. It would also be unfortunate to lose such a vast area of good quality agricultural land, capable of producing food and supporting wildlife.

As an Albury resident, Life Fellow of the RSPB, and member of the Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, I am aware that skylarks have been seen at the proposed site for many years, and that skylarks are in decline. As you are aware from other representations you will have received objecting to this application, Skylarks are classified as red list under the Birds of Conservation Concern 4 (2021) and are included in Section 41 of the Species of Principal Importance in England under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006.

The Environmental Survey and Impact Assessment appear to be inadequate, in that they do not appear to have gleaned sufficient knowledge of the numbers of skylark present, and the mitigation measures proposed fall well below those recommended by experts such as the RSPB, the Environment Agency, and the BTO. I am aware from my membership of the local RSPB group that others have already brought these recommendations to your attention, so please refer to those for the details. A key point is that at the recommended 200 skylark plots per square kilometre this equates to 128 plots- far more than the proposal.

At this time of climate crisis, it is imperative that as well as seeking ways to produce renewable energy, we ensure it is done truly sustainably, without further damaging the environment and biodiversity. It is a delight to hear skylarks in our local countryside, and it would be tragic to allow this vulnerable species to be deleteriously affected by this proposal.

I object to the proposal, but at the very least, please ensure that a proper survey and assessment is carried out, and that proper regard is had to the recommendations of experts such as the RSPB, and others without a vested interest in the development, so that if the development goes ahead, it is with much greater protection and provision for wildlife including skylarks, and for visual amenity.

Kind regards,  
Sheila Winterburn

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