

**From:** Beverley Morris [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 08 January 2024 10:42  
**To:** Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Land at Berden Hall Farm Dewes Green Road Berden, reference number S62A/22/0006.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to express my deep concern that this proposal is being re-determined. This brings further distress to the people of Berden and surrounding areas and does little address truly sustainable energy solutions that meet the needs of UK citizens rather than corporate interests.

At a time of global food insecurity, war in Europe and compromised supply chains, the proposed development would take 177 acres of farmland out of food production for at least 40 years - 72% of the proposal Site is Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land. This is catastrophic for the short and long-term independence of the UK and serves to further fragment our already fragile farming industry. It also goes against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which recently changed (December 2023) to give greater importance to Best and Most Versatile land in order to safeguard domestic food production and protect national food security.

Linked to this, 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. Clearly, the Berden Hall Solar Farm proposal does not meet any of these preferences.

Also, in the NPPF there is a focus on ensuring that renewable energy is located at the point of consumption. Developers can already connect to the grid through the high voltage overhead cable network. This means that Statera's claim that solar developments need to be in the vicinity of the Pelham Sub Station is inaccurate.

A proposal of the scale of the Berden Hall Solar Farm is of industrial proportions, wholly unsuited to open countryside in the greenbelt. This would be setting a terrible precedent for future developments that would blight the landscape, destroy public rights of way and the open visual nature of the area and harm local ancient monuments and listed buildings.

The refusal by the Planning Inspectorate to grant permission for Pelham Spring Solar Farm (PSSF), in close proximity to the Berden Hall Solar Farm site, is a critical issue in this redetermination in terms of consistency, clarity and future precedent as many of the factors in that refusal are of equal importance to the Berden Hall Solar Farm proposal. For example, it will erode the agricultural landscape and constitute industrial infrastructure that would be present for around 40 years, which is not temporary. The scheme would also fail to preserve the setting of the listed buildings and other heritage assets, including the Crump scheduled ancient monument.

The performance of the Applicant, Statera, is also in doubt as they have already failed to undertake a proper site selection exercise to identify poorest land, thus failing to provide compelling evidence needed to devastate such precious farmland and countryside.

I would urge you to refuse this application on multiple grounds as the future for our countryside, farmland, heritage, wildlife, energy security, and way of life is threatened by this proposal.

Yours faithfully

Dr Beverley Morris

[Redacted signature block]