

**TOWN AND COUNTRY  
PLANNING ACT 1990**

**Planning, Design and Access  
Statement**

**Installation of ground mounted  
solar panels and associated  
works**

**8 Seabrook Road  
Kings Langley  
WD4 8NU**

**Statement on behalf of  
Mr J Lambert**

**November 2023**

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## CONTENTS

|                                      | Page No |
|--------------------------------------|---------|
| 1. Introduction                      | 3       |
| 2. Site Description and Surroundings | 3       |
| 3. Proposed Development              | 5       |
| 4. Relevant Planning History         | 5       |
| 5. Planning Policy Framework         | 7       |
| 6. Planning Appraisal                | 10      |
| 7. Conclusion                        | 16      |

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of an application for ground mounted solar panels and associated works at 8 Seabrook, Kings Langley, Hertfordshire, WD4 8NU.
- 1.2 The proposed development will create a more self-sufficient property that generates a significant proportion of its own energy needs. The solar panels will also export energy from an environmentally renewable source back into the grid during sunny periods. It is the applicants intention to create a highly sustainable property that reduces their families carbon footprint to help combat the climate emergency.
- 1.3 It is acknowledged that a previous application for solar panels was refused and dismissed at appeal. However, this proposal is for a new type of ground mounted solar panels with a low profile, reducing its visual prominence. The previous proposal also included the change of use of the land to residential curtilage, which was a key concern that has been addressed in this revised scheme. Furthermore, the previous proposal pre-dated the current energy crisis and the Council declaring a Climate Emergency, which has emphasised the growing importance of renewable energy sources.
- 1.4 This Statement provides an assessment of the proposed development against national and local planning policies and sets out the reasons why it is acceptable in planning terms.

## 2. SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDINGS

### Application Site

- 2.1 The Application Site is located at the eastern end of Seabrook Road. The Site forms part of a built-up residential area positioned approximately 1 kilometre west of Bedmond village centre.



Location and approximate extent of the Application Site

- 2.2 The Site consists of a detached chalet bungalow, outbuildings and swimming pool. The property has recently been upgraded and refurbished, which included various energy efficiency measures to improve its environmental performance.
- 2.3 The bungalow and outbuildings are set within a well landscaped and maintained garden. Directly adjacent to the garden is a large open field, which is the subject of this application. The field is open grass land and enclosed by high boundary planting, which separates it from the main garden and adjacent fields. The boundary planting provides a pleasant green buffer that restricts views of this part of the Site from the surrounding area.



Photograph of the field looking southwards towards the adjacent residential properties

- 2.4 The Site is accessed directly from Seabrook Road and has a parking area on the frontage which can accommodate at least three parked vehicles.

#### Surroundings

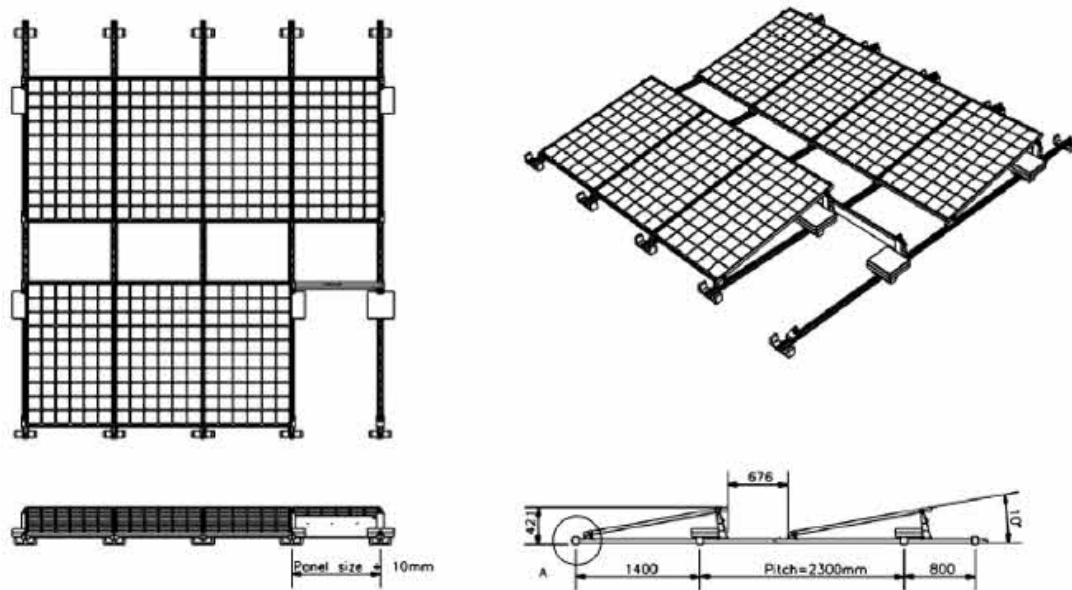
- 2.5 To the north, east and south, the Site adjoins residential properties. The surrounding dwellings have been constructed in various sizes, scales and architectural styles. To the west the Site adjoins fields. The area has an edge of settlement suburban character, where built form meets the countryside.

#### Designations

- 2.6 The Site lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt. It is in Flood Zone 1 where it is at low risk of flooding. There are no topographical features that would constrain development.

### 3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 Planning permission is sought for the installation of ground mounted solar panels with associated engineering works.
- 3.2 The proposed solar panels would be installed in the rear section of the field where they would be south facing to maximise solar gains. The proposal consists of two rows of linked solar panels, measuring 30m wide, by 5m deep, by 0.4m height. The panels would be ground mounted with a raised boarder surrounding them for maintenance purposes.



Drawings of the proposed solar panels

- 3.3 The proposed solar panels would generate approximately 17,122 kWh per year, making a significant contribution to the households energy needs. The solar panels would also export low-carbon electricity back in the grid for others to use.
- 3.4 The proposal follows a refused application for solar panels. The previously submitted application was for a larger number of panels, which were supported on steel frames with a total height of 2.6m. The revised panels are ground mounted with a height of approximately 0.4m, significantly reducing their visual prominence.

### 4. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

#### Application Site

#### Change of use and erection of solar panels (18/1659)

- 4.1 An application for change of use of part of paddock to residential curtilage and the installation of 64 solar panels was refused planning permission on 30 October 2018 for the following reasons:

1. The proposed change of use of the land to residential curtilage and the installation of 64 solar panels would fail to preserve the openness of the Green Belt and would conflict with the purpose of Green Belts by resulting in permanent encroachment to the countryside of residential use and large inappropriate structures. The development would therefore result in an inappropriate form of development which, by definition, is harmful to the Green Belt. No material planning considerations of sufficient weight have been demonstrated which would constitute very special circumstances to outweigh the inappropriateness of the development and the actual harm to the openness of the Green Belt. As a result the development would be contrary to Policies CP11 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011), Policies DM2 and DM7 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013) and the revised NPPF.
  2. The change of use of the land to residential curtilage (including the installation of 64 solar panels) results in an incompatible form of development given the scale and unduly prominent form of development leading to the overdevelopment of the site to the detriment of the character of the area and the visual amenity of neighbouring properties. The development is therefore contrary to Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Policy DM1 and Appendix 2 of the Development Management Policies LDD (adopted July 2013).
- 4.2 This application was subsequently dismissed at appeal. The Inspector raised concerns with the scale of the solar panels and associated visual impact, along with the change in the use of the land to a domestic garden, which was considered harmful to openness and the character of the area.
- 4.3 As noted above, this revised proposal is for ground mounted solar panels which would significantly reduce their visual prominence and any associated impact on openness. The field would no longer be incorporated into the garden, ensuring the proposal would not result in the spread of domestic paraphernalia. These changes have addressed the previous concerns with the proposed development.

#### Other relevant nearby applications

##### Solar panels at Olleberrie Farm Olleberrie Lane, Belsize, Rickmansworth (23/0800)

- 4.4 A planning application for the installation of ground mounted solar panels was granted conditional permission on 08 August 2023. This application is relevant as it was for a very similar type of solar array in a field adjoining a house in the Green Belt. The Council confirmed that given the minor impact on openness and benefits associated with this type of renewable energy scheme that very special circumstances existed.

##### Solar panels at Windrush Common Road, Chorleywood (22/1254)

- 4.5 A planning application for installation of solar panels to existing dwelling and ground mounted solar panels adjacent to existing tennis court was refused on 26 August 2022. This application was allowed at appeal where the Inspector gave 'great weight' to the benefits of the solar panels and concluded that very special circumstances existed that clearly outweighed the harm identified by the Council.

#### Solar panels at Water Lane Farm Water Lane, Bovington, Hertfordshire (23/00802)

- 4.6 A planning application for the installation of 80 ground mounted solar panels was granted conditional permission on 23 May 2023. Whilst this application was approved in the neighbouring borough, it is still relevant as it demonstrates the acceptability of this type of development in the Green Belt.

#### Solar panels at The Hoo Ledgemore Lane Great Gaddesden, Hertfordshire (21/3298)

- 4.7 A planning application for the installation of 60 ground mounted solar panels was granted conditional permission on 13 October 2023. Whilst this application was approved in the neighbouring borough, it helps demonstrate the importance of this type of development and the significant planning benefits they generate. It is noted that this site was in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty but the benefits were still considered to outweigh any harm to landscape character.

## 5. PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

### Local Planning Policy

- 5.1 The starting point for assessing development proposals is always the Development Plan. Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states “if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.
- 5.2 The Development Plan for this area comprises the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Local Development Document. The Three Rivers District Council Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are also a material planning consideration.

### Core Strategy

- 5.3 The Core Strategy was adopted on 17 October 2011 and sets out in broad terms how the Council will plan for, and deal with, future development within Three Rivers. The policies which are relevant to the assessment of this appeal are set out below:-

|             |   |
|-------------|---|
| Policy CP1  | Overarching Policy on Sustainable Development |
| Policy CP11 | Green Belt                                    |
| Policy CP12 | Design of Development                         |

### The Development Management Policies Local Development Document (Local Plan)

- 5.4 The Development Management Policies Local Development Document (LDD) was adopted on 26 July 2013 and sets out the detailed policies used to assess any planning applications. The relevant policies are set out below.

|            |   |
|------------|---|
| Policy DM2 | Green Belt  |
| Policy DM4 | Carbon Dioxide Emissions and On-Site Renewable Energy |
| Policy DM5 | Renewable Energy Developments                         |
| Policy DM7 | Landscape Character                                   |
| Appendix 2 | Design Criteria                                       |

### Three Rivers District Council Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy

- 5.5 Three Rivers District Council Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy sets out how the Council intend to improve operations and lead by example. It states that Three Rivers District Council have declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2030 for its own emissions and assisting the District to achieve net-zero carbon by 2045 at the latest. The Council are seeking to promote a transition to renewable energy sources which this proposal will help deliver.

### National Planning Policy Framework (2023)

- 5.6 Central Government advice relevant to this appeal is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The most relevant aspects of the Framework are summarised below.
- 5.7 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 5.8 Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Paragraph 8 identifies the three dimensions to sustainable development which are economic, social and environmental.
- 5.9 Section 4 requires local planning authorities to approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Paragraph 38 states that decisionmakers should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.
- 5.10 Section 5 'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes', addresses housing development. Paragraph 60 confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes. The NPPF introduces new housing delivery tests and consolidates other mechanisms to boost housing supply. It places an even greater emphasis on meeting housing needs and imposes additional penalties if targets are not achieved.
- 5.11 Section 12 'Achieving well-designed places', at paragraph 126 states that the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It notes that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 5.12 Section 13 'Protecting Green Belt land', states that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by



keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

5.13 Paragraph 135 identifies the five key purposes of the Green Belt: -

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land

5.14 Paragraph 147 confirms that inappropriate development in the Green Belt is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

5.15 Paragraph 149 states that a local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Various exceptions are listed which does not include renewable energy developments. Paragraph 150 includes various other exceptions to inappropriate development, which includes engineering operations.

5.16 Paragraph 151 confirms that when located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

5.17 Section 14 (Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change) at paragraph 152 requires the planning system to support the transition to a low carbon future and help shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

5.18 Paragraph 158 notes that when determining planning applications for renewable development, local planning authorities should:

- not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions;
- approve the application if its impacts are or can be made acceptable

5.19 Section 15 (Conservation and enhancing the national environment) at paragraph 174 states planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services.

## 6. PLANNING APPRAISAL

6.1 The main issues to consider in the assessment of this proposal are set out below:

- Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt;
- Impact on character and appearance;
- Neighbouring amenity; and
- If the proposal is inappropriate development, whether very special circumstances exist that would outweigh the harm

### Principle of Development in the Green Belt

#### Whether the proposal would be inappropriate development in the Green Belt

- 6.2 Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy states that there is a general presumption against inappropriate development that would not preserve the openness of the Green Belt or would conflict with the purpose of including land within it. Policy DM2 of the Management Policies DPD states that within the Green Belt, except in very special circumstances, approval will not be given for new buildings other than those specified in national policy and other relevant guidance.
- 6.3 Green Belt national policy is set out in Section 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 147 of the NPPF confirms that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances. Paragraph 149 advises that a local authority should regard “the construction of new buildings” as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Paragraph 150 lists various exceptions to inappropriate development which includes engineering operations.
- 6.4 The proposed development would include some minor ground works and the installation of infrastructure to support the proposed solar array. This part of the development would fall within the definition of an engineering operation, which is an appropriate form of development in the Green Belt. The minor nature of these works at, or below ground level, would ensure they would not harm openness or conflict with the purposes of the Green Belt.
- 6.5 The main component of the proposal relates to the installation of ground mounted solar panels, which would fall within the planning definition of a building. Solar panels are not listed in any of the exceptions specified in the NPPF and therefore constitutes inappropriate development in the Green Belt.
- 6.6 Therefore, the acceptability of the proposed development depends on whether very special circumstances exist that would outweigh any harm to the Green Belt. However, before undertaking the overall planning balance and considering whether very special circumstances exist, it is first necessary to assess any other impacts associated with the proposed development.

## Openness and purposes of the Green Belt

- 6.7 The NPPF states that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl, by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Openness has both visual and spatial qualities. The proposed solar array would be installed in the rear section of a field that is enclosed on three sides by residential properties. The proposed solar array would only occupy a small rear section of the field and views would be largely screened by hedgerows, landscaping and existing development. Any potential views would be limited and read in the context of the large area of retained green space, hedgerows and the surrounding residential properties. As such, given the minor nature of the development and concealed location in a field surrounded by residential properties, the proposal would not harm the visual dimensions of openness.



The position of the proposed solar array in an enclosed field on the edge of the settlement would conserve the visual amenity of the surrounding landscape

- 6.8 The proposed solar panels are lightweight structures and only extend across a small section of the field. They would be ground mounted and less than 0.5m in height, reducing their visual impact. It is noted that the solar panels can be moved and are not permanent features, with a life expectancy of approximately 30 years. Whilst this is a considerable amount of time, it is not permanent and the impact on openness would be reduced when the land is reinstated to its former open green character in the future. As such, whilst these physical structures would inevitably have some implications on openness, given their modest size and low profile, any harm to the Green Belt would be very minimal.



An example of ground mounted solar panels demonstrating their minor impact on openness

- 6.9 In terms of encroachment, the solar array would only extend into a small section of a field located directly adjacent to a residential garden on the edge of a built-up area. The proposal would not seek to change the use of the field to garden, which was a key concern in the refused application for the larger and more dominating solar panels and considered to have the potential to result in the introduction of additional domestic paraphernalia. As such, this revised proposal would not result in a harmful level of encroachment or urban sprawl.
- 6.10 It is important to note that the Council came to similar conclusions on openness, when assessing a recently approved scheme for comparable but higher solar panels on a field adjoining the garden at Olleberrie Farm, Olleberrie Lane, Belsize (23/0800). In the assessment of this application, the Council stated the following:

“The solar array would not be physically attached into the ground and would therefore not be permanent fixtures on the site and could be removed from the site if they were to become redundant. Whilst it is acknowledged that there would be some spatial impact by reason of the introduction of these structures into the site, their impact on the openness is considered to be limited. This is due to the positioning of the solar panels, close to the main complex of buildings, contained within a fenced field, as well as the limited area required for the solar panels, given the overall size of the site. As such, given the site circumstances it is considered that there would be no material effect on the visual aspect of openness of the Green Belt. The submitted block plan indicates that the panels would not require any associated paraphernalia. Whilst acknowledging the proposed development would be inappropriate, the actual harm to openness is also harmful, although the harm is considered limited.”

- 6.11 Overall, the proposal would not result in any harm to the visual dimensions of openness but given the physical presents of the structure, there would be some very minor harm to the spatial aspect of openness.

#### Character and appearance

- 6.12 The NPPF seeks a high quality of design and that new development is sympathetic to local character, while not preventing appropriate innovation or change. Policies CP1 and CP12 of the Core Strategy promote high standards of design and that new development respects the local context and conserves the quality of an area.
- 6.13 The Application Site is located on the edge of the settlement and is largely surrounded by residential properties. The proposal introduces a row of ground mounted solar panels in the rear section of the field, adjacent to the high hedgerow which extends along the common boundary. The proposed solar array would have a simple and coherent layout that would not harm or disrupt any special qualities of the site or wider landscape setting.
- 6.14 The proposed solar panels are modest in size and have a low profile, ensuring they would sit discreetly within the field and surrounding landscape. The field is enclosed by high boundary treatment, ensuring any views from outside the site would be limited and from considerable distances, where this small solar array would not result in any harm to visual amenity. Additionally, the proposed solar panels are positioned on the very edge of the settlement, ensuring any limited views would be read and understood in the context of this built-up residential area, mitigating any harmful impact on the character of the countryside.
- 6.15 It is important to note that the Council raised no design concerns with the approved solar panels at Olleberrie Farm, Olleberrie Lane, Belsize, which were higher and had a similar layout. With reference to this, the Council stated the following:

“The proposed floor mounted solar panels would run parallel with the fence line of the existing area, and given the siting, height and number of solar panels, it is not considered that the proposed solar panels would result in harm to the character and appearance of the host dwelling, nor appear unduly prominent within the streetscene of Olleberrie Lane or wider area.”

- 6.16 It is acknowledged that every application must be considered on its own merits and that there are differences between the approval at Olleberrie Farm and proposed development. However, this approval provides clear evidence of the acceptability of this type of small scale solar array on character and appearance.
- 6.17 Therefore, the proposed solar array conserves the character and appearance of the site and surrounding area in compliance with local policies and the NPPF.

#### Amenity

- 6.18 The NPPF requires high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers. This key principle is reflected in Policy CP12 of the Core Strategy which

makes particular reference to providing adequate levels and disposition of privacy, prospect, amenity and garden space.

- 6.19 The proposed solar panels are modest in size and positioned in the rear section of the field where they would be completely concealed from all properties on Seabrook Road.
- 6.20 The solar panels would be located over 100m from the dwellings fronting Toms Lane, which provides a substantial buffer zone and ensures they would not have a harmful impact on residential amenity. Additionally, the high boundary treatment between the Application Site and these properties would largely screen and filter views of the solar panels. Whilst it is possible that there may be some glimpsed views from the upper floor windows of these properties, these would be limited and could not be considered harmful to amenity or living conditions given the minor nature and low profile of the proposed development. It is important to note that the Inspector raised no amenity concerns when assessing the significantly higher previously proposed panels. Furthermore, the proposal is for high-quality PV cells that will optimise sunlight absorption while preventing any harmful levels of glare.



Separation distance and hedgerows would mitigate any potential impact on the amenity of the adjoining occupiers

Whether very special circumstances exist (planning balance)

- 6.21 The NPPF recognises that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions. It states that when assessing renewable energy projects in the Green Belt, very special circumstances could include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources. Additionally, the

NPPF states that planning permission for renewable energy development ‘should be approved’ if its impacts are (or could be made) acceptable.

- 6.22 The Development Management Policies DPD confirms that the Council is committed to working towards lowering carbon emissions and increasing the use of renewable energy. Policy DM5 of Development Management Policies DPD states that micro-renewables will be considered in relation to amenity, heritage, openness and other constraints. As detailed above, with the exception of a very minor impact on openness, the proposal would not result in any harm to the listed criteria, in compliance with the provisions of this policy.
- 6.23 The proposed solar array is modest in size and has been positioned in the rear section of an enclosed field on the edge of the settlement, where the impact is acceptable. Additionally, if any visual harm was identified by the Council, this could be made acceptable through an appropriate landscaping scheme. As such, it is clear that the impacts of this renewable energy development are acceptable and should be approved in accordance with the above guidance contained within the NPPF.
- 6.24 Three Rivers and the Government has declared a climate emergency and set a statutory target of achieving net zero emissions by 2050, which is an important material consideration. It is noted that since the declaration, the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has indicated that there is a greater than 50% chance that global temperature increases will exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. The report indicates that delay in global action to address climate change will miss a rapidly narrowing window of opportunity to secure a liveable and sustainable future for all. The UK Energy White Paper, Powering our Net Zero Future (2020), describes the costs of inaction as follows:

“We can expect to see severe impacts under 3°C of warming. Globally, the chances of there being a major heatwave in any given year would increase to about 79%, compared to a 5% chance now. Many regions of the world would see what is now considered a 1-in-100-year drought happening every two to five years.

At 3°C of global warming, the UK is expected to be significantly affected, seeing sea level rise of up to 0.83 m. River flooding would cause twice as much economic damage and affect twice as many people, compared to today, while by 2050, up to 7,000 people could die every year due to heat, compared to approximately 2,000 today. And, without action now, we cannot rule out 4°C of warming by the end of the century, with real risks of higher warming than that. A warming of 4°C would increase the risk of passing thresholds that would result in large scale and irreversible changes to the global climate, including large-scale methane release from thawing permafrost and the collapse of the Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation. The loss of ice sheets could result in multi-metre rises in sea level on time scales of a century to millennia.”

- 6.25 The draft updates to the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy recognises that to meet the Government’s objectives and targets for net zero by 2050, significant large and small scale energy infrastructure is required. This includes the need to dramatically increase the volume of energy supplied from low carbon sources and reduce the amount provided by fossil fuels. Solar Energy is identified as one of the best and cheapest ways of achieving this key aim.

- 6.26 The proposed development, although modest in scale, would make a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and this must attract substantial weight given the seriousness of the climate emergency. The proposal is estimated to generate 23,116 kWh of clean electricity every year and save 4,908 kg CO<sub>2</sub> of carbon. This yearly CO<sub>2</sub> reduction is the equivalent of the adsorption rates of 255 trees. The appellant will install batteries within existing structures that will store any surplus energy generated during the day for use at night, optimising the benefits of the proposal. The proposed solar array would make a substantial contribution to this properties energy needs and export clean green energy back into the grid during peak times.
- 6.27 It is noted that when considering the environmental benefits of the very similar solar array at Olleberrie Farm, Olleberrie Lane, Belsize (23/0800), the Council referred to the allowed appeal decision at Windrush, Common Road, Chorleywood (referenced in Section 4 of this Statement) and confirmed this type of development should be given substantial weight, which they concluded would outweigh any harm to the Green Belt. With reference to this, The Officers Report stated the following:
- “As such, significant weight is applied to the environmental benefits of the scheme. As such, the justification for the solar panels and the benefits which would arise from them would be given substantial weight in favour of this application. When weighed against the resultant harm, the inappropriateness of the development and harm to openness it is considered that in this case there are very special circumstances which would outweigh the harm to the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt.”
- 6.28 The proposal harms the Green Belt, by reason of its inappropriateness, and results in some additional minor harm to the spatial dimensions of openness. However, the proposal generates significant environmental benefits that help combat the climate emergency and given the growing importance of this, these benefits would clearly and convincingly outweigh any harm to the Green Belt. Consequently, the very special circumstances necessary to justify the proposal do exist. The proposal would not therefore conflict with Policy CP11 of the Core Strategy, Policy DM2 of the Management Policies DPD or the NPPF.

## 7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposed development is for the installation of ground mounted solar panels. The proposed solar panels would constitute an inappropriate form of development in the Green Belt. However, in this case very special circumstances exist that would clearly outweigh harm to the Green Belt.
- 7.2 The proposed ground mounted solar panels have a low profile and are positioned in the rear section of an enclosed field, where they would not be overly visible or harmful to visual amenity. Additionally, the minor nature of these type of ground mounted solar panels would ensure that any impact on openness would be minimal.
- 7.3 The proposed solar panels have been carefully and sympathetically arranged to minimise any potential impact. Boundary treatment and the considerable separation distance to the neighbouring properties, would ensure the solar panels would not harm living conditions.



- 7.4 The proposed solar panels result in significant environmental benefits that are recognised in local policies and national guidance, which support renewable energy developments. The proposal makes a significant contribution to this property's energy needs, reducing its carbon footprint and helping to combat climate change. These types of renewable energy developments are needed to help facilitate the country's transition to a low carbon future. The environmental benefits associated with this development attract substantial weight in the planning balance that clearly and convincingly outweighs any harm to the Green Belt.
- 7.5 For the reasons outlined in this Statement, the proposal represents a sustainable form of development and is acceptable in planning terms.