

AYLMERTON - PF/22/1298 - Installation of 28 ground-mounted solar panels (retrospective); Row Farm, Holt Road, Aylmerton, Norwich, Norfolk, NR11 8QA; Mr N Ayres

Minor Development

-Target Date: 14th July 2022

- Extension of time: 9th September 2022

Case Officer: Ana Nash

Full Planning Permission

CONSTRAINTS:

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Landscape Character Area - North Norfolk Tributary Farmland

Landscape Character Area - Wooded Glacial Ridge

Countryside LDF

Principal Routes LDF

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

No Relevant History

THE APPLICATION:

Seeks permission to install 28 ground-mounted solar panels on land at the rear and within the boundary of the property covering an area of 56 sqm. The panels would be mounted on pods that are freestanding units weighted and bolted together with an overall height of less than 1m high. The property lies on the A148 Holt Road along a small linear cluster of properties in a Countryside location.

REASONS FOR REFERRAL TO COMMITTEE:

The applicant is a member of staff working in the Property Services team.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES:

Aylmerton Parish Council: no comments received.

Ward Councillor: no comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS:

To date, no public representations have been received.

HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS:

It is considered that the proposed development may raise issues relevant to

Article 8: The Right to respect for private and family life.

Article 1 of the First Protocol: The right to peaceful enjoyment of possessions.

Having considered the likely impact on an individual's Human Rights, and the general interest of the public, approval of this application as recommended is considered to be justified, proportionate and in accordance with planning law.

STANDING DUTIES

Due regard has been given to the following duties:

Environment Act 2021

Equality Act 2010

Crime and Disorder Act, 1998 (S17)

Natural Environment & Rural Communities Act 2006 (S40)

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017

Planning Act 2008 (S183)

Human Rights Act 1998

Rights into UK Law – Art. 8 – Right to Respect for Private and Family Life

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (S66(1) and S72)

RELEVANT POLICIES:

North Norfolk Core Strategy Policies (2008):

Policy SS 1 - Spatial Strategy for North Norfolk

Policy SS 2 - Development in the Countryside-

Policy SS 4 - Environment

Policy EN 1 - Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Broads

Policy EN 4 - Design

Policy EN 7 - Renewable Energy

MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)(2021):

Section 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Section 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

MAIN ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION:

- 1. Principle of development**
- 2. Design and amenity**
- 3. Landscape impact/AONB**

APPRAISAL:

1. Principle of Development (Policies SS 1, SS 2, SS 4 and EN 7)

This application is retrospective in nature, seeking to retain the existing installation of 28 ground-mounted solar panels on land to the west of Aylmerton. The installation is free-standing covering an area of 56sqm. The installation should generate 8kWp of electrical output annually, providing enough electricity to power Row Farm. Row Farm is set back from the A148 road (Holt Road) and is part of four developments (three residential and one commercial) with agricultural land/fields located at the rear of these developments. The host dwelling is located within a large plot divided between residential and agricultural land, situated between Blyth & Wright Company (north-east side) and Meadow Cottage (west side).

The site lies in the designated Countryside policy area, as defined under Policy SS 2 of the adopted North Norfolk Core Strategy. Within this area, proposals for ancillary residential development and renewable energy installations are considered to be acceptable in principle. The development would constitute a significant, positive renewable resource for Row Farm. The principle of the development is accepted under Policies SS 2 and EN 7.

2. Design and amenity (Policy EN 4)

The panels are of a relatively standardised design for an array of this type and as such, raise no design concerns. The panels would be situated in a relatively discreet position, very low to the ground and obscured from view by neighbouring outbuildings and, although close to the neighbouring boundary, are a significant distance away from the main neighbouring dwelling. There are no other residential properties within close proximity to the site that would raise any residential amenity issues. Accordingly, the proposed development complies with the requirements of Policy EN 4.

3. Landscape impact/AONB (Policies EN 1 and EN 2)

The site lies within the Norfolk Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) where development can only be permitted where it;

- is appropriate to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area or is desirable for the understanding and enjoyment of the area;
- does not detract from the special qualities of the Norfolk Coast AONB or The Broads; and
- seeks to facilitate delivery of the Norfolk Coast AONB management plan objectives.

The area in which these solar panels have been installed constitutes a predominantly grassed area, screened by outbuildings and hedgerows and cannot be seen from the public highway in being very low to the ground. Furthermore, the panels benefit from an anti-reflective dark/tinted coating to maximise light transmission and limit solar glare.

For the above reasons, and given the limited size of the development, it is not considered that the development would have an adverse impact upon the surrounding landscape nor upon the special qualities of the AONB. This being the case, the proposed development complies with the requirement of Policies EN 1 and EN 2 of the adopted North Norfolk Core Strategy.

4. Conclusion

The proposal represents the sensible retention of a renewable energy installation associated with an existing dwelling, the principle of which has been accepted. The design is acceptable with no adverse impact upon neighbouring dwellings nor upon the surrounding landscape or special qualities of the AONB. The development is therefore considered to be acceptable and compliant with the relevant Development Plan policies as outlined above.

RECOMMENDATION:

APPROVE subject to conditions relating to the following matters and any others considered necessary by the Assistant Director for Planning.

- Approved plans

- Removal of installation when no longer required.

Final wording of conditions to be delegated to the Assistant Director for Planning.