

Proposed New EV Charging Station at
Greendale Business Park, Woodbury
Salterton
DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

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ARA Architecture
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This application seeks to place 30 no. electric charging points at the Greendale Business Park's main entrance off the A3052 (Sidmouth Road). The application also includes a battery farm for the storage of excess electricity produced by the biodigesters at Hogsbrook Farm and will be used in direct relation to the aforementioned electric charging points.

This is consistent with the UK Governments commitment to net zero emissions by 2050 supported by the published document in 2022 "Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy" (to be known as the EV Strategy).

1.1 Present Use

The site the subject of this application currently consists of land immediately adjacent the main entrance to the Greendale Business Park off the A3052. The proposal site sits in the North-easternmost corner of this agricultural field and immediately adjacent the landscaped visibility splays for the main Greendale entrance as shown on the submitted drawings. The site has existing gated access onto the internal road network for the larger Greendale Business Park and an existing storage shed which looks to be utilised by the proposal subject of this document.

1.2 Proposed Use

The proposal subject of this application seeks to create 30 no. electric charging points to serve the 2000 employees located at the larger Greendale Business Park. According to current government statistics 2% of the population currently have electric vehicles This equating to approximately 40-50 members of staff of the Greendale Business Park using electric vehicles and requiring localised charging facilities. This is in line with the current governments goal to create 300,000 public charging points at a minimum by 2030. The goal of the government is to ensure that these charging points are installed ahead of demand inspiring confidence in drivers who have not yet made the switch. This is further exacerbated by the UK being only 7 years out from the governments ban on the sale of new and petrol and diesel cars in the UK.

Current analysis by the government of the role out of EV infrastructure is considered too slow, with the demand for EV charging points outstripping supply and therefore the introduction of new EV charging points is considered a real economic urgency. The proposal subject of this application contributes towards the governments aims to produce additional EV charging points and its allocation to what is a large established and economically viable business park is considered highly appropriate and sustainable. The proposal will look to utilise an existing barn structure on site to house a battery farm whereby

excess energy produced by the Hogsbrook Farm biodigester can be stored and distributed to these proposed 30 electric charging points. The introduction of this battery farm again is consistent with promoting the UK's target for net zero or 100% reduction in emissions by 2050. At a European level the 2009 Renewables Directive place an obligation on the UK to generate 15% of its total energy requirements from renewable energy by 2020. It is considered the continued promotion of the Greendale Business Park and the wider Hogsbrook Farms ability to generate renewable energy via the biodigesters should be supported by the local authority being in line with both government and European targets.

That proposed is also considered a rural diversification provide a greater flexibility to rural businesses promoting a more economical sustainable local economy.

1.3 Site Boundaries

The site is bound to the North by the public highway A3052 (Sidmouth Road) with the visibility splays for the main Greendale Business Park entrance and a post and rail fence with sporadic trees on the boundary line. To the East is bound by the main private access route of the larger Greendale Business Park with the proposal sites access and egress onto this road on this boundary line. To the South and West is bound by the remainder of the open agricultural field to which the subject site is located.

1.4 Levels

The site is virtually level with no cross fall.

1.5 Site Surroundings

The site is situated within the open countryside being outside any of the defined Built-up Area Boundaries of East Devon. The site is surrounded on almost all sides by open agricultural land forming part of the curtilage of the Greendale Business Park and Hogsbrook Farm. The site is in no local or national designated land.

1.6 Planning History

The site in question has only had three previous applications for the specific area that forms the subject site. However, there are various other applications where this site has formed part of the larger applications involved with the creation of the main Greendale Business Park. The applications listed below are only those that relate to the land specific to the subject site.

1.6.1 Planning Ref: 94/P0923
Date: 2/9/1994
Address: Land South of Sidmouth Road, Aylesbeare, Exeter,
Devon
Proposal: Use of land for motocross circuit with auxiliary car park
Status: Refused

N: B: This application was refused at the time due to there being insufficient access and egress onto the public highway Sidmouth Road. However, since this time the access and egress onto Sidmouth Road has been vastly improved mainly due to the introduction and use of a walk-in vaccine centre further to the East.

1.6.2 Planning Ref: 75/C0827
Date: 13/1/1976
Address: Land South of Sidmouth Road, Aylesbeare, Exeter,
Devon
Proposal: Proposed touring caravan field
Status: Refused

N: B: As this proposal involved the entire agricultural field to which the subject site is contained it was considered this would be out of character for the rural setting and again there was a lack of sufficient access and egress onto the public highway Sidmouth Road.

2.0 PLANNING POLICY

2.1 The policies and strategies of the East Devon District Council Local Plan 2013-2031 that relate to the proposal subject of this application are as follows: -

- Strategy 3: Sustainable Development
- Strategy 7: Development in the Countryside
- Strategy 39: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Projects
- Strategy 40: Decentralised Energy Networks
- Policy D1: Design and Local Distinctiveness
- Policy E4: Rural Diversification
- Policy E7: Extensions to Existing Employment Sites
- Policy TC7: Adequacy of Road Network and Site Access

2.2 Strategy 3: Sustainable Development, states under section b) of this policy that “prudent natural resource use which includes minimising fossil fuel use therefore reducing carbon dioxide emissions. It also includes minimising resource consumption, reusing materials and recycling. Renewable energy development will be encouraged”.

It is therefore considered Strategy 3 is strongly in support of the proposal the subject of this application which looks to enhance and utilise existing renewable energy production resources of the local area specifically the Hogsbrook Farm biodigesters.

2.3 Strategy 7: Development in the Countryside, relates to proposed developments outside the Built-up Area Boundaries. The site in question is within the open countryside and falls under the Parish of Woodbury. However, this Parish has yet to adopt a Neighbourhood Plan through which localised policies will be considered. According to the East Devon District Council Local Plan in the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan developments in the open countryside must adhere to the following: -

1. Landform and pattern of settlement.

The proposal subject of this application does not look to create any new structures only hard surface areas to accommodate the 30 no. electric charging points proposed. There is an existing barn like structure on site which will be utilised for the storage of the battery farm and other plant machinery required. It is therefore considered the proposal will have no impact on the existing local settlement patterns.

2. *Important natural and manmade features which contribute to the local landscape character including topography, traditional field boundaries, areas of importance for nature conservation and rural buildings.*

The proposal will look to maintain all existing natural and manmade features such as the existing field boundaries, vegetation, and the aforementioned existing barn like structure. The only alteration to the landscape is the creation of new hard surfaced areas, however this can be well offset by additional planting and the proposal contributing to the electric charging vehicle demand of the UK and the governments net zero targets by 2050.

3. *The adverse disruption of a view from a public place which forms part of the distinctive character of the area or otherwise causes significant visual intrusion.*

The proposed new EV charging points will be visible from the A3052 when passing by the Greendale Business Parks main entrance. This is considered of betterment for the proposal advertising the availability of electric charging points to road users. From locations within the wider countryside the new facility will be well screened by existing and proposed boundary vegetation as not to impact the wider landscape character.

- 2.4 Strategy 39 in principle will support and encourage applications for either domestic or commercial renewable or low energy production. Such proposals will need to demonstrate that they have: -

1. *Taken appropriate steps in considering the options in relation to location, scale, and design for firstly avoiding harm.*

Government statistics currently show that 2% of the population use electric vehicles. Greendale Business Park currently employs approximately 2,000 personnel this amounting to 40-50 persons accessing and egressing the business park via their own personal electric vehicles. In addition to that a number of the businesses who operate out of the Greendale Business Park also utilise electric vehicles for their company fleet. It is therefore considered providing 30 electric charging points will sufficiently cover the demand experienced from this employment base. Due to the health and safety factors of electric charging points and in particular the battery farm storage unit it is not appropriate for these facilities to be placed adjacent populated areas such as the wider business park. The location chosen for this facility has been carefully considered as to

have good access to the public highway and of sufficient distance from any sensitive/populated areas as to reduce safety risk.

2. *And then reducing and mitigating any avoidable harm to ensure an acceptable balance between harm and benefit.*

Much of the potential harm created through the installation of this facility has been mitigated through its site allocation. Visual impacts on the wider landscape character have been mitigated against via additional boundary vegetative planting which will work in collaboration with that existing to screen the proposal from the wider landscape.

- 2.5 Strategy 40 strongly supports decentralised energy networks in particular for commercial spaces with a floor area of over 1000m² being required to provide forms of decentralised energy networks in the locality to bring forward low and zero carbon energy supply and distribution.

It is therefore considered that proposed is directly supported by this policy. Being of a nature that meets the requirements and intentions of this strategy providing the necessary infrastructure to support electric vehicles promoting zero carbon energy supply and distribution. In addition, the proposal looks to utilise and enhance the existing decentralised energy production created within Greendale Business Park and Hogsbrook Farm.

- 2.6 Policy D1: Design and Local Distinctiveness, relates to the design and conceptual impact of the proposal on the surrounding character area and adjacent properties. In particular respect the key characteristics of the area in which the development is proposed and ensure that the scale, massing, density, height, fenestration, and materials relate well to their context.

The subject site has no immediate neighbouring properties, and the immediate landscape character is predominantly agricultural fields lined and divided by public highways. It is considered that through landscape mitigation this character can be retained as existing and that the scale, massing, and density of the electric charging point facility proposed is appropriate for the site and the local demand of the larger Greendale Business Park. Through utilising an existing structure on site, the necessary accommodation for the battery farm can be provided without the need to create further structures.

- 2.8 Policy E4 supports diversification of rural businesses, to provide more flexible and therefore economically sustainable businesses.

The proposed new EV charging points and battery farm, provide such diversification while utilising and supporting an existing asset of the area in

the form of decentralised energy produced by the Hogsbrook Farm Biodigesters.

2.7 Strategy E7 encourages extensions to existing employment sites that promote renewable energy production, provided such facilities can meet the following criteria: -

1. *The local highway network is capable of accommodating the forecast increase in traffic established by a traffic assessment or where these can be mitigated either by physical works being undertaken by the applicant or contributions are secured toward the cost of the works.*

It is not foreseen there will be a significant increase in traffic accessing and egressing the main Greendale Business Park entrance from the A3052. As the charging points proposed are intended for existing employees of the Greendale Business Park, there is no change to the number of vehicles using the local highway network or the Greendale main highway access. However, should there be an increase in demand for accessing and egressing this new facility it is considered with the recent upgrades to the Greendale Business Park main entrance this entrance is more than capable of accommodating for any minor increase in traffic.

2. *There will be no detrimental impact upon any nearby residential properties.*

As previously mentioned, the subject site has no immediate neighbouring residential properties.

3. *No protected landscapes or historic interests or other environmental interest are adversely affected, and the existing local biodiversity and habitats are conserved or enhanced.*

The site is not known to have any protected landscape, historic or environmental assets. However, all existing boundary treatment is to be retained (this being the most likely location of any animal habitats).

2.8 Policy TC7 reflects some of the criteria contained within Policy E7 that the existing highway access and egress is sufficient to accommodate the demand upon the proposal the subject of this document. As previously iterated the recent improvements to the main Greendale Business Park highway access and egress onto the A3052 is more than sufficient to accommodate for any increase in demand caused by the introduction of this new EV charging point facility.

2.9 Beyond the East Devon District Council Local Plan Policies the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also supports the increase in use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy production.

Paragraph 155 promotes positive strategies for energy from renewable resources that maximise the potential for sustainable development identifying suitable areas for renewable and low energy sources and identifying opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable, or low carbon energy supplies. This directly relates to the proposal the subject of this application.

Furthermore paragraph 158 of the NPPF notes that when determining planning applications for renewable and low carbon developments local planning authorities should: -

- Not require applications 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; and
- Approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas demonstrates that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.

In terms of the suitability of the location proposed for this new EV charging point facility not only is this well associated with the existing need of the Greendale Business Park there is existing a number of connecting charging points in and amongst the nearby Hill Barton Business Park clearly demonstrating there is a demand and the capability to supply such facilities within the local area.

3.0 DESIGN

- 3.1 The final form of design has been formulated following photo analysis of the surrounding area and discussions with the owner of the site. The scheme therefore puts forward design details provided by the owner to match/blend with the existing surrounding environment and meet the demand of the local area in particular the employment base of the Greendale Business Park.
- 3.2 The proposal the subject of this application can be considered to have two elements, the first being the introduction of 30 no. electric vehicle charging points. These are to be located just off the private road for the main Greendale Business Park approximately 50m from where it connects with the public highway A3052 (Sidmouth Road). The proposed 30 charging points will be arranged in such a way that there will be a continuous looped motion so that vehicles accessing and egressing the facility can do so in a forward motion.
- 3.3 The second part of this proposal is the utilisation of the existing storage shed as a battery farm. This facility will look to utilise the renewable energy production generated by the biodigesters located at the Hogsbrook Farm further to the South. This will allow for this new facility to not only provide charging points for what is considered a sustainable mode of transport (electric vehicles) but provide the electricity for charging said vehicles from a renewable low carbon energy source.
- 3.4 To mitigate any visual intrusion this facility may have on wider landscape; additional soft landscaping is proposed to help screen the proposal. Please note the proposal does not look to create any new structures only create an area of hard surfacing to accommodate for the 30 no. parking spaces associated with the electric charging points.
- 3.5 In 2022 the UK government published the Taking Charge: The Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy also known as the EV Strategy which detailed the UK's commitment to net zero emissions by 2050. Transport is now the UK's largest emitting sector and 91% of those emissions come from road transport. It is considered essential for vehicles on the UK roads to be omission free at the tail pipe.
- 3.6 The government consider that if the UK economy is to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 it has to decarbonise road transport. The recent rapid increase in both the supply and demand for EV's means that changing infrastructure now stands at the single biggest challenge to that decarbonisation.

In November 2020 the prime minister put the UK on course to the fastest nation in the G7 to decentralise road transport announcing sales of new petrol and diesel cars and vans would end in 2030. The UK government currently considers the roll out of EV infrastructure to be too slow, demand is already outstripping supply, it is often cited that planning permission delays are the major cause on the speed of deployment of EV charging points.

- 3.7 It is considered that the proposal the subject of this application contributes positively towards the governments targets for the introduction of EV charging points and the decentralisation of energy production through renewable/low carbon energy sources. We therefore ask that based on the negligible impact this proposal has on the wider landscape character and highway traffic/safety, that an expedient approval be obtained to contribute to government targets in line with the policies of both the NPPF and the EDLP.

4.0 FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT

- 4.1 The site the subject of this application is not in an area identified by the Environmental Agency as being of risk of flooding. Therefore, no particular flood precaution measures are proposed. Disposal of surface water run off will be by way of ground soakaways as not lead to an increase upon the demand on the adopted surface drains.