

<u>APPLICATION NO:</u>	24/00633/FUL	<u>CASE OFFICER:</u>	Maxine Wishart
<u>WARD:</u>	Whiston & Cronton	<u>PARISH:</u>	Whiston Town Council
<u>LOCATION:</u>	3 East Front Halsnead Park, Whiston, Knowsley		
<u>PROPOSAL:</u>	INSTALLATION OF ROOF MOUNTED SOLAR PHOTOVOLATICS (PV)		

Site Description

The application site is located at 3 East Front, Halsnead mobile home park, Whiston. Halsnead Park mobile home park, which is accessed from Windy Arbor Road via Main Drive.

The host property comprises a detached, single storey mobile home located within the north east corner of the mobile home park. The property is of typical mobile home design. It has a cream exterior to all elevations with white UPVC windows and doors and interlocking roof tiles. The roof is of duo-pitched construction with the ridge running the length of the building and there is a hipped feature to the front and rear. The property is surrounded by other similar mobile homes. There is an in-curtilage parking space; an area of amenity space to the rear and the site is enclosed with fencing.

The site is located within an area which is designated as South of Whiston and Land South of M62 Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) on the Local Plan Policies Map. The South Whiston and Land South of M62 Sustainable Urban Extension is allocated on land to either side of the M62 for new housing (north of the M62); employment (south of the M62); and a country park. Halsnead Park mobile home park sits within the northern part of the SUE site. The Halsnead Masterplan SPD assumes that the mobile home park will continue to operate in its current form, and that it will remain unimpeded by the development programme. New residential development will be located to the immediate north, east and south of the mobile home park separated by a strategic open space / landscape buffer. New residential development forming Halsnead Garden Village is in advanced stages of development.

Proposal

The application seeks permission for the installation of roof mounted solar photovoltaics (PV) roof panels to part of the existing roof. These panels would comprise of 8 panels with measurements of approx. 6.9 m by approx. 2.27m. They would be installed to the south facing side roof slope of the property and would project approximately 40mm proud of the existing roof plane.

The domestic installation of solar PV is normally likely to be 'permitted development', by virtue of Schedule 2, Part 14, Class A - *installation or alteration etc of solar equipment on domestic premises*, subject to limitations and conditions.

However, for the purposes of this legislation, domestic premises are limited to a *“dwellinghouse or a block of flats; or a building situated within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or a block of flats”*. Consequently, permitted development rights do not extend to mobile homes, caravans etc and therefore, an application for planning permission is required in this instance.

Consultations

Whiston Town Council - No Comments Received.

Representations

This application has been publicised by letters sent to 8 neighbours. No representations have been received.

Planning History

No relevant planning history.

Relevant Policy

Paragraph 11 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that planning decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or where the development plan is absent, silent or out of date planning permission should be granted unless the application of policies in the NPPF that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the NPPF taken as a whole.

Paragraph 12 of the NPPF clarifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan, permission should not normally be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.

The development plan in Knowsley comprises the Saved Policies of the Replacement Unitary Development Plan, the Core Strategy Local Plan and the Joint Waste Local Plan. The following policies are relevant to the determination of this application.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

SAVED POLICIES - KNOWSLEY REPLACEMENT UNITARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN (ADOPTED JUNE 2006)

H8 - Extensions and Alterations to Residential Properties

KNOWSLEY LOCAL PLAN: CORE STRATEGY

CS2 - Development Principles

SUE1 - Sustainable Urban Extensions and Safeguarded Land

SUE2 - Sustainable Urban Extensions - Development Principles

SUE2c - Sustainable Urban Extensions - South of Whiston and Land South of M62 (M270)

CS19 - Design Quality and Accessibility in New Development

CS22 - Sustainable and Low Carbon Development

CS23 - Renewable and Low Carbon Infrastructure

SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Halsnead Masterplan SPD (2017)

Design Quality in New Development SPD (2016)

Article 35 Statement

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.

Principle of Development

The site is identified as a Sustainable Urban Extension and a domestic development would be acceptable in principle within this location, subject to compliance with all other relevant local planning policies and guidance.

Proposals for alterations to mobile homes, such as the host property, which is occupied as a residential dwelling, should be considered in a similar way to alterations and extensions to conventional dwellinghouses. As such, Saved Policy H8 of the UDP is therefore considered relevant, together with Policies CS2, CS19, CS23, SUE2, SUE2c and the Householder SPD.

These policies and guidance require that new development demonstrates a high standard of design, which does not adversely affect the character of the property or street scene; maintains a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants; avoiding overlooking and overshadowing, as well as an unacceptable overbearing impact; and that adequate parking and garden space would remain for use by residents of the extended property.

Principle 2 of Policy CS2 strives to reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the effects of climate change through development by:

- a) *contributing to reduction in carbon dioxide emissions from all sources, in line with national targets;*
- b) *ensuring an ability to adapt to future changes to national targets for carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions, including recognising the role of new technology...*

Policy CS23 relates to renewable and low carbon infrastructure development and states that the Council will support proposals that will produce and distribute decentralised, low carbon and renewable energy, provided that they do not cause

significant harm (in terms of their number, scale, siting or cumulative impacts) to:

- a) Natural resources, biodiversity, geodiversity, water and air quality and, landscape character;
- b) Aviation and transport safety;
- c) Historical and cultural assets;
- d) Public amenity and living conditions; or
- e) Openness and amenity of the Green Belt, except in very special circumstances

Criterion 2 of Policy CS23 states that *“proposals must be accompanied by information that shows how the local environment will be protected, and how the site will be restored when energy production ends. Proposals resulting in an unacceptable impact must be mitigated by appropriate measures agreed by the Council.”*

Paragraph 167 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights).

Paragraph 168 of the NPPF continues to state that when determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should:

- a) *not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal’s contribution to a net zero future;*
- b) *recognise that small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; ...*

The installation of solar panels is supported in principle by the NPPF and Policies CS2 and CS23 of the Local Plan.

The main issues in this case are therefore the impact of the development on the visual impacts on the proposal on the character of the area and on the amenity of surrounding land and properties.

Assessment

Design

The existing property is typical of a mobile home in its design and other than entrance stairs with associated wrought iron hand rails the unit has not been extended.

The proposed development would be installed to the south facing side roof plane of the mobile home. The roof slope of the host property is quite shallow and as such the views of the proposed panels is likely to be limited and as such would not be highly visible from the streetscene.

The proposed development would comprise of eight solar panels installed on the existing roof slope on a trapezoidal metal rail system and comprise anodized

aluminium alloy frame with coated tempered glass coloured black.

The installation of solar photovoltaic equipment on domestic properties is a common feature, and as indicated above, can in most instances be installed under “permitted development rights”.

It is considered that they would not raise any significant adverse impact in terms of design on the character of the property or the locality in general and as such are considered to be acceptable in terms of visual impacts. The proposed development would therefore comply with the NPPF, Local Plan Policies CS2, CS19 and CS23 and Saved Policy H8 of the UDP.

Amenity Considerations

The proposal would involve the installation of the solar panels on the south facing roof plane of the building. The plot is surrounded by other mobile homes which are all single storey structures. Having regard to the likely views of the proposed panels being limited due to the roof slope it is not considered that the development would appear as an incongruous feature when viewed from the street or from surrounding properties.

The south facing roof slope of the property faces toward the side of the neighbouring property, No. 2 East Front which is located approximately 5.7m to the south. While there may be some limited views of the solar panels from the adjacent property, having regard to the small scale nature of the development and the increased presence of such equipment in residential environments, it is not considered that they would appear as an incongruous or prominent feature. As such there would be limited visual impact on the amenity of the residents of nearby properties resulting from the proposed development.

Glint and Glare

There is potential for issues to arise from reflectivity from the surfaces of the solar panels which can pose both a safety hazard and can cause annoyance to nearby residents.

The applicant’s agent has also confirmed via email that the solar panels would be anti-glare. It is considered that the development would be unlikely to result in significant detrimental impact due to glint and glare at nearby properties and to road users of the mobile home park. Other road infrastructure is some significant distance away which includes the M57 Motorway, located to the south of the park in excess of 350 m away, Fox’s Bank Lane at approximately 500 m to the east and Windy Arbor Road approximately 625 m to the west. The proposal would not therefore be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety in respect of glint and glare.

On balance therefore, it is not anticipated that the proposed works would result in any significant detrimental impacts upon the amenity of nearby surrounding residents or the local environs. As such the proposal is considered to comply with Saved UDP Policy H8 and Policies CS2, CS19 and CS23 of the Local Plan.

Highways

The host property is located within the Halsnead mobile home park and is surrounded by other mobile homes. The park is accessed from an unadopted road, Main Drive, which runs off Windy Arbor Road. The host property and the

surrounding mobile home park are accessed from an unadopted road network.

The proposal would not have any impacts on highway safety and the proposal does not conflict with Saved Policy H5 of the UDP and Policies CS2, CS7 CS19 and CS23 of the Local Plan.

Conclusion

The proposed development would be acceptable in terms of design and amenity and therefore complies with the NPPF and relevant Local Plan and UDP policies and is therefore recommended for approval subject to conditions.

Recommendation

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

- 1) The development must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this permission.

Reason: In order to comply with the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

- 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the approved plans and documents listed in Schedule 1.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt.

- 3) In the event that any solar panel or all solar panels and associated equipment ceases use, becomes redundant or are no longer required for the generation of solar energy, then they shall be removed, and the roof top of the application building be made good within 3 months.

Reason: In the interests of amenity and to comply with the National Planning Policy Framework (2024), Saved Policy H8 of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, adopted June 2006 and Policies CS2, CS19 and CS23 of the Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy, adopted January 2016.

SCHEDULE 1

Date Received	Ref. No	Version	Drawing/Document Title
20/01/2025	-	-	EMAIL FROM AGENT DATED 20/01/2025 RE: ANTI-GLARE
20/01/2025	-	-	S:FLEX TECHNICAL DATE - MID CLAMP AK II KCLICK 30-50 A
20/01/2025	-	-	S:FLEX PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS - S:FLEX SYSTEM SOLUTIONS
20/01/2025	-	-	SOLAX X1-MINI G4 - TECHNICAL SPECIFICATION (INVERTER)
20/01/2025	-	-	PHOTOVOLTAIC SYSTEMS - S:FLEX TECHNICAL DATA TRAPEZOIDAL METAL SHEET RAIL AK
20/01/2025	-	-	HI-MO 6 (SOLAR PANEL SPECIFICATION)

20/01/2025	-	-	ENVIROGUARD - SOLAR SPEED CLIP
20/01/2025	-	-	ENVIROGUARD - SOLAR PANEL BIRD EXCLUSION SYSTEM
20/01/2025	-	-	S:FLEX TECHNICAL DATE - END CLAMP AK II KCLICK 30-50 A
26/11/2024	0001-01	-	SITE LOCATION PLAN
26/11/2024	0001-03	-	PROPOSED ELEVATIONS PROPOSED PLANS
26/11/2024	0001-04	-	EXISTING BLOCK PLAN PROPOSED BLOCK PLAN

Signed Case Officer¹: M Wishart

Signed Authorising Officer²: K Foster

Date: 21 January 2025

Informatives

1 NOTE FOR APPLICANT: The applicant's attention is drawn to the following comments:

2 The proposed development lies within an area that has been defined by the Mining Remediation Authority as containing coal mining features at surface or shallow depth. These features may include: mine entries (shafts and adits); shallow coal workings; geological features (fissures and break lines); mine gas and former surface mining sites. Although such features are seldom readily visible, they can often be present and problems can occur, particularly as a result of new development taking place.

Any form of development over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry can be dangerous and raises significant land stability and public safety risks. As a general precautionary principle, the Mining Remediation Authority considers that the building over or within the influencing distance of a mine entry should be avoided. In exceptional circumstance where this is unavoidable, expert advice must be sought to ensure a suitable engineering design which takes account of all relevant safety and environmental risk factors, including mine gas and mine-water. Your attention is drawn to the Mining Remediation Authority Policy in relation to new development and mine entries available at:

Building on or within the influencing distance of mine entries - GOV.UK

Any intrusive activities which disturb or enter any coal seams, coal mine workings or coal mine entries (shafts and adits) requires a Mining Remediation Authority Permit. Such

¹ I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

² I confirm that I do not have a personal relationship with the applicant, agent or other interested parties; I also confirm that I do not have a financial interest in the site or the development proposed

activities could include site investigation boreholes, excavations for foundations, piling activities, other ground works and any subsequent treatment of coal mine workings and coal mine entries for ground stability purposes. Application forms for Mining Remediation Authority permission and further guidance can be obtained from The Mining Remediation Authority's website at: www.gov.uk/get-a-permit-to-deal-with-a-coal-mine-on-your-property

What is a permit and how to get one? - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

In areas where shallow coal seams are present caution should be taken when carrying out any on site burning or heat focused activities.

If any future development has the potential to encounter coal seams which require excavating, for example excavation of building foundations, service trenches, development platforms, earthworks, non-coal mineral operations, an Incidental Coal Agreement will be required. Further information regarding Incidental Coal Agreements can be found here - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/incidental-coal-agreement/guidance-notes-for-applicants-for-incidental-coal-agreements>

If any coal mining features are unexpectedly encountered during development, this should be reported immediately to the Mining Remediation Authority on 0800 288 4242. Further information is available on the Mining Remediation Authority website at: Mining Remediation Authority - GOV.UK

Informative Note valid from 1st January 2025 until 31st December 2026

Contd....

Appendix 1 – Site Photographs







