

Design & Access
Statement

And

Justification Statement

At
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Low Fulney,
Spalding PE12 6EH

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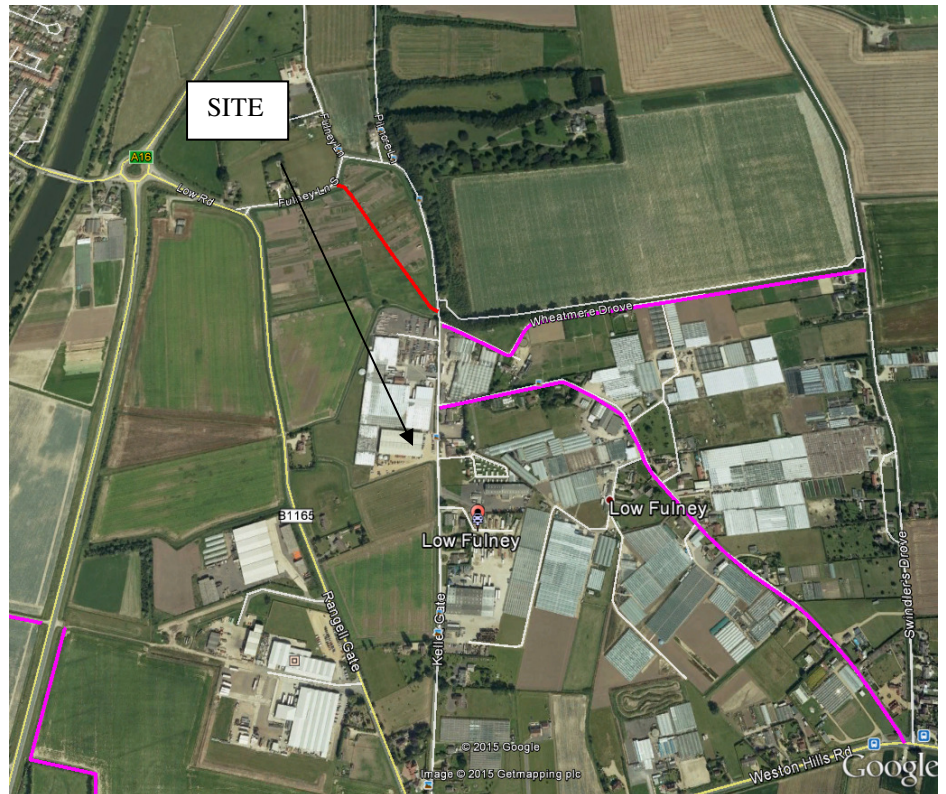
1 – Introduction

- 1.1 This supporting document provides supplementary information for A FULL Planning Application to be considered by South Holland District Council. This statement has been written in accordance with Government Circular 01/2006 – section 3 that came into force on the 10th August 2006 and takes into account advice offered by C.A.B.E. This Design and Access Statement incorporates an assessment of the sites immediate and wider context in terms of physical, social and economic characteristics and relevant Planning Policy context and history in order to define the influencing development principals.
- 1.2 The Application relates to the installation of Solar Photovoltaic Panels on Office/Warehouse Building at The Butters Group, Kellet Gate, Fulney, Spalding Lincolnshire PE12 6EH.
- 1.3 The application is to erect a 240kwp photovoltaic solar roof mounted panels including connection back to the electrical supply.
- 1.4 The Installation Company will be Freewatt Renewable Energy Company. Freewatt are Lincolnshire's Renewable Energy Company of 2012 and are the leading solar photovoltaic design and Installation Company in Lincolnshire and the surrounding counties.

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2 – Analysis of the Context of the Site & Its Surrounding Area

2.1 Application Site – The application site is accessed off Kellett Gate and the site is within the area of commercial buildings. The site is situated within a commercial and residential area. The application site comprises of the Butters Group office and warehouse building. For a large Horticultural business, the building for which the panels are to be installed is sited approximately 20m from the back edge of Kellet Road with car



parking and turning incorporated between the roadway and the building. The building itself is a twin gable steel framed building with internal valley and generally has brickwork to approximately 2.4m high with steel insulated cladding above, with eaves height of approximately 6m and ridge height of approximately 7.5m. The building is situated gable end to the roadway with the building measuring approximately 40m x 70m. Public footpaths and bridleways run close to the site.

2.2 Adjoining development – Kellett Lane has a mixture of industrial type buildings, glass houses and traditional single storey bungalow and two storey house and properties along this road frontage.

2.3 Views of and From the Site – As indicated the application site is within a mixture of commercial and residential properties. There are long distant views across the open countryside of the buildings, however short distance views of the location of the panels

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will be limited due to the relative position of the buildings and road frontages. The panels will be visible when commuting along Kellet Gate in a Northerly direction.

3 – Design Concept Theory/Design Appraisal

3.1 Scheme –The Scheme has been designed following a survey and analysis of the site its constraints, opportunities and surroundings to produce a development appropriate to this location and in character with the traditional development found in the area.

3.2 Use – Planning Approval is sought to install a 240kwp of roof mount photovoltaic solar panel installed in the position shown on the submitted drawings. The completed installation of solar panels could be removed after 25/30 years when the solar panels have reached their life expectancy should the client desire. This would return the roof scape to its original state without leaving a trace of the installation.

3.3 Amount – The 960 panels will be installed in the arrangement shown on the southern roof scape of the buildings. The installation as a whole will generate almost 240kwp of electricity which will be used to offset the costs of the Horticultural business, offices, warehouses and glass houses on the site.

3.4 Layout – Specialist Contractors and designers of the system, have considered the building layout and form to create a scheme that generates the most appropriate electrical generation for the site and the panels are to be located on a building, away from the



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road frontage, the panels are located on all four side of the roof scape, on the internal roofs they will be mounted on stands to allow the panels to collect the sun rays.

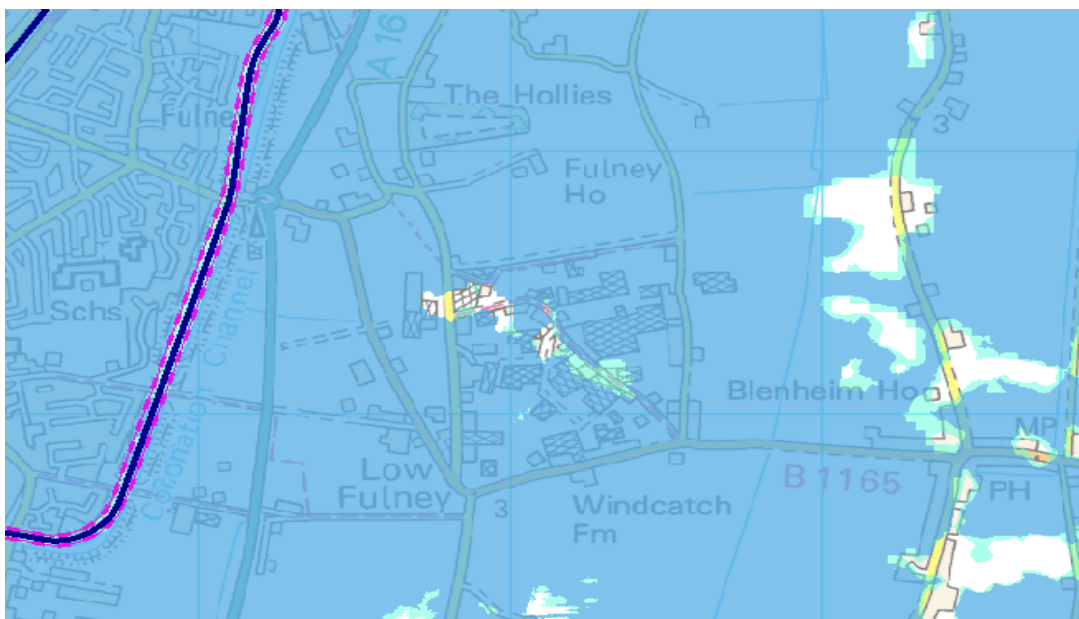
3.5 Scale – Scale should not be confused with size this is a relative term. In respect of this application the panels will take up a very small area of the roof scape of the site and will have limited views from ground level, due to the roof arrangements, other buildings and angles of the site.

3.6 Appearance – The appearance of the proposed development is dictated by the financial incentive for the use of PV Panels. These high performing solar panels will be sited on a steel frame structure which is shown on the submitted drawings. The aerial view of the panels will be of the Photovoltaic Cells themselves which are a dark matt colour. Anti-reflectant by their very nature photovoltaic panels are designed to absorb as much light as possible to create the maximum electrical output. Manufacturers aim to minimize reflection in order to make the panels more effective.

3.7 - Access – The access will not be changed by this application. The panels will be delivered to site by artic lorry and the erection company will travel to and from site in a “transit” type van, neither of which will have a negative effect on Highway Safety. The erection as a whole will take about 14 days. Maintenance visits will only be in the region of every 12 months and panel performance is monitored remotely to cut-down on service inspections. As the area is prevalent with Articulated Lorries, the use of an articulated lorry for delivery to the site together with its turning and manoeuvring will not be out of keeping in the area.

3.8- Flood Risk – The site is situated in Flood Zone 3 when viewing the Environment Agency Flood Risk Mapping System from rivers and sea. Due to the height of the panels being erected on the roof structure of the building, this being a non-vulnerable use, there is no need for a flood risk assessment to be submitted with this application.

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3.9 Justification of The Proposed Development: The applicant's intention is to utilise the generated energy to supply the warehouse, offices and nursery buildings with electricity, to cut down current energy costs, and reduce the carbon footprint to make the business more 'green'.

4 – Planning Policy

4.1 – The Application Site is within a defined employment area of Spalding as defined by the South Holland District Council Local Plan.

4.2 – National Overview – The Government believes that climate change is the greatest long-term challenge facing the world today. Addressing climate change is therefore the Government's principal concern for delivering sustainable development. Policies and priorities are set out in the climate change program and report of the 2006 Energy Review. It is the Government's policy to achieve 30% of the nation's electricity generation from renewable sources by 2020 indeed the Government's Climate Change Act 2008 sets out a legally binding long term framework to cut carbon emissions and create a framework for building the UK's ability to adapt to climate change.

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A report by the independent committee for climate change, commissioned by the Department of Energy and Climate Change concludes that Local Authorities should do more to help the UK meet its carbon budgets by championing renewable energy schemes.

In March 2012 the NPPF was created and its intention was to refocus planning policies to encourage growth and this includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

In particular the following elements of the NPPF would appear relevant.

- Paragraph 6 emphasises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieving sustainable development.
- Paragraph 7 identifies an economic role, social role and environmental role to identifying sustainable development.
- Section 10 of the NPPF deals with meeting the challenges of climate change, flooding and coastal change. The document makes it clear that planning plays a key role in helping to shape places to secure radical reductions in greenhouse gasses and emissions, minimizing vulnerability and providing resilience to the impact of climate change.
- Paragraph 97 states that to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energies Local Authorities should recognise their responsibilities on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources.
- Under paragraph 98 Local Authorities should not require applicants to demonstrate that there is an overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and also recognise that even small scale developments provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gases and emissions.
- It recognises that PV Panel benefits, for energy efficiency and environment arguments for reducing energy use and its dependency on fossil fuels are now widely accepted.
- The inclusion of the PV Panels is making use of energy conservation techniques through its positioning and orientation.

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The introduction of greener methods of generating energy into Britain's homes and businesses is encouraged by Government through feed in tariffs. The solar installation will therefore contribute towards the Governments incentive scheme of reducing the carbon footprint of buildings and the surrounding areas. It will also contribute towards the EU 20/20 goal for delivering renewable energy.

It is important that when considering this application that in months to come this type of application will no doubt be permitted development once the Government have changed the permitted development rights to allow non-domestic properties to install up to 1mw of panels. In this instance we would point out that:-

- The buildings are not situated on Article 1 (5 land)
- The solar panels would not be installed on a site designated by a scheduled monument.
- The solar panels would not be installed on a Listed Building or on a building within a curtilage of a Listed Building.
- Apart from the overall size of the array other requirements of the permitted development rights for commercial buildings are all met by these proposals.

4.3 – National Planning Policy – This emphasises in policy statement 1 paragraph 22 that planning bodies should ensure that development plans contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change. This aims to promote and encourage the development of renewable energy resources, rather than restrict their use. In accordance with this document and taking into account paragraphs 131-134 of the NPPF it can be noted that:-

- 1) There is a clear and convincing argument for the installation of the PV panels to reduce the running costs for businesses, homes and public buildings. In this case the introduction of these panels will offset the amounting electrical costs of the business premises.

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- 2) The solar panels have been paid for in their entirety by the applicant.
- 3) It is important to reiterate that after the 25/30 years of useful life of the PV Array, the array can be fully removed from the roof without having any physical impact on the roof structure.
- 4) It is also important that to know that the feeder cable will be routed through the roof spaces to the electricity meter.
- 5) In the longer term as the North Sea Oil, Fossil fuels deplete this will leave the country more dependent on importing fuel reserves from International Markets. The 2006 energy review estimated that the country could be importing as much as 90% of its gas by 2020 compared with 10% in 2006. Such dependency leaves the country vulnerable to rising costs, terrorism activity and consequently there is a greater need to ensure that diverse energy supplies become available. This will ensure that the country is not dependant on any one supplier, country or even technology.
- 6) The proximity of a site to a suitable electric grid connection is essential. In this case the electrical connection point is within a few meters for a supply direct to the grid. More importantly the panels are located as close as possible, without increasing their visibility.

4.4 – National Planning Policy Framework Section 10 – meeting challenges for climate change, flooding and coastal change – Paragraph 93 states that planning plays an important role in radical changes to support the reduction in greenhouse gasses. The document goes on to say in section 95 the Local Authorities are to support the move to low carbon futures and should:-

- Plan for new development to be located in ways that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Actively support energy efficiency improvement to existing buildings and

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- When setting any local requirements for building sustainability, to do so in a way consistent with Government zero carbon building policies and adopt national describe standards.

It is felt that this application, providing energy from a renewable source, would be compliant with this policy and provides an environmental benefit especially in carbon reduction terms.

4.5 – The NPPF all considers that “Planning plays a key role Supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. This is central to the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development”. It further state “to help increase the use and supply of Renewable and low carbon energy, local planning authorities should recognise the responsibility on all communities to contribute to energy generation from renewable or low carbon sources”.

The NPPF make clear that local planning authorities should:

- Not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and also recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions: and
- Approve the application (unless materials consideration indicate otherwise) if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.

In July 2013, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) published the “Planning Practice Guidance for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy” (Planning Practice Guidance). It advises that “increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. Planning

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has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable". It goes on to state that "The National Planning Policy Framework explains that all communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy, but this does not mean that the need for renewable energy automatically overrides environmental protections and the planning concerns of local communities. As with other types of development, it is important that the planning concerns of local communities are properly heard in matters that directly affect them".

The Government is legally committed to sourcing a minimum of 15% of UK total energy from renewable sources by 2020. In 2005, only 1.5% of energy can from such sources. In 2011, renewable energy accounted for 3.8% of energy consumption, up from 3.2% in 2010. The contribution of all renewables to UK electricity generation was 10.4% for the period July 2011 to June 2012 (it had been 8% in the preceding period).

It is considered therefore that subject to the specific criteria the principal of providing a roof mounted solar array would accord with Policy in the NPPF.

4.6 – Climate Change – Renewable energy proposals will be supported and considered in the context of sustainable development and climate change and taking into account wider environment and social benefits of renewable energy gain and there contribution to overcoming energy supply problems in parts of the district.

The proposals for this renewable energy technology will have no detrimental effect of the surrounding landscapes, town scapes or historic features or listed buildings. The construction and proposals will have no significant effect on highway safety.

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5 - Conclusions

- 5.1 – The proposed development has been designed to have no impact on the surrounding areas.
- 5.2 – Principally, the development has been designed to be incorporated into this setting without compromising the local area, neighbouring amenities or the requirement for unnecessary building work which would be out of context with the locality. The PV Panels will be installed with the expressed aim of reducing the applicants' dependence on the National Grid with an aim to reduce CO² emissions with any excess power produced being exported back to the National Grid.
- 5.3 – To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energies Local Authorities should recognise their duties to help communities; private individuals and businesses generate energy from renewable and low carbon source such as this application.
- 5.4 – The site context has been appraised through site levels, desktop studies of relevant policies, materials and visual appraisals of the site and its surroundings.
- 5.5 - The proposal has been prepared having regard to the local plan policy background as well as a review of national policy guidance and strategies which are considered relevant to the application. The sites full context has been assessed; this includes physical (landscape and buildings) social (nature and community), economic (effect on local economy) and planning policy.
- 5.6 – The visual effects of the proposed panels have been given due consideration. Due to both their nature and location, any visual impact will be minimal and therefore the application is policy compliant and it is submitted that the application should be granted planning approval.

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5.7 – In a statement on the 18th November 2014, DECC Secretary of state for energy and climate change Ed Davy has said “that he is absolutely convinced the falling cost of solar arrays will make it the cheapest form of energy available in coming years.” Therefore to assist businesses going forward approval of such schemes should be supported.

5.8 The Submitted drawings show the survey and scheme proposal in detail