

# North York Moors National Park Authority

## Delegated decision report

**Application reference number:** NYM/2022/0887

**Development description:** installation of ground mounted solar array (216 panels)

**Site address:** Beacon Farm, Beacon Way, Sneaton,

**Parish:** Sneaton

**Case officer:** Mrs Jill Bastow

**Applicant:** Beacon Farm

Beacon Way, Sneaton, North Yorkshire, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO22 5HS

**Agent:** DWA Architects (London) Ltd

fao: Mr Chris Dennison, Link Business Park, Cyclops House, Osbaldwick Link Road, Osbaldwick, York, YO10 3JB

## Director of Planning's Recommendation

Approval subject to the following:

### Condition(s)

Condition number	Condition code	Condition text																		
1	TM01	The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.																		
2	PL01	<p>The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: [insert plan numbers].</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Document Description</th><th>Drawing No.</th><th>Date Received</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Existing Location Plan</td><td>SK(00)01</td><td>5 Dec 2022</td></tr><tr><td>Existing Site Plan</td><td>SK(00)02</td><td>23 Feb 2023</td></tr><tr><td>Proposed Site Plan</td><td>SK(00)03</td><td>23 Feb 2023</td></tr><tr><td>Additional Information (Duncan Renewables)</td><td></td><td>23 Feb 2023</td></tr><tr><td>Renusol Console+ Datasheet</td><td></td><td>23 Feb 2023</td></tr></tbody></table>	Document Description	Drawing No.	Date Received	Existing Location Plan	SK(00)01	5 Dec 2022	Existing Site Plan	SK(00)02	23 Feb 2023	Proposed Site Plan	SK(00)03	23 Feb 2023	Additional Information (Duncan Renewables)		23 Feb 2023	Renusol Console+ Datasheet		23 Feb 2023
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		Mono Half-Cell Black Module Details	23 Feb 2023
3	MC14	If the use of the solar PV array hereby approved permanently ceases, it shall be removed from the site, within three months of that cessation and the land shall, as far as practical, be restored to its condition before development took place.	
4	LD04	The enhancement native hedge planting to the boundary hedgerow and the siting of a bat box shown on the proposed plan no. SK(00)03 shall be carried out in the first planting season following the completion of the development and any plants which within a period of five years from the completion of the development die, are removed or become seriously damaged or diseased shall be replaced in the next planting season with others of similar size and species.	

**Reason(s) for condition(s)**

Reason number	Reason code	Reason text
1	RSN TM01	To ensure compliance with Sections 91 to 94 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended.
2	RSN PL01	For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the details of the development comply with the provisions of Strategic Policies A and C of the North York Moors Local Plan, which seek to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the National Park.
3	RSN MISC09	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.
4	RSN MISC04	To enhance Protected and Priority Species/habitats and allow the Local Planning Authority to discharge its duties under the s40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (Priority habitats & species).

### **Consultation responses**

#### **Parish**

No objections

#### **Third party responses**

No comments received.

#### **Publicity expiry**

Advertisement/site notice expiry date: 16 January 2023 (allowing for Bank Holidays)

**View of the proposed site for the solar PV array looking east from the main farmyard**



**View of the proposed site for the solar PV array looking west from within the site**



**View of the proposed site for the solar PV array looking southeast from Monk's Walk (public  
bridleway) – the array will be located behind the farm shed and hedge.**



## **Background**

Beacon Farm is a working dairy farm with a large camping site, tearoom and ice cream parlour located on the north side of Beacon Way at the eastern end of the village.

The proposal is for a substantial ground mounted array of 12 rows of 18 solar panels totalling 216 no. 275W panels to produce a supply of renewable electricity for use at Beacon Farm. The panels will be mounted on freestanding ballasted tubs with a depth of 1000mm and maximum height of 450mm.

## **Main issues**

### **Local Plan**

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).

Strategic Policy A 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. 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.

Strategic Policy F expects new development to be resilient to and mitigate the effects of climate change and will be supportive of new development which reduces the need for and makes efficient use of energy; uses renewable energy; and incorporates sustainable design and construction.

Policy 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. In the justification to the policy, it advises that small-scale renewable energy developments which contribute towards meeting domestic, community or business needs within the National Park will be supported where there is no significant environmental harm to the area and the objectives of National Park designation will not be compromised.

## **Discussion**

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

The proposal is for a substantial ground mounted solar PV array of 12 rows of 18 panels which has been calculated to meet approx. 60% of the energy needs of Beacon Farm and will not generate surplus energy to be funnelled into the grid to be used by homes and businesses outside of the National Park. As such the proposal will meet the energy needs within the Park as required by Policy ENV8.

The proposed solar array is not considered to be significant in size or scale given the overall size of the working farm and associated tourism facilities (camping site, tearoom and ice cream parlour) which it is designed to serve. Given the very low lying nature of the installation (freestanding ballasted tubs) combined with the local topography, farm buildings and surrounding hedgerows and trees, the installation will largely be screened from public view, both from the public highway and neighbouring properties to the south and the public bridleway (Monk's Walk) to the north west . Furthermore, the method of mounting means that no ground work is required and the land can easily be restored to its existing condition in the event the equipment is no longer needed and is removed. As such is it considered that the proposal would not result in an unacceptable adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park as required by Policy ENV8.

In terms of bio-diversity net gain, the proposed site is predominantly an area of hard standing, surrounded by hedgerows and trees. Given the solar panels will be mounted on freestanding ballasted tubs there will be no below ground works which might otherwise impact on the root protection zone of the hedgerow and trees. It is proposed to retain the hedgerow and in order to comply with Strategic Policy H in terms of bio-diversity net gain, enhancement native hedge planting is proposed, and a bat box will be installed on one of the trees.

### **Conclusion**

The proposed solar array, although substantial in number and size, will contribute towards meeting the energy needs of an established tourism business within the National Park without harm to the environment or landscape of the locality and without compromising the objectives of National Park designation. As such approval is recommended.

### **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.