



Delegated Report

Discharge of Condition Application

Planning Application No:	20220542
Location:	The Old Dairy, Bocoda Hill Farm, Wrotham Road, South Street
Description:	Application for approval of conditions 3 and 4 attached to planning permission reference number 20211286 relating to details of (3) details of the solar panel array, including details of their height, mounting and distance from the ground and (4) Soft Landscaping.
Applicant:	Mr N Payne
Site Visit Date:	Desktop assessment

Submitted Documents/Plans

Application form
Covering letter
Drawing no. 01 (Proposed site plan)
Drawing no. 02 (Proposed solar panel and planting alignment)
Drawing no. 03 (Proposed solar panels plans and elevations)

Relevant Planning History

Reference	Description	Decision	Decision Date
20211286	Application for installation of solar panels.	Permitted	07.04.2022

Development Plan

Gravesham Local Plan Core Strategy (September 2014)

- CS01 – Sustainable Development
- CS02 – Scale and Distribution of Development
- CS12 – Green Infrastructure
- CS18 – Climate Change
- CS19 – Development and Design Principles

Gravesham Local Plan: First Review (1994)

- T1 – Impact on Development on the Highway Network

Paragraph 33 of the NPPF (2021) 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 (2021), the Council will also seek to replace these.

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)

- 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- Section 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Section 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Section 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Section 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Section 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

- Gravesham Landscape Character Assessment (2009)
- KCC Solar Policy Position Statement (August 2014)
- Planning Practice Guidance Green Belt (2019) SPG2 – Residential Layout Guidelines (2020)

Consultations, Publicity and Representations

GBC Environmental Protection

No comments.

Officer's Analysis

Condition 3 (Details of solar panels)

Condition 3 states as follows:

The solar panels hereby permitted shall not be erected until full details of the solar panel array, including details of their height, mounting and distance from the ground, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and retained as such thereafter.

The submitted covering letter states as follows:

The panels will be mounted on individual consoles with a maximum height above ground level at approximately 500mm once fitted. The front of the panels will be 70mm above ground level with the panels fitted at a 15° angle. The consoles will be sited on a shingle-filled 100mm-150mm deep and 1100mm wide strip formed by skinning the surface of the current field. This will provide stability for the panels whilst in-situ and whilst allowing for adequate drainage. The strips will be reversible should the panels be removed.

There will be six rows of panels each containing 11 individual consoles. The rows will be 1.5m apart to allow access for a mower between the rows for maintenance.

The cable connection from the array to the inverter located within an existing building on the applicant's property will be undertaken using a mole, thus avoiding the need for the excavation of a long trench.

The submitted details are considered to limit the visual impact of the solar panel array in line with the recommendations in the previous Committee report, and the reason for condition 3. The details are therefore considered to be acceptable and condition 3 can be discharged.

Condition 4 (Landscaping)

Condition 4 states as follows:

The solar panels hereby permitted shall not be erected until full details of a soft landscaping scheme associated with the development, including boundary screening and grass seeding or turfing, have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The details to be submitted shall include planting plans, including specifications or species, sizes, planting centres, number and percentage mix, and details of seeding or turfing.

The approved landscaping scheme shall thereafter be implemented and maintained in accordance with the approved details. All planting, seeding and turfing comprised in the approved scheme of landscaping shall be implemented during the first planting season following the completion of the development. Any trees, or plants or grass which within 5 years of planting are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of a similar size and species, unless the Local Planning Authority gives written consent to any variation.

Lawn will be retained between the panels (which are spaced to allow for mowing between the panels) and a mixed species hedge (Guelder Rose, Holly, Hawthorn and Spindle) will be planted along the rear boundary fence of Bocoda Hill Farm Cottage, which will link into the existing hedgerow on the eastern boundary and will provide screening of the array for the neighbouring property, as well as improve the site's biodiversity.

The proposals will ensure an acceptable provision of landscaping to protect and enhance the character and appearance of the site and locality, as recognised in the reason for condition 4. The submitted details are therefore considered sufficient for condition 4 to be discharged.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The Local Planning Authority is satisfied with the details submitted in relation to planning permission 20211286 for the installation of solar panels. It is considered that conditions 3 and 4 can be fully discharged.

A further informative should be included to remind the applicant of the need to comply with the requirements of the remaining conditions.

(See draft Decision)

Case Officer:	Mrs Katherine Parkin	Team Leader:	Richard Hart
Signed:	<i>K. Parkin</i>	Signed:	<i>R Hart</i>
Dated:	18th July 2022	Dated:	18th July 2022