Installation of roof mounted solar PV array.

Pro-Life Fitness Centre, 98 New Sneddon St, Paisley, PA3 2BD

SNRG Ltd

Site description

Pro-Life Fitness Centre lies on the east side of Sneddon Road, and urban area of mixed use, with industrial buildings to the north and across the road to the west, and residential properties to the south, separated from the site by sports pitches. The building itself has an appearance similar to a warehouse with a dual pitched roof that is orientated gable end onto the road. Parking lies to the rear of the building, bordering the river.

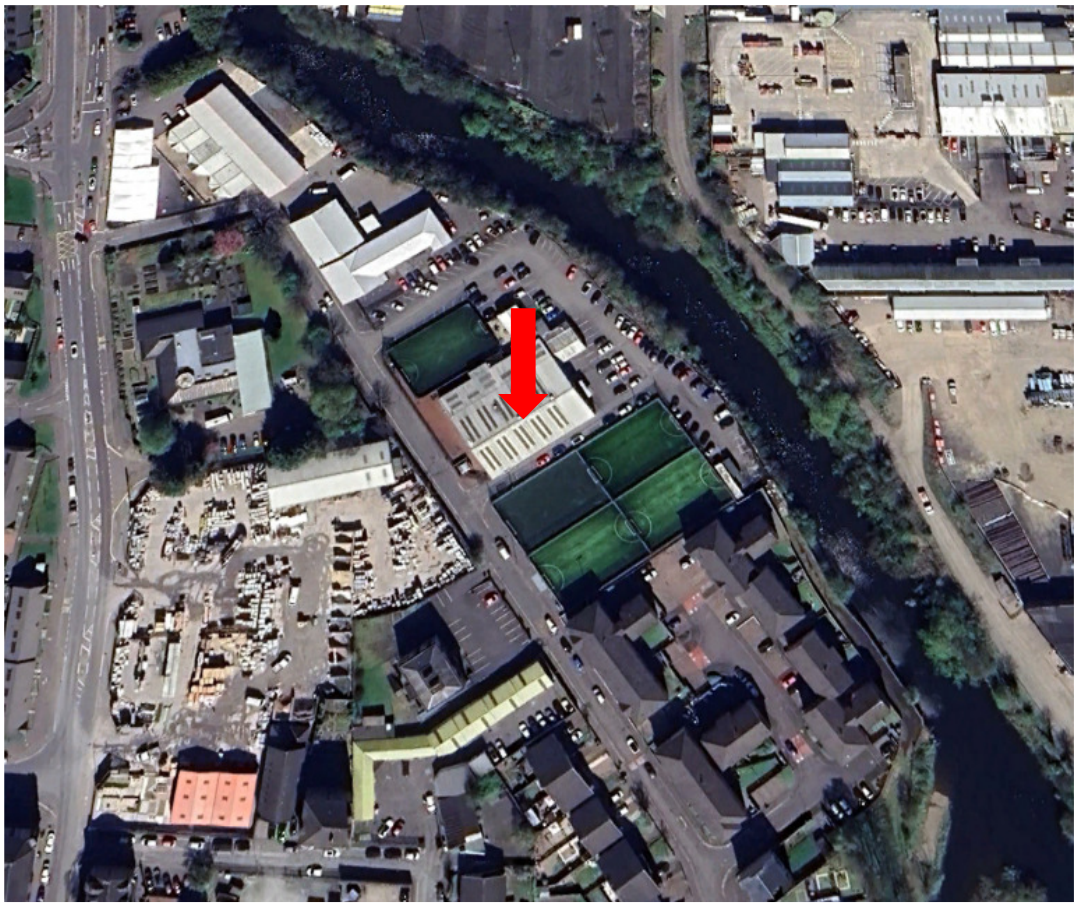

Figure 1: Site location in context of surrounding area (Google Earth imagery date 20/04/2023)

Proposed Development

SNRG Ltd is seeking to install a roof mounted solar PV array to provide energy to Pro-Life fitness, with any excess being supplied to the grid. The total capacity on the installation would slightly exceed the 50 kWp permitted development threshold for non-residential buildings (approximately 78kWp in this case). The panels would be confined to the southeast facing roof slope, as illustrated below.

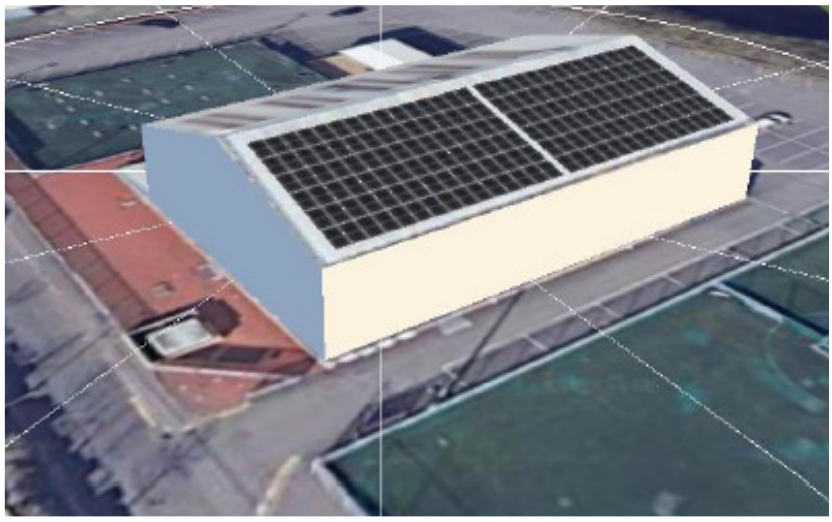

Figure 2: Montage of proposed array arrangement

Figure 3: Google street view image (dated 10/2020).

Planning Assessment

The proposals will be of significant environmental benefit as well as economic benefit to the fitness centre, supplying electricity directly to the business, in turn helping running costs.

The principle of the installation has direct support from National and Local Policies. Policy 11 of the National Planning Framework 4 confirms "Development proposals for all forms of renewable, low-carbon and zero emissions technologies will be supported" and that these include solar arrays. This support is particularly relevant where there are business benefits.

The proposals also have the support of Policy 14 of the of the Renfrewshire Local Development Plan 2021, regarding Renewable ad low carbon energy developments, stating "Development proposals which deliver increased energy efficiency and the recovery of energy that would otherwise be lost will be supported". The other main considerations under the policy that are relevant to the case are visual amenity and impacts on dwellings.

The building has a relatively shallow roof pitch and is of an industrial, utilitarian appearance, similar to the commercial buildings to the north. The immediate setting of the building is dominated by the sports pitches on either side, which are enclosed by high wire fencing. The panels would not result in any significant change to the setting or the appearance of the existing industrial style roof covering, and the panels would appear in keeping with the building.

The nearest residential properties are in the form of three storey flats, which are located approximately 50m to the south, with their solid end walls adjoining the sports pitches. The orientation of these buildings and the similar level to the proposal means there are no significant concerns regarding possible glint or glare.

Figures 3 & 4: Example views looking to and from site showing nearest residential area (Google earth 10/2020)

Flood risk assessment

The site is located within an area with a low risk of flooding; however, the panels will be located on the existing roof and above the flood zone. The application does not relate to any change of use, increase in footprint, or any intensification in existing use, which would be relevant considerations.

Conclusion

The installation of the proposed renewable energy system to support an existing business has significant support under National and Local Policy, and there would be no adverse impacts that should prevent planning permission from being granted.