



Delegated Report

Full Planning Application

Planning Application No:	20260044
Location:	Brookvale Depot, Springhead Road, Northfleet, Gravesend
Description:	Installation of Roof Mounted Solar PV system.
Applicant:	Nikki Norris, Carbon3
Site Visit Date:	Desktop assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Location Plan
Drawing no. PV-1 Rev. P01 (Existing and Proposed East Elevations)
Drawing no. PV-2 Rev. P01 (Existing and Proposed South Elevations)
Drawing no. PV-5 Rev. P01 (Existing Roof Plan)
Drawing no. PV-5 Rev. P01 (Proposed Roof Plan)
Drawing no. PV-6 Rev. P01 (Ground Floor Plan)
Construction Details and Project Report

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20180828	Application for determination as to whether prior approval is required for the demolition of ancillary store buildings, former workshop 2 areas of precast concrete open storage bays.	Approval	06.09.2018
20050317	Change of use of part of the ground floor from warehouse to offices incorporating alterations to the southern elevation and installation of part mezzanine floor and 3 new windows on the first floor southern elevation.	Permitted	03.06.2005
20050378	Installation of three new windows in front elevation.	Permitted	24.06.2005
19880886	Change of use of storage area to offices and installation of windows.	Permitted	30.09.1988

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS07 – Economy, Employment and Skills
- CS11 – Transport
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development and Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- TC7 – Other Archaeological Sites
- T1 – Impact of Development on the Highway Network

Paragraph 34 of the NPPF (2024) sets out that policies within adopted local plans should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years and should then be updated as necessary. Such reviews are also a legal requirement as set out in Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) England Regulations 2012.

The Council undertook such a review in September 2019 and found that the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy is in need of a partial review in terms of Policy CS02, due to the increased need for housing since the Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted and the need to ensure that a sufficient land supply exists to meet this need. Whilst saved policies from the Local Plan 1st Review (1994) generally conform with the NPPF (2024), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

- Section 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Section 4 – Decision-making
- Section 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Design for Gravesham – Design Code (2024)
- KCC Solar Policy Position Statement (August 2014)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

Internal Consultee Responses

GBC Environmental Protection

There is no objection to this application or adverse comments to make.

Neighbouring properties

The application has been advertised by individual neighbour letters to 12 properties and on site. The overall consultation period expired on 6 March 2026.

No letters of representation have been received from neighbouring properties.

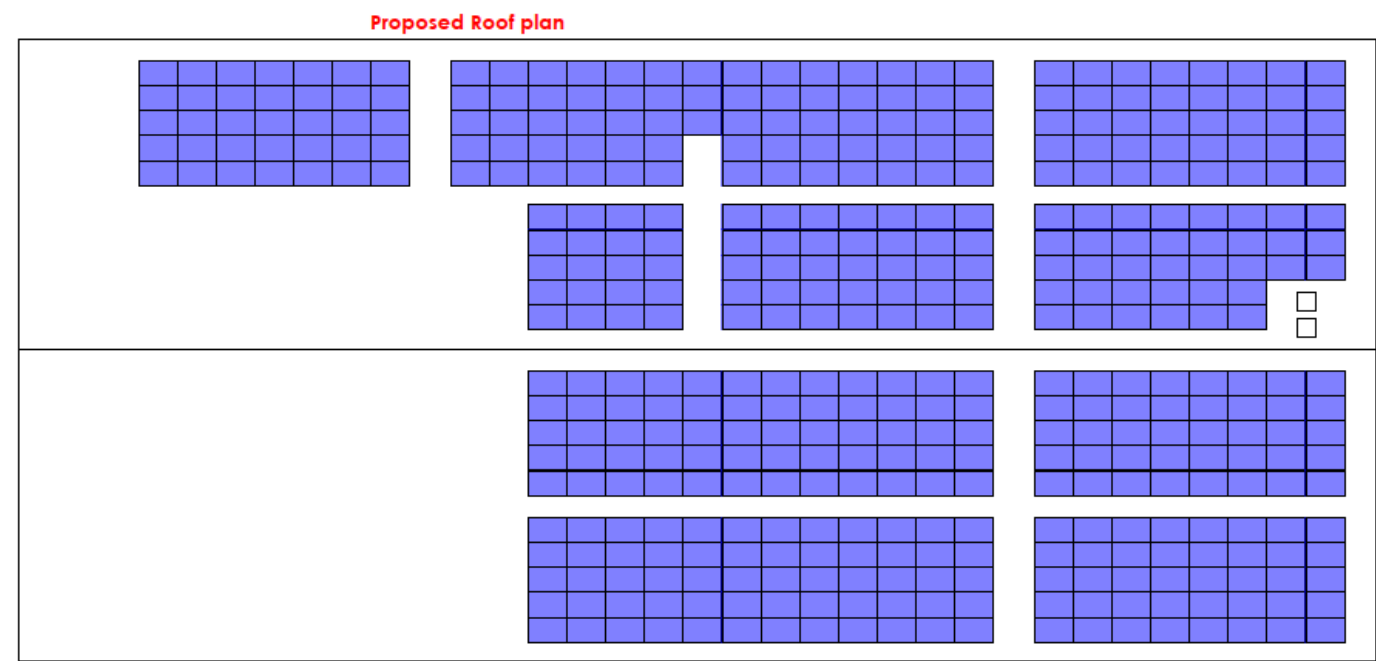
Local Ward Councillors were also consulted but no responses were received.

Officer's Analysis

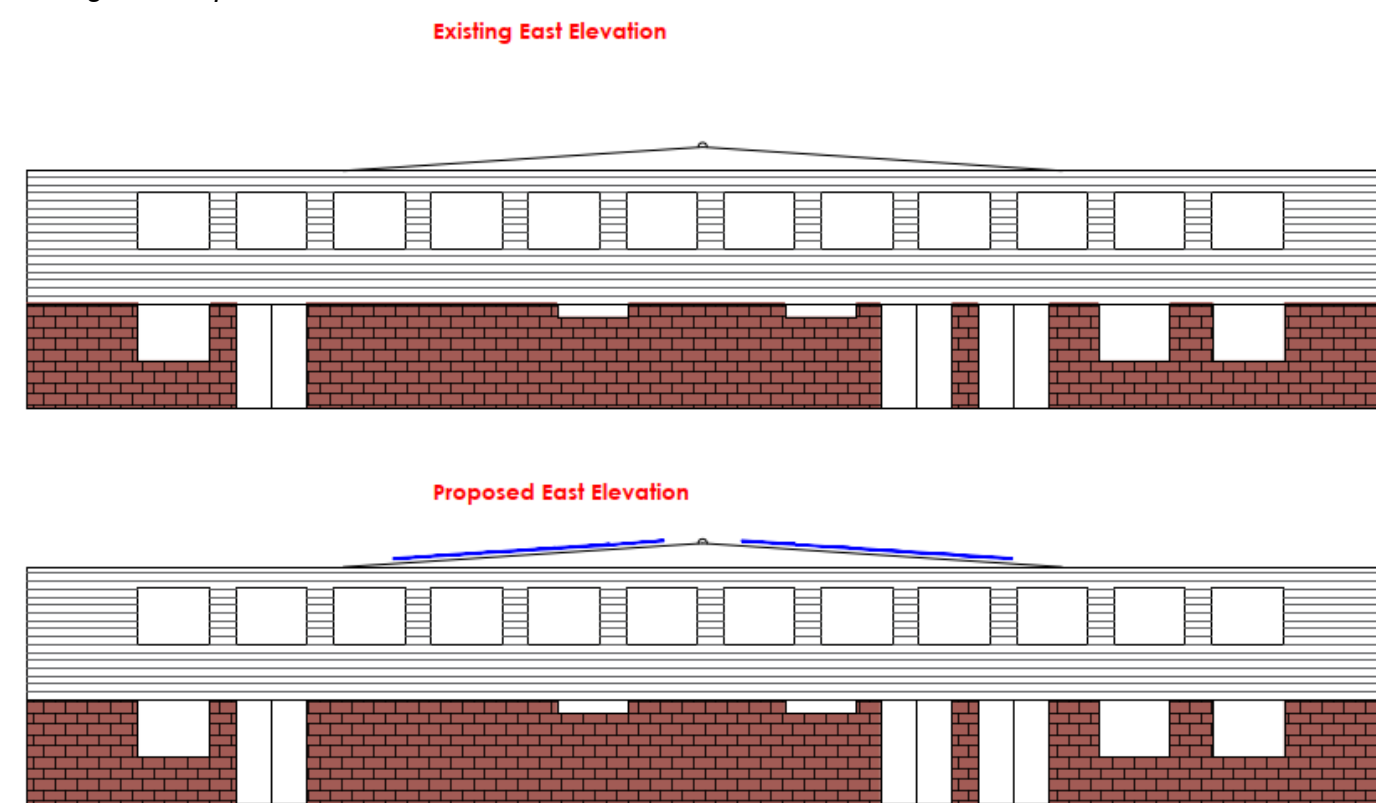
Proposal

This application seeks permission for the installation of a roof mounted solar PV system on the existing metal sheeted roof of the Brookvale Depot building, comprising a total of 440 panels. There are no solar panels on the existing roof.

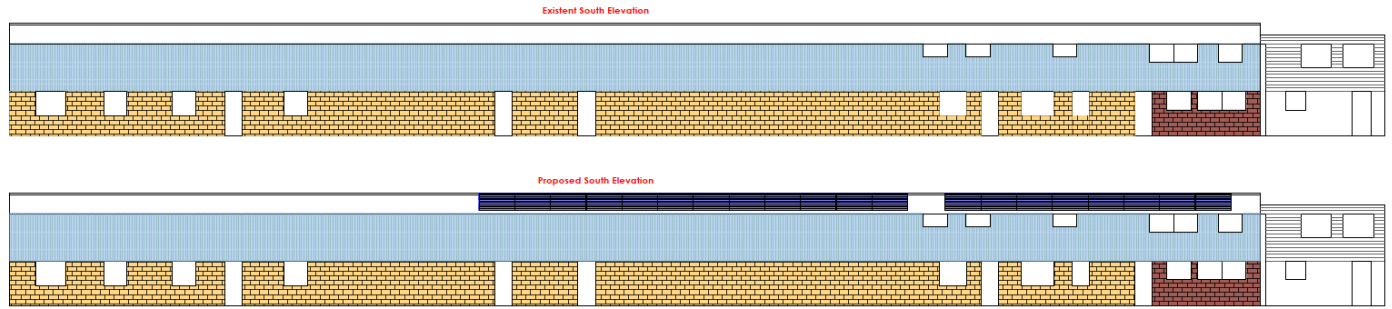
Proposed Roof Plan:



Existing and Proposed East Elevation:



Existing and Proposed South Elevation:



Principle Issues

The proposal site is located within the urban boundary of Northfleet. Policy CS02 of the Core Strategy 2014 prioritises development in the urban area as a sustainable location for development.

The site also lies within an Area of Archaeological Potential and within Zone 1 of a Groundwater Source Protection Zone. The nature of the proposed development, which comprises solar panels on the roof, will have no impact on these site constraints.

As there are no relevant site constraints, the main issues for consideration in the determination of this application are as follows:

- Design and impact on character and appearance
- Residential amenity matters
- Parking and highways issues.

Design, Character and Appearance

Paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024 seeks to ensure that development will add to the quality of an area, be visually attractive, and sympathetic to local character and history. Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 reflects these aims and requires that new development is well-designed and respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

The Brookvale Depot an industrial site, adjoined by the North Kent Police Station to the east, Springhead Enterprise Park to the west and Northfleet Cemetery and an established gypsy/traveller site to the south (Springvale).



The solar panels will be positioned on the roof of the building, which is where such panels would usually be expected to be installed. As the building is large and the roof profile is low, the panels will not be readily visible from a public vantage point but they are also a conventional installation for a roof and are found on other such buildings nearby in Springhead Enterprise Park. The solar panels would not therefore result in any adverse impact on the character and appearance of the area. The proposal is considered acceptable and would comply with the overall aims of Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, and paragraph 135 of the NPPF 2024.

Residential Amenity

The NPPF 2024 states that planning decisions should aim to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future users (paragraph 135f). The impact on amenity is also considered with regard to the criteria within Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, which states that new development should be located, designed and constructed to safeguard the amenity, including privacy, daylight and sunlight, of its occupants, and those of neighbouring properties and land, and avoid adverse environmental impacts from pollution.

Due to the orientation of the building, the closest and most affected residential properties to the application site are the pitches opposite on the gypsy/traveller site in Springvale, which is at a higher land level than the Depot. The houses to the east of the site on Springhead Road would largely see the panels against the backdrop of the roof end-on, and the proposal is not considered to adversely affect these properties in any way.

The roof of the Depot is more visible from Springvale, but due to the distance between the sites with an

access road between them, and the low profile of the roof over the Depot building, the panels will not significantly visually impact these properties. There may be a change in their view, but the proposed solar panels would not have an overbearing or unacceptable impact on the outlook of these properties.

There have been no objections from the Council's Environmental Protection team in relation to any environmental issues with the proposal.

The proposal would comply with Policy CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014 in respect of residential amenity matters.

Parking and Highways

The proposal does not necessitate any changes to existing access and parking areas within the site. There are therefore no concerns in parking and highways terms and the proposal would comply with saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan 1994 and Policy CS11 of the Core Strategy 2014.

Any Other Material Planning Considerations

Climate Change

There is strong national policy support to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, including solar power, to ensure the country has a secure energy supply, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Paragraph 168 of the NPPF 2024 states that when determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments, local planning authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and should give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal's contribution to a net zero future.

Policy CS18 of the Core Strategy 2014 also seeks to reduce the overall carbon footprint of the Borough and supports stand-alone renewable energy development where it is compatible with national and local planning policies.

KCC produced a Solar Policy Position Statement in 2014 in relation to large-scale solar arrays. In summary, it is supportive in principle of the installation of renewable and low carbon energy generation technologies. The Statement specifically sets out a support for solar arrays mounted on existing roofs or integrated into new roofs/buildings.

Given the above policy support, the renewable energy benefits of the proposal should be given substantial weight.

Conclusion

The proposed development would be acceptable in relation to its design and impact on the character and appearance of the site and its surroundings. In addition, the proposal would not cause harm to residential amenities or highway safety. Furthermore, the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources mean that the proposed solar panels would make a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions, and this should be afforded significant weight.

The proposal would therefore comply with the requirements of Policies CS02, CS11, CS18 and CS19 of the Core Strategy 2014, saved Policies T1 and P3 of the Local Plan 1994, and paragraphs 8, 116, 131, 135, 168 of the NPPF 2024.

Recommendation

Permission subject to conditions.

(For detailed conditions and informatives, see draft Decision.)

Case Officer:	Mrs Katherine Parkin	Team Leader:	Mrs Faye Walsh
Signed:	<i>K. Parkin</i>	Signed:	<i>F Walsh</i>
Dated:	12 March 2026	Dated:	13 March 2026