

From: Rosie Somers [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 March 2023 21:16
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to Pelham Spring Solar Farm, Ref S62A/2022/0011

Dear Sir/Madam,

OBJECTION TO PELHAM SPRING SOLAR FARM
Application no S62A/2022/0011: Land East of Pelham Substation, Maggots End, Manuden

I am writing to object to the application made by Low Carbon to construct a solar "farm" on land between Maggots End Road, Manuden, CM23 1BJ and Brick House End, Berden for a number of reasons, many of which I gave, which are still valid, when I objected to their first application:

- * the development is still too big
- * the site is still not flat
- * whether routes 1,2 or 3 are used, the local roads are unsuitable for construction vehicles
- * negative impact on wildlife
- * it is an inappropriate development in the wrong place
- * there will be harm to heritage assets adjacent to the site
- * loss of arable farmland, mostly BMV land at that
- * negative visual impact on the rural character and appearance of the area

I welcomed and applauded Uttlesford Council's rejection of the first set of plans back in January 2022 as many of my concerns above were cited in their decision notice.

I find it disappointing that Historic England were not consulted prior to this submission, especially as the proximity to heritage assets were grounds 2 & 3 in the refusal of the first application. The small loss of 2 sections of panels will have little effect on the substantial impact on the heritage assets. Paragraph 13 of the PPG on renewable and low carbon energy is very clear in the guidance it provides, and the impact of a solar farm within the setting of a heritage needs to be considered as it may cause substantial harm to the significance of the heritage asset. Historic England do not consider that this application meets the requirements of the NPPF, particularly paragraphs 189, 194 and 195.

Unfortunately the planned mitigation screening of the existing substation and BESS have never been enforced by the local councils, despite numerous communications from the local parish councils and villagers. So I do NOT accept the argument from the Landscape Officer that because of the existing electrical infrastructure, this weighs in favour of the development. Or are we being told that any mitigation planting will yet again not be enforced?? Yet another reason that the visual impact will be huge.

I also have concern about the spread out location of the batteries across the site as there is not a circular road around the periphery of the site or two access roads as recommended by Dr Paul Christensen, the government's adviser on BESS. In the event of a battery fire, ready access for fire engines with huge amounts of water is key to controlling thermal runaway. We know from Affinity Water that we only have around 50% of the required water flow to try and control such battery fires..1,900L per minute for 2 hours, as recommended by Allianz. Another flagrant disregard for the safety of the local community and any firefighters called to deal with any lithium battery fire.

There is also concern about the potential cumulative impact of another solar farm proposed to the north-west (Application no S62A/22/0006). This is in addition to 2 further batteries in planning with East Herts, also within the locale. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF requires that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment including by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

Proximity to a substation is NOT a compelling reason for the siting of a solar farm..it is just a more profitable location for the developer. Don't get me wrong, I am not against renewable energy - we recently replaced our oil boiler with an ASHP and have retrofitted solar panels on our roof. What I am against is the inappropriate siting of these projects in open rural areas, taking BMV farmland out of food production, using outdated technology (we know that solar panel technology is developing very rapidly with new solar films being now available for retrofitting on warehouse rooves and the like) which is only efficient 11% of the time.

I therefore urge you to refuse this inappropriate development. I welcome the opportunity to speak at any hearing.

Yours faithfully,

Rosie Somers,
[REDACTED]