

From: Jon Slade [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 January 2024 19:59
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: In relation to land at Berden Hall Farm Dewes Green Road Berden, reference number S62A/22/0006

[REDACTED]
Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing in relation to a planning application for land at Berden Hall Farm, Dewes End, Green Road, Berden. The reference number is S62A/22/0006.

I strongly object to the proposed development, and the residents of Berden and the surrounding area have lived with the threat of this monstrous development for too long. There are a myriad of reasons that this application should be rejected:

1. The proposed development would remove 177 acres of food production farmland for at least 40 years, at a time when food security is at a premium. Almost three quarters of the proposal site is Best and Most Versatile land. The National Planning Policy Framework changed in December 2023 to give greater importance to this type of land.
2. This area is in beautiful open countryside with no equivalent development to date. The proposal is for a huge industrial development that would be entirely alien to the environment. The negative effects on landscape would be immense, and would impact several very well-used footpaths.
3. The development would cause significant harm to a scheduled ancient monument (The Crump ringwork), St Nicholas Church, a Grade 1 listed building, and Berden Hall, a Grade II* listed building.
4. Consistency in planning decisions is clearly vital, and Planning Inspectorate refused to grant permission for the nearby Pelham Spring Solar Farm (PSSF), which is a highly material consideration. Many of the reasons for the rejection are apposite - the planning inspector (Mr. Callum Parker) stated that the proposal for the PSSF would erode the agricultural landscape via industrial infrastructure for four decades, and would fail to preserve the setting of listed buildings and other heritage assets. Clearly these factors are also relevant to the proposal you are considering.
5. The revised proposals are contrary to Policy S7 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (LP) which (broadly) states that planning permission will only be given where a development is needed in a particular location, is appropriate and protects and enhances the landscape character. The proposals are also contrary to para 174 (now 180) of the NPPF for similar reasons.
6. The Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan states that the government seeks large scale ground-mount solar deployment across the UK, looking for development mainly **on brownfield, industrial and low and medium grade agricultural land**. Wherever it references solar energy, the Plan focuses on Rooftop Solar, not Ground-Mounted Solar. There is also increased emphasis in the NPPF on ensuring that renewable energy is located at the point of consumption. Developers can already connect to the grid via the high voltage overhead cable network, so Statera's claim that solar developments need to be in the vicinity of the Pelham Sub Station is therefore erroneous.
7. Recent planning decisions highlight the importance of a proper site selection exercise to identify poorest land. The Applicant, Statera, did not perform such an exercise when

selecting the proposal site for a large-scale industrial-style development on land currently used for food production, which is contrary to ENV5 of the LP. They have therefore failed to produce “compelling evidence” to justify the selection of the Site.

8. In November 2023 the government announced changes to permitted development rights to enable more homeowners and businesses to install solar panels on their roofs without going through the planning system, thereby confirming that government policy is to support the deployment of solar on already developed land rather than greenfield sites.

I am grateful for your consideration of these points, and I hope that you agree that the application should be rejected once and for all.

Yours sincerely,

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Jon Slade