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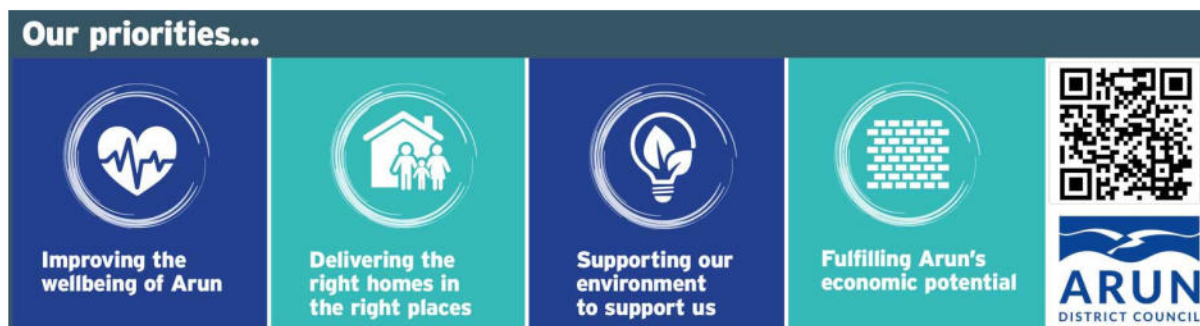
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From: Martyn White <Martyn.White@arun.gov.uk> **On Behalf Of** Conservation Officer
Sent: 21 November 2025 16:31
To: Planning.Responses <Planning.Responses@arun.gov.uk>
Cc: Hebe Smith <Hebe.Smith@arun.gov.uk>
Subject: BR/184/25/PL

BR/184/25/PL

The Royal Norfolk Hotel The Esplanade Bognor Regis PO21 2LH

Installation of 101 solar panels across roof. This application affects the setting of listed buildings, affects the character and appearance of The Steyne, Bognor Conservation Area and is in CIL Zone 4 (Zero Rated) as other development.

A map-based assessment has identified that The Royal Norfolk Hotel is a listed Building. It is also located within a conservation area:

The Royal Norfolk Hotel

The Grade II Listed Building was likely constructed in the 1840s, with subsequent extensions, notably after 1898. The building presents an imposing and elongated stuccoed façade, set diagonally at the junction with West Street. It comprises three storeys and has been extended from its original seven bays to a total of seventeen.

The ground floor features drafted masonry and pilasters between the window openings. Windows are timber sashes without glazing bars. First-floor windows are enriched with pediments supported on brackets; the central three are segmental, while the remainder are triangular. A continuous stringcourse links the cills of the second-floor windows, providing horizontal emphasis.

Above a low parapet, a free-standing royal coat of arms with supporters is prominently positioned at the centre of the elevation. The cornice is supported on elongated brackets, rhythmically spaced to articulate the upper façade. A balcony spans the central seven bays, supported on slender iron columns and enclosed with finely detailed iron railings.

The entrance is marked by a projecting glazed porch with classical columns. The rear elevation is irregular and less formally composed.

The hotel is a substantial building and is located so that it is visible from the surrounding roads. There are various views of the principal elevation which contribute towards its significance.

The Conservation Area

The Conservation Area is illustrative of the growth of Bognor Regis in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and derives its historic interest from its links to the development of Bognor Regis as a seaside resort town as well as its association with the founder of Bognor Regis, Sir Richard Hotham.

The conservation area has a strong grid pattern. It is clear in 'plan view' that the conservation area includes a series of roads which run on a north south basis which link up the promenade on the southern boundary of the conservation area with West Street, which is located (in part) to the north.

Architectural interest is derived from the various buildings with architectural features such as terraced houses with bay windows and balconies and building materials, such as render. The variety of buildings present creates a jostling vitality quite different in character from the formal buildings of Sir Richard Hotham's resort, which is located to the north around Upper Bognor Road (and is the subject of a separate conservation area)

The imposing Royal Norfolk Hotel is situated in the western part of the conservation area and is set back diagonally across the corner of Aldwick Road and West Street within a large area of private open space to its front, which enables the principal elevation to be viewed and appreciated. This area of open space also forms the largest area of private space within the conservation area. In addition, the Pier forms a strong focal point, extending into the sea

The Proposal

The proposal involves the installation of 101 solar panels across the roof of the Royal Norfolk Hotel. This is a grand and imposing building situated in the western part of the conservation area. It occupies a prominent corner position at the junction of Aldwick Road and West Street, set back

within its own extensive grounds. This arrangement allows the full principal elevation to be experienced and appreciated, contributing significantly to the building's visual prominence.

The Royal Norfolk Hotel is not only the largest building within the conservation area, but its open, lawned frontage further enhances its architectural presence and reinforces its status as a landmark structure. The building's scale, detailing, and relationship to the seafront are integral to the historic townscape and the significance of the designated heritage asset.

The proposed number of solar panels is substantial, with a significant proportion located along the front roof slope, which forms part of the principal elevation of the listed building. This elevation is clearly of architectural and historic significance, and any alterations here have the potential to affect its character. The submitted drawings confirm that the solar panels, or at least part of them, would be visible above the parapet. The introduction of solar panels in this location would result in a visually intrusive feature on a highly prominent elevation. This would appear incongruous against the established roofscape and architectural character of the building, thereby detracting from its contribution to the conservation area.

Such an intervention would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, contrary to the statutory duty under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and relevant policies within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which require that great weight be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets.

Alternative locations for the panels, such as the flat-roofed areas between the roof structures or inward-facing slopes that are not readily visible, would significantly reduce visual impact. These areas are not readily visible from public viewpoints and would therefore provide a more appropriate solution that meets sustainability objectives without harming the heritage significance of the building or the conservation area.

Conclusion

At present, the location of the panels on the principal elevation would result in a visually intrusive feature on a highly prominent elevation. As a result, the proposal is such that the impact can be described as causing less than substantial harm in accordance with paragraph 215 of the NPPF (2024). As such, you will also need to consider the public benefits that the development may achieve as part of your assessment of the application, along with the contents of section 66 & 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended).

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