

Planning Statement – Installation of an 80kw, 192 panel solar array – Coombeshead Farm, Lewannick, Launceston PL15 7QQ

Introduction

The proposal is the installation of an 80kw, 192 panel solar array at Coombeshead Farm, Lewannick, Launceston PL15 7QQ.

The panels would be sited on a gently sloping field on the farm currently in use providing produce for the Coombeshead Farm business.

Coombeshead Farm comprises a guesthouse, bakery, restaurant, shop & working farm – where all the production effort from the farm is directed to producing food for the business. The field proposed for the solar array contains a polytunnel, growing space for vegetables for the farm and fruit trees and is grazed by sheep and free range hens. The solar array would be sited in the north west part of the field with the array facing slightly south west. The site is screened to the north by a stand of trees – which won't impact on the efficacy of the array and will not be affected by it. Sheep will continue to be grazed around and under the panels.

The farm is looking to install the panels to reduce, over the longer term, the costs of power needed to run the business and to improve the sustainability of the business – in common with many other businesses.

The power from the panels will be taken to inverters in the existing plant room to be used by the farm business and - when available - the surplus would be battery stored.

The panels would be erected on a flexible mounting system capable of changing the angle of the panels on the array. The panels, each approx 1.8 high x 1m wide, would be arranged in a double row one above the other in 6 rows of 28 panels and 1 row of 24 panels.

The array would not be visible from any public view points and would not impact on the amenities of any nearby properties.

Relevant Planning Policies

The relevant Development Plan policies include:

CLP 2010-2030 Policy 1, 5, 14, 21.

NPPF July 21 – Chapter 2, Achieving Sustainable Development paragraphs 7-10; The presumption in favour of sustainable development – paragraph 11; Chapter 11 – Making effective use of land; Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Location and Setting

The location proposed for the panels is within a field presently in fairly intensive use for producing food for the business, where currently several buildings / mobile structures are located. The proposal would not impact on the setting of the locality.

The site is not within a designated area but is within an AGLV.

Design & Landscaping Considerations

The location for the panels array is to the north east of the main group of buildings that comprise Coombeshead Farm. The double panel height, mounted array is wholly within a field adjacent to the buildings and indeed there are buildings / moveable structures in the same field. The actual location of the panels is in part of the field well screened to the north by a stand of mature trees which are to be retained. The array would not be readily visible to any public viewpoints.

It is considered that the impact on the locality would not be significant and that what limited impact there may be, would be outweighed by the environmental benefit to be derived from the renewable energy produced by the array.

There are no particular design or landscaping considerations – other than to retain all existing boundary features.

Access

The proposal would not impact on the present access arrangements and would be served from the existing farm access points

Ecology.

The proposal has no ecological impacts – being placed on regularly grazed grass. A WTL is attached.

Green Infrastructure Statement

1) The green infrastructure should form a multifunctional network through the creation of linear and other green infrastructure features to provide and enhance natural connections using important local character features, including existing planting, trees, groups of trees, copses, wetland, hedgerows and opportunities for wild food foraging as the key starting point for green infrastructure proposals and retain, reinforce and embed them into the design of the development to create distinctive places with permeable boundaries that reference, reflect and enhance the local environment;

Not applicable

2) The green infrastructure shall be accessible for all with high levels of accessibility in public areas, and promote health, wellbeing, community and cohesion and active living;

Not applicable

3) The green infrastructure shall incorporate sustainable drainage and blue infrastructure wherever possible and create better places for people and wildlife;

Not applicable

4) The green infrastructure shall be resilient to climate change, minimise the development's environmental impact and enhance the quality of water, soil and air, aiding resilience and adaptation to climate change;

Not applicable

- 5) Priority shall be given in landscaping schemes and natural planting to at least 50% pollinator friendly planting of predominantly native species;
No landscaping / planting presently proposed – the proposal includes retention of all existing hedges.
- 6) Street trees and other greening shall be integrated into street design and public open spaces wherever possible while remaining sympathetic to the historic environment. Streets should be designed to accommodate tree pits, whilst maintaining the space for the necessary runs of services (e.g. water, electric, sewerage);
Not applicable
- 7) The design and maintenance of green infrastructure shall conserve and enhance the historic environment and contribute to local distinctiveness;
Not applicable
- 8) Homes should have access to a well-proportioned and well-orientated gardens (generally equal in size to the footprint of the house) or other communal green space that provides a cohesive and useable space which is suited to a range of activities and space for nature;
Not applicable
- 9) The development shall make provision for long-term, post-development management and maintenance for all green infrastructure, including provision for community representation and management;
Not applicable
- 10) The development proposal shall include a scheme for the provision of bird and bat boxes and bee bricks tailored to habitat conditions existing on or being created on and/or adjoining the site including the location and clustering (as appropriate) of those measures. These should normally be provided at the rate of one measure per unit, provided in the most suitable locations, either as single units or a cluster of such (e.g. close to hedgerows and flightpaths).
the proposal has no Ecological implications.
A free standing bird box will be provided close to the north west boundary of the array.

Travel Plan

The proposal is for a solar array

Once installed there will be no necessity for anyone to visit the site other than for maintenance.

The use of the access therefore would be site specific to the need for access at the time of the visits.