

From: John Arnell [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 January 2024 17:20
To: Section 62A Applications <section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk>
Subject: Land at Berden Hall Farm, Dewes Green Road, Berden Ref S62A/22/0006

I wish to object to this application as I believe it is an inappropriate use of 177 acres of farmland, 72% of which is classed as Best and Most Versatile farmland (BMV).

About 54% of food on plates is produced in the UK, including the majority of grains, meat, dairy, and eggs. (Office of Statistics, UK Food Security Report, updated 5th October 2023).

This does mean we rely on the rest of the world supplying 46% of our requirements. The Government has stated its commitment to produce 60% of the food we eat in the UK which hopefully will make us less vulnerable to the impact of climate change on global food production.

This issue was addressed at a recent conference by The Secretary of State for the Environment

From: -
[Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs](#) and [The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP](#)

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The biggest upgrade to the UK's farming schemes since leaving the European Union has been set out by the Environment Secretary Steve Barclay at the Oxford Farming Conference today (4 January 2024).

The updates include funding uplifts, streamlined application processes, enhanced environmental incentives and support for the roll out of new technology. These will provide further support for British farmers, strengthening supply chains and helping deliver the Government's commitment to continue to produce at least 60% of the food we eat in the UK.

Under the UK's agricultural transition, new farming schemes are paying farmers to take actions that boost sustainable food production while delivering positive outcomes for the environment. The schemes are designed to work for all farm types and sizes, with thousands of farmers across England already taking part, and replace the bureaucratic Common Agricultural Policy which saw 50% of funding go to the largest 10% of landowners.

Speaking at the conference, Steve Barclay reiterated the Government's support for British farmers and outlined the [updated offer for 2024](#) which has been designed using farmers' feedback and aims to bring more farmers onboard the schemes and facilitate even greater environmental ambition.

The improvements include:

- *A 10% increase in the average value of agreements in the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Countryside Stewardship driven by increased payment rates, with uplifts automatically applied to existing agreements.*
- *A streamlined single application process for farmers to apply for the Sustainable Farming Incentive and Countryside Stewardship Mid Tier.*
- *Around 50 new actions that farmers can get paid for across all types of farm businesses, including actions for agroforestry and those driving forward agricultural technology such as robotic mechanical weeding.*

- *Enhanced payments for 'creation' and 'maintenance' options to improve the long term incentives for farmers to create habitats and ensure they are rewarded for looking after habitats once they have created them.*
- *Premium payments for actions with the biggest environmental impact or combinations of actions that deliver benefits at scale, such as £765 per hectare for nesting plots for lapwing, and £1,242 per hectare for connecting river and floodplain habitat.*

This proposal would take a substantial piece of productive agricultural land out of production and would work against many of the proposals outlined above.

In their paper Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan, the Government declared their intention to give their priority to rooftop solar energy.

Deploying rooftop solar remains a key priority for the government, and it continues to be one of the most popular and easily deployed renewable energy sources; over a million homes now have solar panels installed. Solar can benefit households and businesses by allowing them to reduce electricity bills significantly and receive payment for excess electricity generated. Warehouses, distribution centres and industrial buildings with high electricity demand can offer significant potential for solar deployment, which can rapidly pay for itself by means of energy bill savings. The government is looking to facilitate and promote extensive deployment of rooftop solar on industrial and commercial property in order to make maximum usage of available surfaces for business as well as environmental and climate benefits.

In this area, rooftop solar take up has been minimal despite very considerable new property development.

Only when rooftop, industrial and brownfield sites have been thoroughly investigated and developed should proposals of this nature be considered.

This proposal is also inappropriate because of its impact on the local environment.

It is a large industrial scale proposition which would impact the landscape, visual amenities, a scheduled ancient monument; The Crump ringwork, the Grade 1 listed church in Berden, St. Nicholas Church and Berden Hall, a Grade 2* listed building.

I would ask that you bear in mind this is a 40 year proposal, not short term. The situations I have outlined above are all destined to become more negative as the years go by and I would strongly urge that this proposal is refused.

Regards,
John Arnell

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