LIGHTSOURCE
SWITCHING ON SUNLIGHT

South Holland District Council,
Council Offices,
Priory Road,
Spalding,
PE11 2XE.

8th June, 2015

Application for Prior Approval under Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J(c) of the General Permitted Development Order 2015 – Installation and operation of a 858.585kW rooftop mounted PV system – Moulton Bulb Company, Long Lane, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 6PP.

This letter accompanies an application to South Holland District Council Planning Authority for determination as to whether or not Prior Approval is required for the installation and operation of a 858.585kW rooftop mounted PV system – Moulton Bulb Company, Long Lane, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 6PP.

It is considered that the proposed development constitutes Permitted Development under Schedule 2, Part 14 Class J(c) as follows (direct extract from GPDO):

> ***Permitted development***
> ***J. The installation, alteration or replacement of—***
> ***(a) microgeneration solar thermal equipment on a building;***
> ***(b) microgeneration solar PV equipment on a building; or***
> ***(c) other solar PV equipment on the roof of a building, other than a dwellinghouse or a block of flats***
> ***Development not permitted***
> ***J.1*** *Development is not permitted by Class J if—*
> *(a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a pitched roof and would protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof slope;*
>
> The proposed system sits flush with the pitch of each roof, and protrudes no more than 101mm beyond the plane.
>
> *(b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a flat roof, where the highest part of the solar PV equipment would be higher than 1 metre above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney);*
>
> N/A – the proposed system is on pitched roofs.
>
> *(c) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed within 1 metre of the external edge of that roof;*
>
> The system has been designed so that all panels are located more than 1 metre from the edge of each roof.
>
> *(d) in the case of a building on article 2(3) land, the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a roof slope which fronts a highway;*

N/A – The proposal does not involve any building located within Article 2(3) land.

(e) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a site designated as a scheduled monument; or

The proposal is not located within a site designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

(f) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a listed building or on a building within the curtilage of a listed building.

The Proposal is not located on a Listed Building, or within the curtilage of a Listed Building.

***J.3** Development is not permitted by Class J(c) if the capacity of the solar PV equipment installed (together with any solar PV equipment installed under Class J(b)) to generate electricity exceeds 1 megawatt.*

The proposal involves the installation of a system with a maximum capacity of 858.585kW.

In accordance with Clause J.4 of the above provisions, the following information is provided to assist the Planning Authority in making a decision as to whether or not Prior Approval is required under these Regulations:

Site Location

The site comprises a lawfully established processing plant used to supply onions, garlic and shallots to the UK market. The buildings are located 2km south-west of Moulton, and 8km east of Fulney.

Figure 1: Aerial showing site and surrounds



Figure 2: Aerial showing site and local surrounds



The wider site is used mainly for agricultural purposes, other than a row of houses located close to the sites north-eastern boundary. A dense row of trees run along the sites north-eastern, southern and western boundaries, with partial tree screening along the sites eastern boundary. Due to the orientation of the buildings, the screening measures already in place between the adjacent properties and the sites boundaries, and the distance the majority of the buildings are from the surrounding visual receptors, only limited views of the proposal on building roofs 1, 3 and 4 may be visible from Broad Lane.

The site is not located within any nationally or locally designated areas, and there are no Listed Buildings within the site or nearby. The nearest listed heritage assets include the Grade II listed building; Broadgate House Farmhouse, 1.3km west of the site, and the Grade II listed building; Clifden House Farmhouse, 1.8km east of the site. No impact on the setting of listed buildings would be impacted should development take place due to the distance and screening between the Listed Buildings and the site.

Description of Proposed Development

Application for Prior approval is sought to install solar PV panels on nine existing buildings at Moulton Bulb Company, Long Lane, Spalding, Lincolnshire, PE12 6PP, with a total combined capacity of 858.585kWp, covering 5,521.88m2. The electricity will be consumed on site, with any excess capacity exported to the National Grid.

The proposed installation will not fundamentally change the appearance of the building and the site setting. The panels will sit close to the roof plane meaning there will be no significant change to the height of the building, or orientation of the rooftop. The height and orientation of the processing

buildings, the screening of trees surrounding the site, the distance the buildings are from the surrounding visual receptors, and the low effects of glint and glare (as described in appendix A), means the effect of the development will be minimal.

Overall, it is considered that the proposed panels could be installed with no adverse effect on the surrounding environment.

Conclusion

It is considered that the proposal for a 858.585kWp rooftop solar photovoltaic facility constitutes Permitted Development under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015. Further, it is considered that the proposal will not materially affect the overall appearance of the building on which the development is proposed, and as such Prior Approval is not considered to be required in this instance.

I look forward to a response from the Planning Authority within the 56 day statutory limit. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require anything further in this regard.

Regards,

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Appendix A – Summary of potential for Glint and Glare

There is sometimes a misconception that PV panels might result in significant adverse glint and glare effects, with reflected sunlight creating a nuisance or even a safety risk for planes or traffic. This is not the case. The glass used to make the panels is not like window glass; it is specifically designed to absorb as much daylight as possible to convert to electricity, and therefore has a low level of reflectivity when compared to surfaces such as window glass, water or snow. Less than 9% of total incident visible light is reflected by PV panels, whereas normal glass reflects about 17%.

The potential for glint and glare from a rooftop PV installation is much lower than the potential for glint and glare from other man-made structures such as poly tunnels and glass houses, as well as natural features such as water or snow.

Glint refers to a specular reflection, produced as a direct reflection of the sun off of a surface. Glare refers to a continuous source of brightness, being the general reflection of a bright sky rather than a direct reflection of the sun.

In summer, once the sun reaches sufficient height in the south eastern sky, sunlight will fall directly on the panels and there may be a slight chance of glint occurring, however, the reflected beam will be directed back into the sky toward the south west. During the winter, the location of the sun in the sky means light would be reflected back into the sky toward the west-southwest. Because most of the reflections from the panels will be skyward, the solar farm will not create a traffic hazard, or nuisance to residential properties.

This skyward reflection does not create a safety hazard for aeroplanes. In Germany and the USA it is common for PV systems to be installed on airport terminal buildings, or within airport grounds, and in 2012 solar panels were installed on the terminal buildings at Birmingham and Gatwick Airports in the UK.