

North York Moors National Park Authority

Parish: Harwood Dale

App No. NYM/2020/0638/FL

Proposal: installation of 10 no. ground mounted solar panels

Location: Park Hill Farm, Harwood Dale

Applicant: Ms Jan Hoyland, Park Hill Farm, Harwood Dale, Scarborough, YO13 0LB

Date for Decision: 16 November 2020

Director of Planning's Recommendation

Approval subject to the following conditions:

1. TIME01 **Standard Three Year Commencement Date**
The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.
2. PLAN02 **Strict Accordance With the Plans/Specifications or Minor Variations**
The development hereby approved shall be only carried out in strict accordance with the detailed specifications and plans comprised in the application hereby approved or in accordance with any minor variation thereof that may be approved by the Local Planning Authority.
3. MATS00 The solar panels hereby approved shall have black frames and thereafter be so maintained.
4. MISC14 **Use of Equipment Ceasing (inserts)**
If the use of the **solar PV equipment** hereby approved **permanently ceases**, it shall be removed from the **site** within **one month** of that cessation and the **land** shall, as far as practical, be restored to its condition before development took place.

Reasons for Conditions

1. TIME01 To ensure compliance with Sections 91 to 94 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.
2. PLAN00 For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the details of the development comply with the provisions of NYM Strategic Policies A and C which seek to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the NYM National Park.
3. MATS00 For the avoidance of doubt and in order to comply with the provisions of NYM Strategic Policies A and C which seek to ensure that the appearance of the development is compatible with the character of the locality and that the special qualities of the National Park are safeguarded.
4. MISC00 In order to return the land to its former condition and comply with the provisions of Strategic Policy A of the North York Moors Local Plan which seeks to conserve and enhance the landscape of the National Park.

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Consultations

Parish - No objection.

Natural England - No objection.

Site Notice Expiry Date - 29 October 2020.



Credit: Boulton & Cooper sales details

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Background

Park Hill is an isolated small holding located approximately 2km to the north-west of the small settlement of Harwood Dale. Vehicular access is via private, single track road serving two other farms. The track is a designated public bridleway and a public footpath exists to the east of the property. The house is a traditional, modest, moorland farmhouse of stone under pantile construction. It is linear in form with the main house flanked by former outbuildings/byres, which are now also in residential use (with the exception of one cell which is still used as a store). The property is set within a parcel of grazing land, overlooking Scar Wood and is subject to an agricultural occupancy restriction.

This application seeks full planning permission for the installation of a ground mounted solar PV array, located in the paddock to the north-west of the house, adjacent to a parking area. It is relatively small-scale (domestic scale) comprising of 10no. panels.

Policy Context

The relevant NYM Local Plan policies to consider with this application are Strategic Policy A (Achieving National Park Purposes and Sustainable Development), Strategic Policy F (Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation) and Policy ENV8 (Renewable Energy).

SPA states that a positive approach to new development within the Park will be taken in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and where decisions are consistent with National Park Statutory Purposes (applying the Sandford Principle if necessary). Development will be supported where it: is a high quality of design which respects the local landscape and built heritage; supports the function and vitality of communities; protects or enhances natural capital and ecosystem services; maintains and enhances geodiversity and biodiversity through conservation; builds resilience to climate change; makes sustainable use of resources and; does not reduce the quality of soil, air and water in and around the National Park.

SPF expects new development to be resilient to and mitigate the effects of climate change and will be supportive of new development which, amongst other things: reduces the need for and makes efficient use of energy; uses renewable energy and; incorporates sustainable design and construction.

ENV8 permits development proposals for the generation of renewable energy where it is of a scale and design appropriate to the locality and contributes to meeting energy needs within the Park; where it respects the landscape character; where it does not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park; it provides environmental enhancement or community benefits where possible and it makes provision for the removal of equipment and the reinstatement of the land should it cease to be operational. Additional considerations are provided in respect of wind turbines.

Main Issues

The main issues are considered to be whether the proposed solar PV array is of a size and scale which is commensurate with the site and whether it is in an acceptable position in terms of landscape impact.

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The solar panels will be located within an area of land forming the approach to the property where there is an existing parking area and utilitarian character. They will be within the setting of the house but not located immediately adjacent to the house. The site is gently sloping and away from trees and buildings which would otherwise overshadow the solar equipment. The chosen position is not considered to impact on the character of the original dwelling. The solar panels will also help to contribute towards meeting the domestic energy needs of the property, in accordance with the above planning policies.

It is recognised that the solar panels will be noticeable in the approach to the property via the vehicular track/bridleway and in glimpses from the footpath. However, it is not considered that a modest array of 10 no. solar panels would have an unacceptable landscape impact and any visual disruption is offset by the benefits of energy provided by renewable resources. It is however considered necessary to ensure the solar panels have a black frame to reduce their impact.

The proposed panels would be ground mounted in a grass paddock but which is not grazed. The equipment will be mounted on relatively lightweight framework with minimal ground work required. It is considered that the land can easily be restored to its existing condition in the event the equipment is no longer needed.

The Parish Council and Natural England have been consulted on this application and have raised no objections. No other third party representations have been received.

In view of the above, it is considered that the proposal is in accordance with adopted policies and approval is recommended subject to conditions.

Explanation of how the Authority has Worked Positively with the Applicant/Agent

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.