



Planning Advisory Panel South – 21 April 2020

Delegated Report

Application no DC/20/0766/FUL

Location

The Old School House
The Street
Kettleburgh
Woodbridge
Suffolk
IP13 7JZ

Expiry date 16 April 2020

Application type Full Application

Applicant Hoopers Architects

Parish Kettleburgh

Proposal Install 60 new solar panels which will serve an existing dwelling, and change of use to extend the current residential curtilage of the dwelling into adjoining agricultural land within its ownership.

Case Officer Jamie Behling
01394 444412
Jamie.Behling@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

Summary

The proposed development seeks to change the use of part of an agricultural field to residential curtilage for the erection of 60 solar panels servicing the host dwelling.

This application is to be considered at the Planning Advisory Panel in accordance with the scheme of delegation, as the officer's recommendation of refusal is contrary to resolution to support the application by the parish council.

The application does not accord with planning policy and as such the recommendation is of refusal.

Site description

The proposed site is an agricultural field that is owned by the applicant who resides in the dwelling to the west, adjacent to the site. The site is on the north-eastern outskirts of Kettleburgh with a road leading into the village bordering the north of the site leading around and down to the west side going south-west into the residential area. A thick vegetation lines the roadside to the north and south boundaries with it thinning on the west side. The grass field site is on a gradient rising to the east with the roadside west being the low point of the landscape with Church Road climbing opposite to the west providing open views of the terrain. An application was recently permitted at the dwelling adjacent to the site for residential extensions however this is not relevant to this application.

Proposal

The proposal seeks to convert a long strip, 95 metres x 15 metres, of the agricultural grass field in the south-west corner of the site to residential curtilage of the adjacent dwelling to accommodate 60 solar panels to provide renewable power to the home.

Consultations/comments

No third-party representations received.

Consultees

Parish/Town Council

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Kettleburgh Parish Council	24 February 2020	13 March 2020
Summary of comments: Kettleburgh Parish Council "With reference to the above application a Planning Meeting was held by Kettleburgh PC yesterday 12 Mar at 1930 at St Andrew's Church, Kettleburgh. Following a discussion between the council and some clarification from the applicant it was decided that the application should be supported in its current form. It is noted that the applicant's requested location of the panels (and the corresponding area for requested change of use from agricultural to residential curtilage) is on the brow of the hill and would not present a significant degradation of the view from the rest of the village. However it is also noted that this is not the preferred location of the LPA - which would be adjacent to the road on the west side of the property. Neither the applicant nor the KPC would support the application if this were to be the chosen location because of the visual effect both to the village and to the applicant's property."		

Non statutory consultees

Consultee	Date consulted	Date reply received
Landscape Team (Internal)	24 February 2020	4 March 2020
Summary of comments: No objections subject to condition.		

Publicity

None

Site notices

General Site Notice

Reason for site notice: Change of Use

Date posted: 27 February 2020

Expiry date: 19 March 2020

Planning policy

National Planning Policy Framework

SP1 - Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

SP1a - Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

SP12 - Climate Change (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

SP15 - Landscape and Townscape (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

SP29 - The Countryside (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

DM8 - Extensions to Residential Curtilages (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

DM21 - Design: Aesthetics (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

DM23 - Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy and Development Management Development Plan Document (July 2013))

Planning considerations

*Planning considerations - Principle, impact upon countryside and character of the locality and visual amenity

The proposal is in, what is considered the countryside as Kettleburgh does not have a settlement boundary within the current Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. The Countryside comprises an important economic, social and environmental asset within the district which it is important to sustain. The strategy for development outside of the physical limit boundaries of any settlements is clearly described within strategic policy SP29 is that it is to be limited to which of necessity has to be located there and accords with relevant policies within the core strategy. The size and scale of the proposed residential solar panel arrangement would not be considered a necessity for the districts goals to be achieved and although the scheme supports renewable energy which is seen as a positive contribution, does not automatically make the proposal acceptable.

Strategic Policy SP12 - Climate Change looks to encourage developments promoting renewable energy which are consistent with safeguarding the countryside environment and landscape. Although the development provides renewable energy, the positioning and the size of land needed to accommodate a relatively large residential related proposal does not appear proportionate or well related to the host site for the scheme to be considered as preserving the countryside landscape.

The extension to the residential curtilage is considerable with measurements from the proposed block plan showing an increase of approx. 1400sqm with the existing curtilage being only approx. 845sqm. This is a large increase in the size of the curtilage positioned awkwardly to create a L-shaped site that projects into the countryside.

The relevant Local Plan Policy (DM8) relating to residential curtilage expansion requires consideration of "(a) the resulting size of the curtilage reflects the scale and the location of the dwelling; (b) Its use would not result in visual intrusion caused by developments ancillary to the residential use;". The proposed extension to the curtilage is too large when compared to the original dwelling and does not relate well to the layout of the site and surrounding properties.

Local Plan SP15 - Landscape and Townscape also looks to protect and enhance the various landscapes around the district including agricultural fields from developments out of character with their surroundings. Although partially screened, such a large residential curtilage extension with a development of solar panels surrounded mostly by what is considered agricultural countryside is not characterful of the location or existing pattern of residential curtilages. It is therefore contrary to SP15.

The proposal shows additional proposed planting to provide some screening from the road views. However, this would take time to grow sufficiently to fully screen the proposed panels, and any other residential paraphernalia which is likely to result within the extended curtilage.

Although it is accepted that permitted development rights could be removed for fences and other means of enclosure, sheds and other outbuildings, fuel storage tanks and pools, there are items ancillary to a residential use, which do not constitute development but would still alter the

character of the site to that of residential e.g. benches, tables and chairs, flowerbeds and other ornamental planting.

In addition, the proposed planting as part of this application would significantly alter the shape of the existing field, and the proposed planting to subdivide the proposed residential curtilage extension from the remaining agricultural field would create a visual break between the two uses, further highlighting the change from the existing pattern between residential curtilages and agricultural land which characterised this locality.

Therefore the change would result in significant detrimental harm to the character of the locality, contrary to policies SP15, DM8 and DM21 of the local plan, and the principles of good design and those related to landscape considerations outlined in Sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF.

*Planning Considerations - Residential Amenity

The proposal is kept away from neighbouring properties with dense vegetation between the site and the nearest neighbour to the south. It is therefore considered that the proposal would cause no harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties and complies with policy DM23.

Conclusion

The proposed extension to the residential curtilage would result in a curtilage out of proportion with the dwelling to which its proposed to relate, and of a shape and location which would be out of character with the pattern of residential curtilages adjacent to agricultural land which characterises the locality. Even with the proposed planting and the potential to remove permitted development rights, harm would be created through the subdivision of the existing field.

Whilst it is accepted that permitted development rights could be removed for outbuildings etc, this would not prevent residential paraphernalia from being sited within the extended curtilage which in turn would create visual harm.

The proposed panels would also result in visual intrusion and harm, changing the character of the locality, especially whilst the proposed planting matures.

The scheme is therefore contrary to the principles of good design outlined in Sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF, and Local Planning Policies SP15, DM8, and DM21.

Recommendation

The application is recommended for Refusal.

The reason for the decision to refuse permission is:

1. The proposed extension to the residential curtilage and stationing of 60 ground mounted solar panels, adjacent to The Old School House, The Street, Kettleburgh, is located within the countryside.

Whilst the potential benefits of the provision of solar panels providing green energy are recognised, the proposal would cause more harm than benefit to the local area and landscape. It would result in significant harm to the character of locality, through the

formation of a residential curtilage which would be out of proportion with the host dwelling, and those within the vicinity, in terms of size, shape and location in relation to the dwellinghouse. In addition to the proposed ground mounted solar panel arrays there is significant potential for additional residential paraphernalia, which in turn would create additional visual harm. The development is not in keeping with the character of the location and does not preserve or enhance the countryside environment.

The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies SP15, SP29, DM8 and DM21 of the Suffolk Coastal District Local Plan - Core Strategy & Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (July 2013) and the design principles set out in sections 12 and 15 of the NPPF, which seek to safeguard the countryside for its own sake and seek to ensure developments recognise and are well related to the existing pattern of development and character of the area in which they are located, by only permitting extensions to residential curtilages that are proportionate to the host dwelling, and of a form, size and location which would not adversely affect their surroundings.

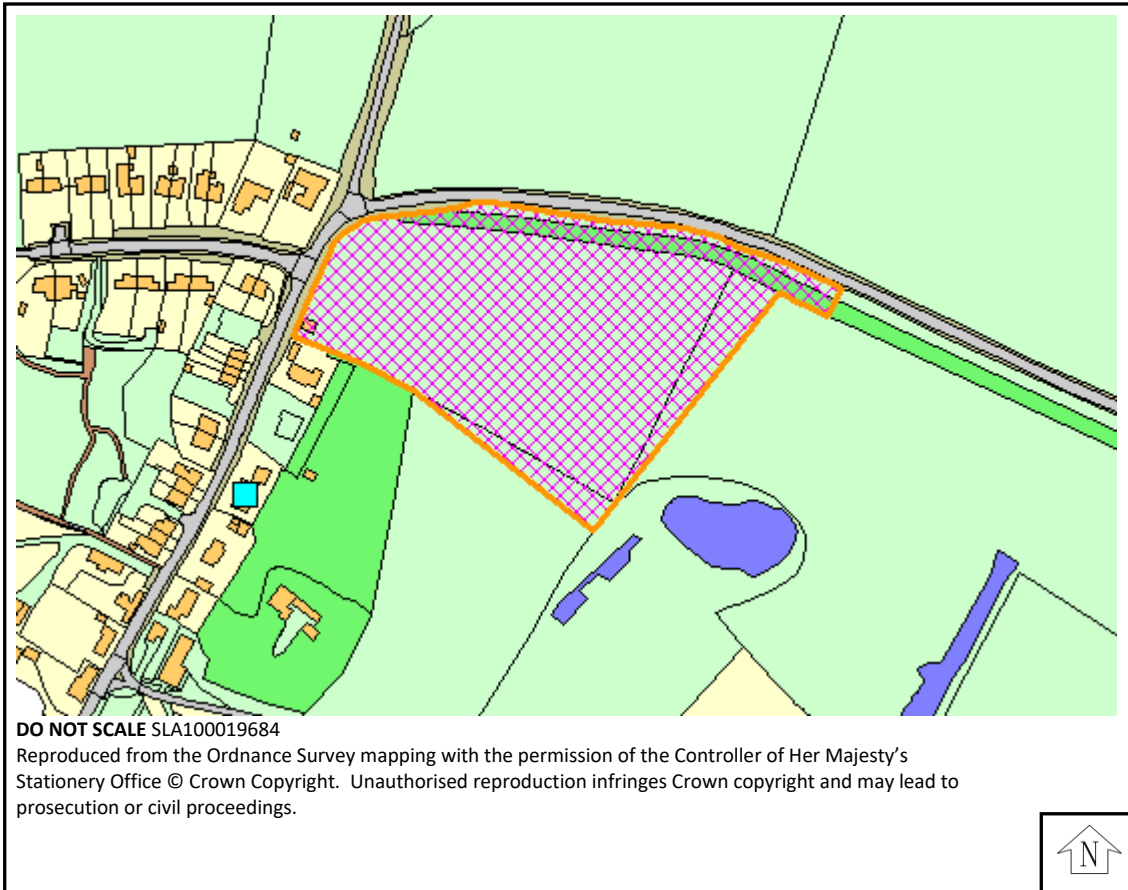
Informatives:

1. The Council offers a pre-application advice service to discuss development proposals and ensure that planning applications have the best chance of being approved. The applicant did not take advantage of this service. The local planning authority has identified matters of concern with the proposal and the report clearly sets out why the development fails to comply with the adopted development plan. The report also explains why the proposal is contrary to the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and local plan to deliver sustainable development.





Background information

See application reference DC/20/0766/FUL at <https://publicaccess.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=Q61VT3QHXF00>

Map



Key

-  Notified, no comments received
-  Objection
-  Representation
-  Support