Development Management - Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: **Recommendation – Approve**
AWDM/0976/11

Site: **Adur Indoor Bowling Club, New Barn Way, Southwick.**

Proposal: **Installation of 49.5kw of PV Solar panels to roof**

Date of site visit: 28.11.11.

Neighbours checked: Y

Proposal

The application relates to the Adur Indoor Bowls club, a utilitarian building of brick and metal cladding located in the eastern part of Southwick Recreation Ground, to the south of Old Barn Way. The building is approximately 42m wide (east to west) by 58m deep (north to south) with a shallow pitch roof with north and south side gables.

Permission is sought to cover a portion of each roof slope of the building in solar pv panels. There would be 49.5kw of energy generated by the panels aligned in a horizontal direction, and covering 336sqm with 210 individual panels, 104 on the east slope and 106 on the west slope.

To the east is Southwick FC with, beyond it, residential houses in Old Barn Way. To the north is Southwick Leisure Centre, a two-storey flat roofed brick building, to the west are the football pitches and the majority of the recreation ground. To the south is the raised railway embankment serving the Southwick to Shoreham part of the mainline railway, beyond this are the houses in Westbrook Way.

Consultations and Representations

Third Parties: There have been no third party objections to the proposals.

Relevant Planning Policies
Adopted Adur District Local Plan 1993-2006 (ADC 1996) (saved policies): AG1, AR1
PPS1 'Delivering Sustainable Development (ODPM 2005) and Supplement 'Planning and Climate Change'
PPS22 'Renewable Energy' (ODPM 2004) and Companion Guide (ODPM 2004)

Planning Assessment

Policies
The supplement to PPS1 recognises the urgent need for action on climate change. Both PPS1 and PPS22 state that the wider environmental and

economic benefits of all proposals for renewable energy projects, whatever their scale, are material planning considerations that should be given significant weight in determining whether proposals should be granted planning permission. Planning authorities are advised not to require applicants for energy development schemes to demonstrate either the overall need for renewable energy and its distribution, nor question the energy justification for why a proposal for such development must be sited in a particular location.

The promotion of such onsite microgeneration installations is considered to be a good thing that can only have a positive influence on the general perception of the bowling club and its sustainable credentials. It is not considered that this would be detrimental to the area as a whole.

Visual amenity

The building is located well away from residential areas, however the western roof slope faces directly towards the public park and the community football pitches, outdoor bowls area beyond, and more obliquely the MS Treatment Centre building, children's playground to the north, and the skate park adjacent to the railway line to the south. The proposed PV panels would cover a large amount of the existing roof, however the roof has a shallow angle and there would be a large amount of roof slope to the eaves as shown in the amended plans. Whilst there would be a large number of panels (210 in total) it is considered that the blue colouring is unlikely to detract particularly from the overall appearance of this particularly industrial building, and given the nature of the panel there would not be any significant reflection or glare produced. The location of the panels would be such that they would not over dominate the very large existing roof plane.

Residential amenity

The application building is well located within the recreational ground, well away from residential dwellings. The nearest houses are located on the south side of the railway embankment in Westbrook Way some 65m away. It is not considered that the proposed solar panels would have an adverse impact on the residential amenities of these dwellings.

Recommendation

APPROVE for the reason that:

The proposed array of solar PV panels would cover a large surface area on both the eastern and western roof slope of the building. However, in view of the shallow angle of pitch at which the panels would be installed, together with the relative separation from the nearest residential dwellings, it is considered that the visual impact would not be excessively intrusive, nor would they otherwise detract from the amenities of neighbouring residents or those using the surrounding area for recreation. Therefore having regard for the weight of national and regional policy which seeks to promote and encourage this type of small-scale renewable energy proposal it is considered the proposed development does not conflict with the 'saved' policy AG1 of the Adur District Local Plan or policies of the South East Plan (CC1, CC6, BE1) and accords

with national planning policy contained within PPS1 ‘Supplement on Climate Change’, and PPS22 ‘Renewable Energy’.

Subject to:

1. Standard 3 year time limit
2. The solar pv equipment hereby approved shall be removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer in use for the microgeneration of electricity.
   Reason: *In the interests of visual amenity and to comply with policy AG1 of the ADLP.*
3. Solar PV Panels to be installed in accordance with the following approved plans:-
   Drawing Title: 1:200 Layout Plan. Date received: 22.02.12.
   Drawing Title: 1:1250 Site Location Plan. Date Received: 22.02.12

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Carlos Hone Date: 29.02.12.

Authorised by: Jo Morin Date: 1.3.2012