

The Malt House Solar Array

Broad Campden
Chipping Campden
Gloucestershire
GL55 6UU

Design, Access and Heritage Impact Statement

March 2024

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Statement

This statement accompanies the planning application for the a ground mounted solar array at The Malt House, Broad Campden. The property has been in the applicants ownership for 11 years and the photovoltaic panels and batteries are part of an ongoing strategy to de-carbonise the listed property.

The proposed location aims top balance minimal visual impact on the listed building as well as the surrounding landscape and views thereof.

This statement documents the key elements of the proposal.

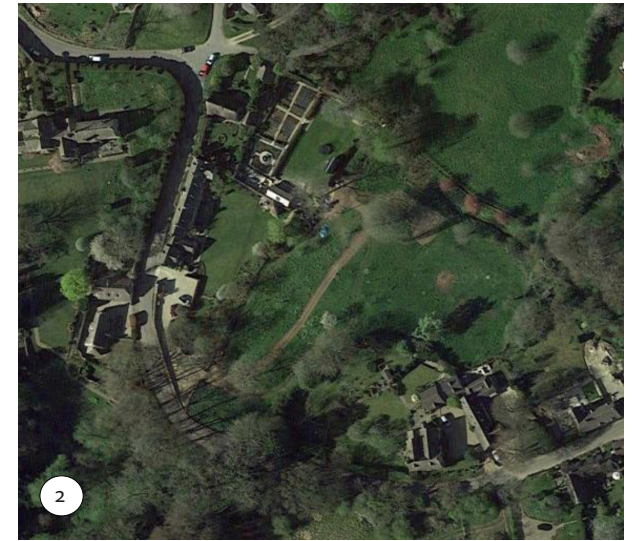
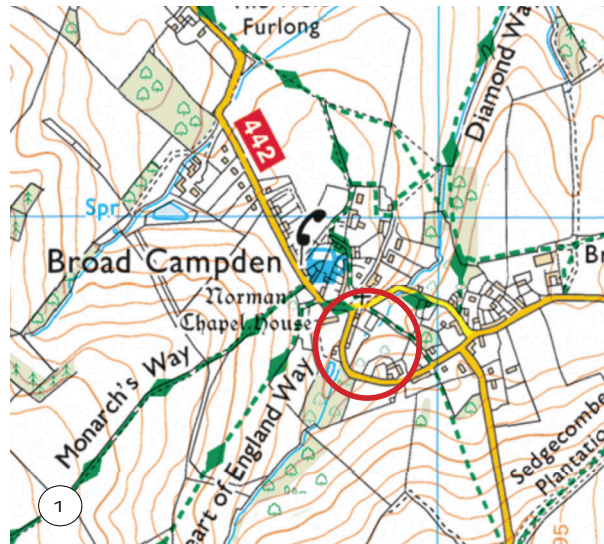
1.2 Site & Existing Building

The Malt House is grade II listed and lies within both the Cotswold AONB and the Broad Campden Conservation Area.

The house comprises the original house and Malt House and the listing refers to various external features.

"C18 house and malt house, latter converted to dwelling 1905 for one of the Noel family. Two and a half storeys, coursed rubble with Cotswold stone roof, 6 ridge chimneys (3 in ashlar), hipped dormers. Three-one-four windows, 2 on first floor of former house have flat mullions to 2 light casements, and angled bays below; one, above main entrance is a small triangular oriel. The others 2 and 3 light leaded casements, with segmental heads on ground floor. Gable over central window which has an arched label. Main door (to left) has bracketted flat hood; Tudor arched second doorway to right of centre."

The property includes a large meadow that was most likely a historic orchard site and is the proposed site for the new array. The meadow is bordered by a stream and footpath to the north and the land slopes up from this point to both north and south.



- 1) OS map location
- 2) Satellite image of site
- 3) Historic Site Map - 1883

2.0 PROPOSED DESIGN

2.1 Design Rationale

The proposed array has been positioned in on the edge of the meadow which the applicant has invested significant energy into restoring through nature recovery works including a large increase in fruit trees, grassland management and water course restoration.

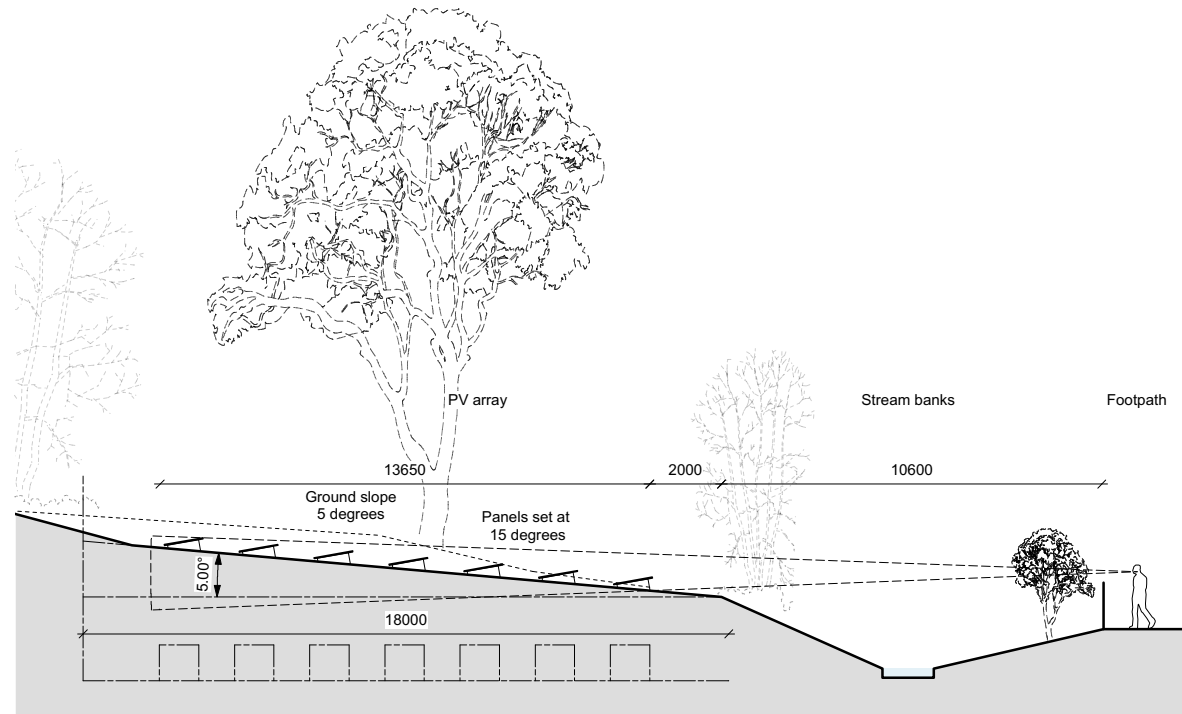
The panels will be installed on a ground mount array minimising impact on both the listed building and the landscape.

Further planting will provide screening from the footpath. The objective is not to obscure the view from the footpath but to soften the connection.

The proposal seeks to:

- Work with the natural topography to position the panels with the least amount of levelling.
- Sensitively locate an increasingly familiar and necessary feature in our landscape.
- Diversify the productive use of a village green space.
- Utilise a removable mounting system to minimise impact on ground and bio-diversity.
- Utilise panels to increase bio-diversity by creating pockets of shaded sheltered areas.

A GRP shed to house the inverters and batteries will be discretely positioned in the south east corner of garden attached to the main dwelling.



2.2 Sustainability

Mitigating and meeting the energy demand of our historic housing stock whilst protecting its heritage value is an ongoing challenge and the Malt House is a perfect example of this. Fabric upgrade opportunities are limited and whilst efforts are being made to reduce the energy demand, meeting a large proportion of this demand with renewable energy generated on-site will have a significant positive impact.

2.3 Landscape & Biodiversity

The panels are part of a wider nature recovery scheme that will result in an enriched habitat for flora and fauna. Since purchasing the site 11 years ago circa 40 trees have been added to the meadow with more to follow over the coming years.

The frame will be ballasted down rather than mechanically fixed so no concrete will be poured and the soil and plant life at ground level will not be compromised.

2.4 Visual Impact

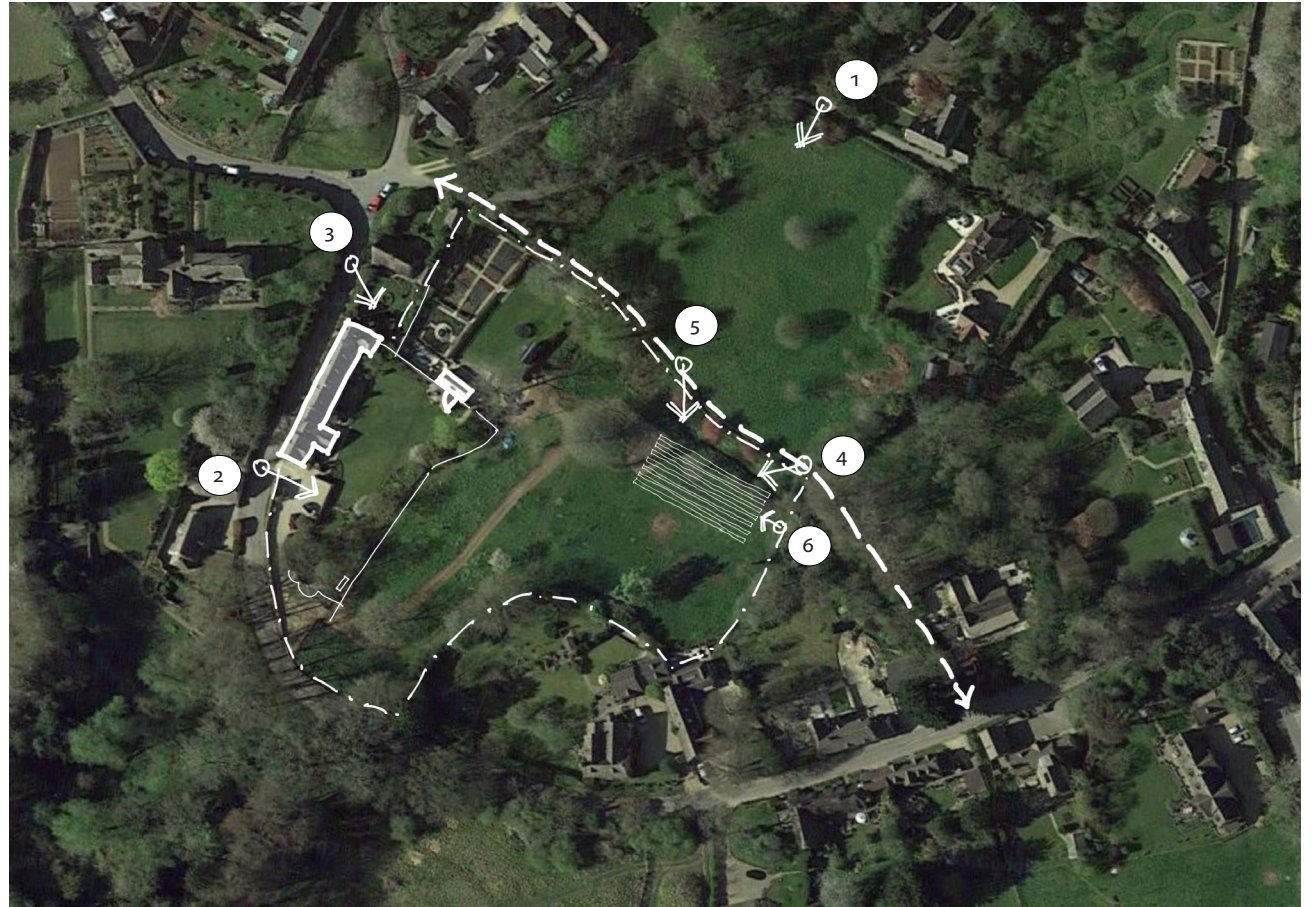
There are very limited views of the site from the surrounding public roads and for the most part is totally obscured by ground levels and buildings.

The public footpath to the north of the site runs along the opposite bank of the stream to the array and so will have a direct visual connection. The nearside bank is undergoing substantial replanting (including 200 native hedgerow whips) which will enhance the footpath.

It is hoped that a well considered and integrated array in a sensitive landscape location will serve as a demonstration of how technological solutions to key contributors to the climate emergency can (and need to) be integrated into our landscape.

2.5 Access and Drainage

Parking and access to the property are unaffected. Rainwater run off from the panels will have no effect on existing infrastructure.



3.0 APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING STATEMENT

In my work life I have some responsibility for the national implementation of new greening measures such as the Future Home Standard as well as supporting national ambitions for decarbonisation through fabric first retrofit and greening energy sources to homes. I therefore feel very strongly that I need to demonstrate the same commitment in my personal life with the challenge that the Malt House is a grade 2 listed home of some size and complexity in an AONB. Cotswold DC declared a climate emergency in 2019 with a very comprehensive Climate Emergency Strategy but I feel there is more that needs to be done to accelerate the appropriate transition if we are to have 100% clean energy by 2030. I am pleased that the council wishes to embed climate emergency considerations into all decision making processes and promote solar power. I have now commenced my own transition here at the Malt House and indeed otentially working with th e council's own recommended installer partner. From a fabric first perspective I will be seeking to substantially improve roof insulation this year and, with regards to this application, effectively deliver net 100% green electricity. Like many Cotswold villages use of solar will not always be easy in Broad Campden - especially on constrained sites where roofs need to be considered. I am fortunate to have a large meadow that already benefits from screening given the large amount of tree planting I have undertaken over the last 11 years. We have identified a proposed site in the meadow with a natural incline that benefits from substantial sun, has de minimis overlooking and where through use of the incline, existing tree and contour lines, native hedging, grass screening and the use of very low positioned panels I feel we are indeed balancing a thoughtful respect for the area we live in with meeting the Councils own commitments in this climate emergency. A small number of the still juvenile fruit trees I have planted will need to be removed along with one more mature tree. I am committed to planting at least the same number of trees again elsewhere in the meadow as I have consistently done with dead or dangerous trees over the years. As a completely separate endeavour I have , at my own expense, undertaken significant works to the public footpath that passes by the meadow including the full replacement of the stream bridge, removal of brambles and nettles, flattening the path and new stable fencing. I have planted 200 whips of native hedging that will further enhance the experience but also act as an additional screen to the panels. Overall I feel I am balancing respect for the area and recognition of the emergency we face.



4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Heritage Asset

Views of The Malt House

Heritage Value

Grade II listed. Distinctive part of fabric of conservation area

Impact

Negligible. From public vantage points the proposal does not impact enjoyment of the heritage asset. From the site of the proposal views back towards the house are limited, even in winter.



View towards The Malt House from the proposed site



View towards The Malt House from the street

Heritage Asset

Views from The Malt House

Heritage Value

Views from the rear of the Grade II listed building are across the private garden and on to the historic meadow.

Impact

Negligible. In winter there will be glimpses of the array which is positioned on the opposite side of the meadow.



View from The Malt House rear terrace



View from The Malt House rear dormer

4.0 HERITAGE STATEMENT

Heritage Asset

Meadow Site of Historic Orchard

Heritage Value

Conservation Area - Designated Heritage Asset. The meadow is seen as a key part of the character of the conservation area.

Impact

Minor. Whilst the proposed array will be sited in the meadow, there will be no permanent fixing or concrete casting. When the array reaches the end of its life it can be lifted away. There will be some localised cut and fill of the ground that will not change the character of the meadow.

As shown above there is a visual impact, and whilst the proposal will be well screened with new hedgerow planting there will be glimpses of it from the footpath and other dwellings overlooking the meadow. It is felt that the non-permanent nature of the installation combined with the need to produce renewable energy to preserve the wider environment make this an appropriate addition to the conservation area. Alongside the ongoing planting of fruit trees the solar array will increase the diversity and productivity of this once productive resource.

