



Planning Inspectorate

March 17th 2023

Dear Sirs,

Re Consultation S62A/2022/0011 regarding application UTT/22/2624/PINS

I write to submit my strong objection to this application. I was a Manuden resident for 20 years.

Principally my objection relates to the misuse of agricultural land – the site is classified as a mix of Grade 2,3a and 3b quality – over 81 pct of the land is ‘best and most versatile land’. Paragraph 174b of the National Planning Policy Framework states that ‘policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystems services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland. ‘ The Government’s agricultural land quality records confirm the site as Grade 2 ‘Very Good’ and as such it continues to be farmed for arable crops.

Annex 2 defines the ‘best and most versatile land’ as land graded 1,2 and 3a by Agricultural Land Classification. Local policy ENV5 states the where agricultural land is required, developers should seek to use areas of poorer quality except where other sustainable considerations suggest otherwise.

The Planning Guidance on Renewables and Low Carbon Energy refers to a speech made by Greg Barker – Minister for Energy and Climate change at the time – to the solar PV industry and the Large Scale Solar Conference. In that speech Mr Barker made the comments : ‘ not at any cost,,,,not in any place.....not if it rides roughshod over the views of local communities. As we take solar to the next level, we must be thoughtful, sensitive to public opinion and mindful of the wide environmental and visual impacts.’

In addition, the Government now considering updating the NPPF to propose more onshore wind energy production in order to protect the environment and tackle climate change.

The scale of the development is contra to Uttlesford’s policy of ‘small scale renewable energy which does not effect sensitive landscapes, nature conservation and residential and recreational amenities’. The application clearly affects all of these. There are many footpaths and bridle paths across this land – as a previous resident of Manuden I have frequently walked these paths as do many of the local residents and ramblers and this would constitute a serious loss of amenity.

With regard to the construction traffic, any traffic at all – even returning traffic – passing through Manuden will have a detrimental effect on properties in the village, likewise Berden, Maggots' end and other properties en route. Even if an alternative route is proposed, experience tells us that this will not be adhered to and not policed. As a former Parish Council chairman, I know that Manuden has experienced this situation in the past. Roads are very narrow in places – 4 metres wide – which allows no room for construction vehicles to pass cars, cyclists or even pedestrians.

This application is not materially different from the previous rejected application UTT/21/3356/FUL. As such, I would urge you to the same conclusion here.

Finally, there are a number of other applications which should be considered in order to provide a view of the total potential effects of the current and proposed schemes in and around the area – something which the applicant chooses not to include :

UTT/16/2316/FUL and UTT/17/2075/FUL – Statera scheme adjacent to Pelham substation - as built

3/21/0969/FUL – nearby Green's Farm – current application made to East Herts

3/21/0806/FUL – nearby Crabbs Green – also adjacent to Pelham substation – current application

3/21/2601/FUL – Farnham – permission granted

S62A/22/0006 – Berden Hall – current application

3/22/0806/FUL – Pelham again – current application

Thank you

Yours Faithfully

Julie Kershaw