



Ms Lindsey Stuart  
East Lindsey District Council  
Tedder Hall  
Manby Park  
Louth  
Lincolnshire  
LN11 8U

Our Ref: 70070079-130  
28 September 2022

Dear Lindsey,

**Hardens Gap, Hardens Lane, South Ormsby, LN11 8QS**  
**Full Planning Application for Roof-Mounted PV Panels on approved Agricultural Building**

We write to submit an application on behalf of our client, the South Ormsby Estate, to seek planning approval for roof-mounted PV panels on a newly approved replacement agricultural building (LPA ref: N/160/02310/21, approved 19 January 2022).

Alongside this letter, the application is accompanied by the following documents:

- Planning application forms, CIL forms and ownership certificates; and
- Planning application drawings prepared by Takero Shimazaki Architects ("T-sa").

## **SITE AND SURROUNDINGS**

Hardens Gap ('the site') is situated within the South Ormsby Estate, near to South Ormsby Hall (which is Grade II\* listed), within the Lincolnshire Wolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ('AONB') and South Ormsby village. The site is located within Flood Zone 1, an area of the lowest probability of flooding.

There is a public bridleway to the west of the site which goes north and turns east. Hardens Gap is to the northern side of Hardens Lane which runs in an east-west direction. Access is located to the centre of the site with more traditional brick and pantile agricultural buildings to the east and larger more modern agricultural buildings to the west. There is a pair of semi-detached houses to the far east which front onto Hardens Lane. The more traditional brick and pantile buildings are single storey to the roadside and some are two storey as they move back into the site. These buildings create a crew yard which has been covered with a more modern building. The wider area is characterised by the rolling countryside of the AONB.

## **DETAILS OF THE PROPOSAL**

The proposed addition of roof-mounted PV panels to the approved barn are requested to ensure that the development contributes towards the overall drive within the South Ormsby Estate to achieve holistic sustainability. The Estate has sought to undertake a range of improvements and upgrades to the existing building stock, in order to improve overall efficiency and incorporate sustainable energy measures. It is intended that the PV panels will generate power for use within the existing



farming enterprise, as well as to support the approved adjacent commercial units. Any additional supply will be fed back into the grid.

The agricultural building is located on Hardens Lane, fronting the highway. It was granted planning permission on 19 January 2022 (LPA ref: N/160/02310/21) as a replacement for a previously fire-damaged structure. This building is currently under construction.

The position and size of the agricultural building offers an ideal opportunity to support an array of solar panels which would be used to generate (and store) energy for use within the farm and the wider estate, with any excess being fed back into the grid. Therefore, once construction of the agricultural building is completed, the PV panels are proposed to be located on the southern elevation of the roof slope of the agricultural building. In addition to the panels themselves, a range of inverters will also be necessary to support the PV equipment and these will be installed, along with a covered panel, on the northern elevation of the agricultural building, facing away from the road.

Recent amendments to the original replacement barn were approved by East Lindsey District Council in 2022. These included the approval of a Section 96a application on 26 July 2022 to lower the eaves of the roof (LPA ref: N/160/00960/22). This amendment achieved a 15-degree roof pitch, which provides the optimum roof angle to support the proposed PV panels. It is intended that the approved barn will be built out in accordance with the approved amended roof pitch details.

A second application approved in 2022 (ref: N/160/00968/22) was submitted in line with Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act and agreed the replacement of the roofing materials with an integrated PV system. Due to difficulties in the supply chain, the integrated PV option is unlikely to be feasible for this project and therefore, a roof mounted PV system is proposed as an alternative solution. Initial pre-application advice was sought from the Planning Officer at East Lindsey, and the response from Lindsey Stuart, dated 7 September 2022 confirmed that a new full planning application would be required to agree details of a new roof-mounted PV array in this location.

## **PLANNING ASSESSMENT**

All planning decisions are taken in accordance with Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). In this context, the Development Plan comprises of the East Lindsey Local Plan (adopted 2018) and the other material considerations including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and supporting National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

The key material planning considerations for this application are:

- Design;
- Landscape; and
- Sustainability.

### **Principle of Development**

The PV panels will be located on the south-facing roof slope of the new agricultural building, which as noted by the Case Officer in the Officer's Report for the consented planning permission (LPA ref: N/160/02310/21), will be a modern building (located on the same part of the site as the previous agricultural building) with a similar footprint and of a similar scale. As the agricultural building will be a modern building, constructed from modern materials, the PV panels will not appear out of place within the surrounding environment. Indeed, the principle of a PV system on this same building has already been agreed through the approval of the earlier Section 73 application (ref: N/160/00968/22).

The only difference being that the proposed panels will now project slightly above the plane of the roofslope, as shown within the supporting plans.

The proposed PV panels are requested, in order to ensure that the agricultural building contributes towards the overall drive to achieve holistic sustainability within the South Ormsby Estate. This is in accordance with Paragraph 8 of the NPPF and Policy SP2 of the Core Strategy, as the Estate has undertaken work to upgrade and improve the sustainability of the new and existing building stock over recent years and the proposed PV panels will ensure the development is sustainable in the manner described in Paragraph 8 of the NPPF, by the introduction of low carbon energy sources and demonstrating clear environmental benefits of the development.

The development as consented will support and improve the agricultural functionality of the Estate and the wider rural economy, demonstrating clear social and economic benefits associated with the development. This is supported by Core Strategy Policy SP13 and NPPF Paragraph 84, which seek to support a prosperous rural economy.

### **Design**

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF and Strategic Policy 10 and 11 of the Core Strategy require the highest standard of design by adding to the overall quality of the area, being visually attractive and sympathetic to local character and history, maintaining a strong sense of place, and creating places that are safe, inclusive and accessible.

As the new agricultural building will be modern, the PV panels will not detract from its appearance or look irregular when installed on the roof. The PV panels will be installed on the south-facing roof slope of the building and will be viewed within the context of surrounding modern agricultural buildings.

The proposed panels are dark in colour and will therefore be visually recessive within the landscape. The PV panels will sit above the plane of the roof, but will not increase the overall height of the building. On this basis, we do not consider the proposal to have a noticeable visual impact, especially when compared to the already approved integrated PV system. As a result, there will be a very limited impact on the surrounding landscape or the wider AONB.

While it is recognised that the PV panels will face towards the Hardens Lane highway, this is the optimum location for the development, as placing them on the north-facing roof slope would have considerable impact on their functionality and efficiency.

Following previous advice from Natural England (in their response to planning permission ref: N/098/01711/15), roof-mounted PV panels have been chosen instead of ground-mounted panels in this case, as they can often be carried out without causing significant landscape impacts within the AONB. The installation of roof mounted PV panels in this case, complies with SP23 of the Core Strategy, which aims to ensure that the District's landscapes are protected, enhanced, used and managed to provide an attractive and health working and living environment.

The proposal is considered to represent an appropriate development for the site in relation to design and has been designed in accordance with SP10 and SP11 of the Core Strategy and Paragraph 130 of the NPPF.

## **Landscape**

Paragraphs 176 and 177 of the NPPF give great weight to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs. Strategic policy 23 of the ELLP protects the distinctive landscape character of the District. The highest level of protection is given to the Lincolnshire Wolds AONB, due to its landscape quality. The distinctive landscape of the AONB should not be compromised by development proposals.

The minor changes to the agricultural building through the addition of solar panels to the roof will not harm local landscape features or the distinctive character of the area. The design change as a result is considered minimal, and acceptable within the largely agricultural context of the site. This has been recognised in the Officer's Report for planning permission for the original building (LPA ref: N/160/02310/21), where it is stated that it would be in keeping with the rural agricultural character of the site and wider area, with no harmful impact on the setting of the AONB. The recent landscaping enhancements carried out within and surrounding the site, and other modern agricultural buildings in the surrounding area further supports the integration of the building into the surrounding landscape. Therefore, the proposals are in accordance with Strategic Policy 23 of the ELLP and Paragraphs 176 and 177 of the NPPF.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Renewable Energy**

SP27 of the Core Strategy details East Lindsey District Council's policy relating to renewable and low carbon energy. The policy outlines that small scale renewable energy development will be supported where the impact, when weighed against the benefits, is not considered to have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity, cultural or historic features or areas of local landscape quality. In the consideration of the previous s73 application for an integrated PV system, the Officer's report confirms that this proposal would be small in scale and not result in a significant visual impact on the setting of the AONB with any harm being out-weighed by the benefits of renewable energy in helping to reduce climate change.

As established in the above section, the installation of PV panels on the roof of the approved barn will not affect any residential amenity, and cultural or historic assets or the local landscape and setting. The agricultural building already has permission, and the installation of PV panels will not significantly alter the visual impact of the approved building.

The NPPF further supports the application as Paragraph 152 outlines that planning decisions should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, which includes the support of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. The addition of solar panels to the roof of this agricultural building will, therefore, aid the Estate in moving towards a low carbon future.

### **Estate-Wide Sustainability**

The installation of PV panels is in line with the wider strategy for the South Ormsby Estate, which has the vision of creating a sustainable future for the community of South Ormsby. Much of the Estate's work is to improve the social and economic sustainability of the area, by creating rural jobs and restoring heritage assets to their former significance.

However, as outlined in Paragraph 11 of the NPPF and Policy SP2 of the Core Strategy, sustainable development requires a holistic approach and comprises economic, social and environmental sustainability. As such, the Estate is seeking to ensure that buildings across the Estate are upgraded



to improve their energy efficiency. In the case of agricultural buildings, where improving the energy efficiency often is not possible, the installation of PV panels will be able to ensure that the Estate continues to promote sustainable development.

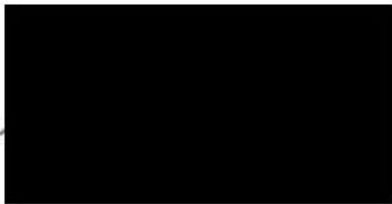
## **CONCLUSION**

The addition of roof-mounted PV panels on the new agricultural building at Hardens Gap will help to facilitate the South Ormsby Estate's vision to achieve holistic sustainability. The agricultural building has already been approved and is currently under construction, and the design of the PV panels will not appear out of place on the building or within the setting of Hardens Gap.

The proposal represents the positive upgrading of the agreed agricultural building, which will result in improvements to the overall sustainability of Hardens Gap and the wider South Ormsby Estate. The proposal is therefore considered to be in accordance with the relevant policies of the East Lindsey Core Strategy and the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF.

We look forward to receiving confirmation that this application has been received and validated. In the meantime, should you have any queries or require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me (07795 922435 / [anna.brindle@wsp.com](mailto:anna.brindle@wsp.com)).

Yours sincerely



Anna Brindle  
Associate