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| Application number(s): | 22/02185/F |
| Application site: | Glebe Farm, Main Street, Sibford Gower |
| Proposal: | Installation of 24 ground-sited solar panels in field |

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| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Listed Building | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation Area | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Setting of a Listed Building |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grade I | <input type="checkbox"/> Grade II* | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Grade II |

Policies

Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (2015)

Policy ESD15 New development proposals should: Conserve, sustain and enhance designated and non-designated 'heritage assets' including buildings, features, archaeology, conservation areas and their settings, and ensure new development is sensitively sited and integrated, furthermore development should respect the traditional pattern of the form, scale and massing of buildings

Cherwell Local Plan 1996 Saved Policies

C18 Works to a listed building should preserve the building, its setting and any features of special architectural or historic interest. Alterations or extensions to a listed building should be minor and sympathetic.

C23 Presumption in favour of retaining positive features within a Conservation Area.

C28 The layout, design and materials proposed within a new development should respect the existing local character. 'control will be exercised over all new development to ensure that standards of layout, design and external appearance are sympathetic to the character of the urban or rural context of that development.

NPPF – Chapter 16

Paragraph 199. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.

Paragraph 200. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:

- grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
- assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly Exceptional.

Paragraph 201. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.

Paragraph 202. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

Paragraph 203. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Other Relevant Policies and guidance

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

Section 16. In considering whether to grant listed building consent for any works the local planning authority shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Section 72. With respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

Significance (50 words)

**The significance of this plot of land is that it forms part of the open agricultural land that has been assessed as being important to the conservation area in particular as stated in the conservation area appraisal that it 'anchors' the village 'to its agricultural roots'. Below this section of the filed are some strip lynchets which were used in the medieval period to form areas that allowed for cultivation in the steeply valleyed areas.
There may be other archaeological interest in below the site and nearby that may be impacted by the proposal.**

Appraisal (250 words)

The proposal is to erect two arrays of solar panels, 12 in each at the top of the field by the hedge. There are a number of trees near to where the electrical supply cable will run, and this should be considered by the Authorities Arboriculturist to determine if digging the trench will have any impact on adjacent trees. From a built heritage perspective, the application will have no impact on the adjacent listed buildings, although I note that there are two adjacent the former barn and Glebe Farmhouse. Neither will be impact visually as long as the hedge and nearby trees are maintained in good health.

Level of harm

No Harm

Less than Substantial Harm

Substantial Harm

Public Benefit (NPPG)

Yes

No

Comments

There will be some impact on the area of field that is proposed to be used for this project as it will no longer be in agricultural use. However, it will be a minimal change and there is public benefit in regards the production of green energy that outweighs the damage that the loss of the open field will have on the character and significance of the conservation area.

Recommendation

No objections

Objections

Engage in preapp

Suggested Conditions

Please check with the archaeologist and Arboriculturist if they would want any conditions.

Conservation Officer: Rosie. Burton

Date: 24/10/2022