

From Stocking Pelham Parish Council, Stocking Pelham, Hertfordshire

By email to: [section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk](mailto:section62a@planninginspectorate.gov.uk)

8 January 2023

Dear Sir or Madam

**Ref: Section 62A Planning Application: S62A/22/0006 Berden Hall Farm, Ginns Road, Berden – additional documents**

Our submission comprises this letter and two appendices.

We **object** to the development. We urge the Inspector to reject this application based on dangers during construction, negative impacts to the landscape and community for at least 40 years, and lack of research by the Applicant for practical alternatives.

#### Construction Management Traffic Plan

We choose to focus here on the traffic plan for development of the site because of the dangers the hundreds of HGV deliveries required pose to local children and parents attending school and pre-school.

It has been difficult to ascertain which Construction Traffic Management Plan is the current plan. We have found this plan labelled [“Document Ref: Pelham Solar Limited CTMP – Rev 3”](#) (the “Rev 3” version). However, we are unsure if this is the most current plan, and we are also unsure as to whether this is the plan that Essex Highways has commented on. We believe this is the plan that was submitted only at the Inspectorate’s hearing on 9 March, after all formal submissions had closed. Uttlesford Council was asked to comment on the document during the hearing, and the public had no chance to comment on or assess the plan. Residents of Clavering, Manuden and Newport are likely not aware of this plan, as it was not part of the initial planning process and has not been publicised by the Applicant. Rather, it was kept private until the last moment prior to the initial hearing, and even now is difficult to find on any planning site.

Each solar panel is huge and requires HGVs for delivery. This Rev 3 version predicts five hundred HGV deliveries (down from 600 deliveries in the first iteration of the plan) on **16.5-meter articulated lorries**. At peak, the Applicant predicts 34 journeys for these 16.5 meter articulated HGVs per day. The Applicant’s hope is that this can be achieved with 16.5 meter articulated HGV arrivals “typically” starting at 9am (but travelling the route to and from the M11 from around 8am) and last departures by 15.00 (so reaching the M11 by 16.00).

The attached photo labelled [“Berden village hall and play group”](#) shows the Berden pinch point through which these 16.5 meter articulated HGVs will come, at this point of the route in two directions. Events are frequently organised at Berden Village Hall including play group meetings but also coffee mornings and planning meetings. 16.5 meter articulated HGV drivers are not known for their care and attention when driving through villages, and we fear loss of life and serious injury.

The Manuden school is directly on the proposed Rev 3 route. Around 50 children attend this school and there are constant comings and goings by teachers, parents etc. As the attached picture “[road view from Manuden primary school](#)”, illustrates, there is only a narrow space for cars and really not enough room for trucks even out of school hours. Parents and children would be in danger during construction.

Clavering school is also on the Rev 3 route and has similar hours and activity to the Manuden school. Photos of the through route in Clavering are enclosed in Appendix 1, though we were not able to capture the mayhem at school drop off and pick up times. The scene is very similar to Manuden.

The Joyce Frankland Academy in Newport is not directly on the Rev 3 route. However, the school is on a cut-through that cars and other vehicles use when the main route is blocked. The main route has a pinch point at the turning in the middle of Newport (see photo labelled “[road view at Newport pinch point](#)”) and while construction is running, the main route is likely to be blocked by 16.5 meter articulated HGVs for much of the day. This will cause danger and frustration to parents and children during drop off and pick up times.

Sadly, the Construction Traffic Management has been given very limited circulation at it seems only the residents of Berden and Stocking Pelham are aware of the plan. Clavering School, Manuden School and Joyce Frankland Academy appear to be unaware of the plan. If they were aware, we would expect vociferous objections.

There are several other pinch points illustrated by the photos attached. All the 16.5 meter articulated HGV movements are through villages, past schools, playgroups, listed buildings and along narrow country roads and will generally affect local traffic movements, impact on health and safety, air quality and significantly damage the rurality and way of life for many local people.

In previous iterations of the plan, a return route through Stocking Pelham was proposed. This route takes you past a blind bend just before the Stocking Pelham Village Hall, where a pre-school meets every day during term time. There is of course mayhem at school pick up and drop off times at 9.30 and 14.30. There are other points on this route such as the Wash at the far end of Stocking Pelham where there is only room for single file traffic.

Given the impractical nature of these routes for large numbers of 16.5 meter articulated HGV's, we can understand the Applicant's reluctance to put forward a plan for public scrutiny prior to the previous hearing. As noted above, we are unable to determine whether Rev 3 is the latest iteration of the plan. If Rev 3 is the planned route, we urge the Inspector to travel the proposed route to gain a proper perspective on this proposal. Please imagine the appearance of an articulated 16.5m HGV carrying a full load approaching him/her at every point of the route, and in the case of the road to Berden passing each other along the route. We would also suggest that the Inspector consult with the schools along the route.

#### Additional points

As per our previous comments, as well as our short term safety concerns, our long-term concern is around the change this proposal makes to the overall feel of the rural community and its heritage. The solar panels will dominate the views between Berden and Stocking Pelham for 40 years or more, and the previous Inspector's decision was rightly overturned

for ignoring these views particularly the heritage views that are such an important part of our rural setting. The proposed development is part of a creeping industrial intrusion alongside the substation, existing BESS, and proposed nearby BESS developments.

There are far less intrusive places to host a development of this type, with fewer dangers to parents and children during construction and lower adverse effects on multiple communities. The Applicant appears to believe that no alternative sites exist. However, we see no evidence that the Applicant has researched or considered alternatives, perhaps on a smaller scale, on rooftops on new housing developments, and on brownfield sites remote from people. It is certainly not for the residents of Berden and Stocking Pelham to find an alternative, as the Applicant appears to expect.

#### Hearing

Stocking Pelham Parish Council would like the opportunity to speak at any hearing. We reserve the right to respond to any further documents provided by the Applicant including updates to the Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Yours faithfully

*Stocking Pelham Parish Council*

Stocking Pelham Parish Council

**Appendix 1 – Rev 3 proposed route for 16.5 meter articulated lorries**

School pick up at Manuden School on 8 January 2024 at 15.10



Approaching Manuden school at pick up time on 8 January 2024



Road view from Manuden Primary School – 11am or so



Leaving Manuden for Berden



Single track road to/from Manuden



From Berden to Manuden



Blind summit on turn off on from Clavering towards Berden Road:



Berden Road – two way 16.5 meter articulated HGVs expected to pass here



Two-way 16.5 meter articulated HGV traffic also expected along this stretch of road into Berden:





Road view of Berden Village Hall



Berden Village Hall and Play Group on the right



After Berden Village Hall – hope there isn't a 16.5 meter articulated HGV around the corner



Another blind bend in Berden



Approach to Newport pinch point from Clavinging:



Approach to Newport pinch point from Cambridge Road:



Road view at Newport pinch point



Cut-through past Joyce Frankland Academy





After Joyce Frankland Academy



On route in Clavering





**Appendix 2 – Rev 1 proposed route for 16.5 meter articulated lorries through Stocking Pelham**

Road view to Stocking Pelham village hall





Approach to the Wash in Stocking Pelham



Coming from the Wash in Stocking Pelham



The wash



Down to the Wash from Stocking Pelham



Albury – blind corner, single file traffic



