

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

Application Reference Number	14NP0051
Description / Site Address	Proposed installation of 16 ground mounted photovoltaic panels to generate electricity at Diamond Cottage, Tarsset, Hexham, Northumberland, NE48 1RN
Applicant	Ms. J Ashdown
Agent	I Need Planning Permission
Expiry date of publicity / consultations	2/7/2014
Last date for decision	01/08/2014

Proposal

This application seeks the installation of a bank of 2 lines of solar panels to be constructed at Diamond Cottage, Tarsset.

The 16 solar panels proposed measure 8.2 metres in length by 1.5 metres deep. The angle of installation means they would be 0.768 metres high from ground level. The solar arrays are to be installed in two parallel lines with a 2.5 metres gap between.

The site is to the north of the garden of Diamond Cottage and is bounded by an established hedge.



Location of proposed solar array



Diamond Cottage from the Tarsset road. The proposed Solar array would be located behind the cottage.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework

Chapter 7: Requiring Good Design.

Chapter 10: Meeting the challenge, flooding and coastal change.

Chapter 11: Conserving and enhancing the Natural Environment.

Northumberland National Park Core Strategy and Development Policies Document

Policy 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Policy 3: General Development Principles

Policy 20 Landscape Quality and Character

Policy 25 Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Relevant Planning History

N/A

Consultations/Representation

Parish Council: No objections

NNPA Access and Recreation Officer : No objections

NNPA Ecologist: No objections

NNPA Landscape and Forestry Officer: No objections

NNPA Historic Environment Officer: No objections

Assessment.

The application property is located in an isolated position to the north of Greenhaugh. The area proposed for the location of the solar array is situated in a sloping site which slopes away from the house and is not prominent from surrounding public viewpoints.

The main issues for consideration are:

Principle of Development

Impact on Landscape

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

Principle of Development

The NPPF in Chapter 10 promotes the use of development which provides energy supply from de-centralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems (para 97). The NPPF also states in Chapter 10 that local planning authorities should approve applications for renewable energy proposals if the impact of the development are (or can be made) acceptable (para 98). Chapter 11 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that the natural environment is protected in the assessment of proposals with great weight given to protected areas such as National Parks.

In addition to the NPPF, the emphasis of Local Development Framework Policy 1 is that development is sustainable and reduces the causes of climate impact change, particularly by maximizing renewable energy generation. As the proposal is for small scale energy provision and does not raise issues of conflict with other policies in the LDF, then the development is considered to accord with Policy 1 of the LDF.

The proposal meets the criteria set out in the policies in the LDF and the relevant Chapters in the NPPF, the proposal is considered to be acceptable in principle. The proposal would also accord with the general development principles set out in Policy 3 of the LDF.

Impact on Landscape

Chapter 11 of the NPPF seeks to ensure that development conserves or enhances the natural environment. Policy 20 of the Local Development Framework seeks to ensure that proposals protect or enhance the natural environment.

The application site is located immediately adjacent to the domestic curtilage of the property. The solar panels are to be installed, orientated away from viewpoints outside the site. Whilst the cottage itself is prominent in the landscape in this part of Tarsset, the area of the land where the solar array is proposed is entirely screened from the wider landscape by virtue of the morphology of the land and the mature hedge which would screen the structures. The proposed ground mounted panels would have significantly less impact than if panels were roof mounted on the cottage. The proposal is therefore considered to accord with the relevant chapter in the NPPF and Policy 20 of the Local Development Framework.

Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development with Chapter 10 specifically dealing with the challenge of climate change. . Para 98 stresses the importance for local authorities for approve applications for renewable energy where the proposal does not impact on other aspects. Policy 25 of the LDF concerns renewables in development and is a permissive policy in that development for renewable energy generation are generally encouraged where they do not conflict with the purposes of the National Park. The location of the application site is such, that no neighbouring properties are affected by the proposal and no issues are raised which conflict with National Park purposes. It is therefore considered that the proposal accords with the criteria set out in the relevant Chapters of the NPPF and Policy 25 of the Local Development Framework.

RECOMMENDATION

Taking all of the above into account, including development plan policies and other material planning considerations including the NPPF, it is recommended that the local planning authority grant permission for application reference 14NP0051 subject to the following conditions:

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To ensure that the development is commenced within a reasonable period of time from the date of this permission and to comply with Section 91 (as amended) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans and documents:

- Application Form received on 22nd May 2014
- 1:1250 Location Plan received on 22nd May 2014

- Drawing Entitled: Black Plan and details received on 22nd May 2014
- Drawing Entitled ' Design and Access Statement ' received on 22nd May 2014.
- Specification Details : Romag Photovoltaic systems received on the 30th April 2014.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt, to enable Northumberland National Park Authority to adequately control the development and to conform with Policies 1, 2, 3, 20 and 22 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. When the solar array hereby approved has not been used for the generation of electricity for a period of 6 consecutive months, it shall be removed in its entirety from the site within the following three months, or as may otherwise be agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the landscape quality of the National Park and in order to accord with Policy 20 of the Northumberland National Park Authority Core Strategy & Development Policies Document and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Informative Notes

1. This planning permission is granted in strict accordance with the approved plans. It should be noted however that:

(a) Any variation from the approved plans following commencement of the development, irrespective of the degree of variation, will constitute unauthorised development and may be liable to enforcement action.

(b) You or your agent or any other person responsible for implementing this permission should inform Northumberland National Park's planning authority immediately of any proposed variation from the approved plans and ask to be advised as to the best method to resolve the matter. Most proposals for variation to the approved plans will require the submission of a new planning application.

2. This consent is granted subject to conditions and it is the owner and the person responsible for the implementation of the development who will be fully responsible for their compliance throughout the development and beyond. If there is a condition that requires work to be carried out or details to be approved prior to the commencement of the development this is called a "condition precedent". The following should be noted with regards to conditions precedent:

(a) If a condition precedent is not complied with, the whole of the development will be unauthorised and you may be liable to enforcement action.

(b) In addition if a condition precedent is breached, the development is unauthorised and the only way to rectify the development is the submission of a new application. If any other type of condition is breached then you will be liable to a breach of condition notice.

	Signature	Date
Planning Officer		

I hereby certify that the proposal may be determined by the National Park Officer or the Head of Planning or relevant Director under the current Delegation Scheme, and can confirm that I **grant** planning permission under delegated powers, subject to conditions set out in the recommendation above.

	Signature	Date
Interim Manager: Development Management		
Chief Executive		