

Our Ref: Bilsham storage containers FULL
Your Ref: TBC

100 Brand Street
Glasgow
G51 1DG

Arun District Council
Planning Services
Civic Centre
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 5LF

12 December 2019

Dear Sir/Madam,

Installation of two secure storage containers at land southwest of Drove Lane Farm, Yapton

On behalf of BL Solar 2 Limited, please find enclosed (via the planning portal) a full planning application to install two secure storage containers at the above consented solar farm. The solar farm has been constructed and is now operational in accordance with planning permission Y/87/13/.

Temporary planning permission (25 years from the date of the solar farm development commencing, in line with Condition 4 of planning permission Y/87/13/) is sought for the installation of these containers, which will be used to store tools and materials.

Discussions were held with the local planning authority (LPA) on 6th December 2019 to determine whether or not the proposed development can be treated as a non-material amendment (NMA). However, the LPA were of the opinion that it cannot be treated as an NMA and advised us to submit a full planning application for the installation of storage containers, hence this submission.

Location and Appearance of Storage Containers

It is proposed that the two secure storage containers will be located within the approved red line boundary of the solar farm, however the planning authority have advised that, nonetheless, full planning permission is required. As shown on the submitted Site Layout Plan, the containers are located in a relatively central area of the solar farm next to the access track. The proposed containers shall not appear as out of place in comparison to the existing buildings as their siting has been carefully considered to avoid them appearing as visually obtrusive. Views of the solar farm from outside its perimeter are limited due to the generally flat topography of the area and the solar farm being enclosed by mature screening.

The proposed containers will be smaller than the approved substation on the Site, with the dimensions of each container as follows: Container 1 (l-12192, w-2438, h-2591) and Container 2 (l-6058, w-2438, h-2640). Furthermore, the colour of the proposed containers will be RAL6007 Bottle Green; this shall help them blend in with the natural vegetation of the surrounding area thus further reducing their visibility.

Due to the relatively isolated nature of the Site, a point emphasised by the fact that the solar farm is encircled by mature screening and also fields which help to form a visual barrier from public footpaths and nearby roads, the visual impact of both storage containers shall be negligible and will not stand out separately. It shall fit neatly amongst the existing buildings and appear as part of the overall development. Furthermore, the nearest residential dwelling is approx. 750 metres from the proposed containers, meaning the impact on this property will be negligible.

Taking all of these factors into account, when compared with the scale of the associated operational solar farm, the proposed containers will not have an adverse, negative impact on the visual appearance of the development, nor have any greater impact upon neighbouring amenity. The containers would also be located adjacent to

existing infrastructure, therefore appearing as part of the overall development. Both containers shall not appear out of place in comparison to the existing solar farm infrastructure as its siting has been carefully considered to avoid them appearing as separate/isolated. It is considered that the proposed containers would have a negligible impact upon the openness of the surrounding countryside, particularly when taken into account with the operational solar farm.

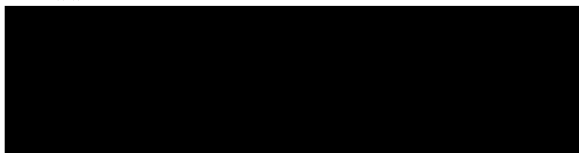
The National Planning Performance Framework (NPPF) was published in February 2019 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It sets out three overarching objectives in achieving sustainable development: an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy; a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing the natural environment, including making effective use of land and using natural resources prudently. The latest version of NPPF, just like its predecessor, states that the planning system should help support renewable and low carbon energy development to realise a “transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate”.

Policy ECC DM1: Renewable energy of the adopted *Arun Local Plan 2011-2031* supports renewable energy development that contributes to the social, economic and environmental development and overall regeneration of the District. In addition, *Policy ECC DM1* supports proposals that are located and designed to minimise adverse impacts to landscape, habitats, the historic environment and residential amenity including visual, noise and odour impacts. Like the NPPF, it is clear that the Local Plan is supportive of renewable energy developments like the one at Drove Lane Farm. The continuation of generating renewable energy would help realise the country's vision of becoming a low-carbon economy and considering the principle has already been accepted, would not result in noteworthy additional adverse negative effects on the natural environment and landscape, therefore is considered to be compliant with national and local planning policies.

It is important to note that this planning application is for the installation of two storage containers only and should effectively be considered as a minor change to an existing renewable energy development. Although the solar farm partially falls under Flood Zone 3, the containers will be situated in Flood Zone 1 and are therefore located in a sequentially preferable part of the site. The relatively obscured location of the proposed containers shall mean that any possible residential and visual amenity impacts will be negligible in their extent. There shall be no further significant impacts on landscape character and designated heritage assets as a result of the siting of both containers. The containers should be viewed in the wider context of the much larger operational solar farm; of which it shall be a part. The proposed development will not jeopardise ecology and landscape measures set out on the Recommended Landscape Mitigation Plan adopted under planning permission Y/87/13/, therefore no biodiversity impacts are anticipated as a result of the installation of two secure storage containers.

I trust the above is clear and hope that this proposed minor addition to the existing development can be granted planning permission timeously. Should you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Stephen C. MacLeod
Planner

