

Application No: 23/00667FULL Full Application

Site: 10 Foxgloves, Garden Road, Burley, Ringwood BH24 4EA

Proposal: Solar panels

Applicant: Mr Harp Grewal

Case Officer: Ethan Townsend

Parish: Burley Parish Council

1. REASON FOR COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION

Contrary to Parish Council view.

2. POLICIES

Development Plan Designations

Conservation Area

Principal Development Plan Policies

DP2 General development principles

DP18 Design principles

SP7 Landscape character

SP15 Tranquillity

SP16 The historic and built environment

SP14 Renewable energy

SP17 Local distinctiveness

NPPF

Sec 12 - Achieving well-designed places

Sec 15 - Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Sec 16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Documents

Design Guide SPD

3. MEMBER COMMENTS

None received

4. PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS

Burley Parish Council: Recommend refusal. Comment: This application appears to be in direct contravention of NFNPA Policy SP14. Such introduction of solar panels in a visible paddock location (within the Burley Conservation Area and New Forest National Park) would risk setting a most unfortunate and unwelcome breach of environmental principles whilst also establishing a most inappropriate precedent for future such applications.

5. CONSULTEES

Building Design and Conservation Area Officer: An array of 40 solar panels is probably the upper end of what can be considered a small-scale installation but could be supported if it will be used solely for meeting the energy needs of Foxgloves. The panels will be low so visual impact from outside of the site would be minimal and thus are unlikely to have significant adverse impact upon the landscape or the character and appearance of the conservation area. However, unsure why the solar panels cannot be located within the domestic curtilage of the building.

6. REPRESENTATIONS

None received.

7. RELEVANT HISTORY

Outbuilding; demolition of existing outbuilding (22/00543) granted on 25 October 2022

Single and two storey extension; 1no. single storey ground floor extension; 2no. single storey first floor extensions; infill opening to create additional habitable ground floorspace; alterations to doors and windows; alterations to roof; swimming pool; two storey extension and first floor single storey extension to garage to form ancillary accommodation; alterations to outbuilding; cladding; render (Application for a non-material amendment to planning permission 21/00325) (21/00883) objections raised on 26 October 2021

Single and two storey extension; 1no. single storey ground floor extension; 2no. single storey first floor extensions; infill opening to create additional habitable ground floorspace; alterations to doors and windows; alterations to roof; swimming pool; two storey extension and first floor single storey extension to garage to form ancillary accommodation; alterations to outbuilding; cladding; render (21/00325) granted on 27 May 2021

8. ASSESSMENT

Application Site

- 8.1 Foxgloves is a large, two-storey, detached Arts and Crafts dwellinghouse dating from the early 20th century. The area is characterised by similar style dwellings, set back from either side of the road. The property is located within character area A of the Burley Conservation Area, and it is identified as a building of local, cultural, and vernacular interest.

Proposed Development

- 8.2 This application seeks permission for the installation of 40 solar panels on a field to the rear of the curtilage of the dwellinghouse. The panels would be arranged in two rows of 20. The row of panels would be 36 metres in length and have a height of circa 1.68 metres. The panels would be located near the northern boundary of the site.

Consideration

- 8.3 The relevant considerations relate to compliance with Policy SP14; the impact upon the landscape and conservation area; ecological considerations; and the impact on neighbouring amenity.
- 8.4 Policy SP14 of the Local Plan relates to renewable energy and states that development proposals incorporating renewable energy generation, other than wind energy, will be permitted where they are small scale, are located and designed to have minimum visual impact and do not have an adverse impact on the special qualities of the National Park. Subject to meeting these requirements, Policy SP14 does not specifically require small scale schemes designed for household use to be sited within the domestic curtilage.
- 8.5 In this case, Foxgloves has extensive grounds and the panels would be sited on a paddock located to the rear of the domestic curtilage of Foxgloves. The site owner has provided further information relating to why this location is optimal for the solar panels. Firstly, the roof of the dwellinghouse is broken up, which makes it unsuitable for panels. Secondly, the property is a non-designated heritage asset, and the installation of roof mounted panels could harm the aesthetics of the dwellinghouse. Similarly, if the panels were sited on the roof, they would be more visible within the conservation area. Whilst ground mounted panels could have been sited within the garden, this location was chosen given the distance from street scene and from public vantage points. The siting of the array within the land to the rear of the garden would have very limited visibility from Garden Road. The low height of the solar panels would mean that their visual impact from outside of the site would be minimal. The panels would be situated 84 metres from Garden Road to the east and 41 metres from the public footpath serving Campden Park

to the west. The site is well screened by trees and hedges on all boundaries. Given the distance from external public vantage points, it is not considered that the proposal would have a detrimental visual impact upon the landscape character of the surrounding area.

- 8.6 The proposal would provide electricity purely for domestic purposes for the dwellinghouse. Currently, the property is unsustainable, with the heating and cooking facilities relying solely on oil. The proposed number of panels would help the property move towards a more renewable and sustainable energy solution. An array of 40 solar panels is on the upper end of what can be considered small-scale, however, given that the property is of a considerable footprint set within a generously sized plot, and the proposal is required to make the transition to electric heating and cooking viable, the proposed number of panels is considered to be acceptable. The number of panels would be commensurate with the energy output of the dwellinghouse and it would help in providing a renewable, carbon free energy to the dwelling. Therefore, it is considered that, in the context of this site, the proposal would comply with the requirements of Local Plan Policy SP14.
- 8.7 Policy SP16 seeks to ensure that development preserves and enhances the character of the conservation area and the setting of any non-designated heritage asset. The Authority's Conservation Officer has been consulted on the application and considers that the justification provided does not sufficiently explain why the solar panels cannot be located within the domestic curtilage of the building. Whilst noting this comment, the proposed location is considered to be a sufficient distance from the setting of the non-designated heritage asset and other designated properties located on Clough Lane and Garden Road to not result in visual harm. Due to the screening around the site, and distance from the road, it would be less visible within the conservation area. Overall, the proposed panels are assessed to have a neutral impact on the conservation area and setting of the non-designated heritage asset.
- 8.8 With regards to ecology, the site is not located within the open forest and is not constrained by ecological designations such as SSSI, SPA or SAC, the nearest of which are circa 50 metres away. While the proposed panels would be ground-mounted, they would be installed with low impact screw foundations which would limit the impact on the ground. The field in which the panels are to be located, is currently not used for any specific purpose. It is intended to use this field as a wildflower meadow. The site could still be used for this purpose and therefore the agricultural use of this field would not be compromised by the introduction of the proposed panels. Given the minimal physical impact on the land, the proposal would not result in a significant or long-term loss of this agricultural land. The proposal does not include or require lighting and would not have an adverse impact on the wildlife or tranquillity of the area. A condition would be attached in respect of external lighting to ensure that tranquillity is preserved.

8.9 The parish council have recommended refusal due to concerns over compliance with SP14, its visible location and potential to set a precedent. As noted above, the panels would provide energy solely for this dwellinghouse and enable a shift towards more renewable energy. The solar panels would be situated in a location to minimise their visual impact, being located at such a distance from Garden Road that they would be hardly visible from the street scene. Mature vegetation surrounds the side and rear boundaries of the site, which would further screen the development and ensure that it would not have significant wider impact on the character of the area. The granting of planning permission would not set a precedent, each application would still be considered on its own merits, and in this instance, the proposed panels in this location is considered acceptable.

8.10 The rear gardens of residential properties 8, 10 and 12 Clough Lane back onto the paddock where the panels are proposed to be situated. The proposed panels would be well screened from neighbouring properties by virtue of the boundary hedgerow which runs along the northern boundary of the site. This hedgerow would minimise any visual impact from the proposed panels. The applicants have identified that there is an existing covenant requiring the hedge to be retained at a certain height. However, as covenants are civil matters, it is considered reasonable to also attach a condition to this application requiring the hedge to be retained and maintained at 1.8 metres in height to ensure that the visual impacts of the development are minimised. Furthermore, solar panels emit little noise, around 45 decibels of sound, which is considered quiet and therefore there is not considered to be any adverse impacts upon noise. Overall, it is not considered that the proposal would result in any adverse impacts upon neighbouring amenity.

Conclusion

8.11 The proposed development would contribute towards the provision of renewable energy at the site and is capable of being accommodated without an adverse impact upon the landscape, setting of the property, character and appearance of the conservation area, or neighbour amenity. The proposal is therefore overall considered to be in accordance with Policies DP2, SP7, SP14, SP15, SP16, SP17 and DP18 of the Local Plan.

9. RECOMMENDATION

Grant Subject to conditions

Condition(s)

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. Development shall only be carried out in accordance with drawing nos: 300-227/02 and 300-227/03. No alterations to the approved development shall be made unless otherwise agreed in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policies SP16, SP17, DP18 and DP2 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016- 2036 (August 2019).

3. No external lighting shall be installed on the site unless details of such proposals have been submitted to and approved in writing by the New Forest National Park Authority.

Reason: To protect the amenities of the area in accordance with Policies DP2 and SP15 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016 - 2036 (August 2019).

4. The solar panels the subject of this permission shall only be used in conjunction with the domestic property of 10 Foxgloves. The panels shall be removed when no longer needed and the land restored to its former condition, or condition agreed by the Local Planning Authority

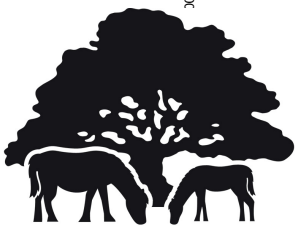
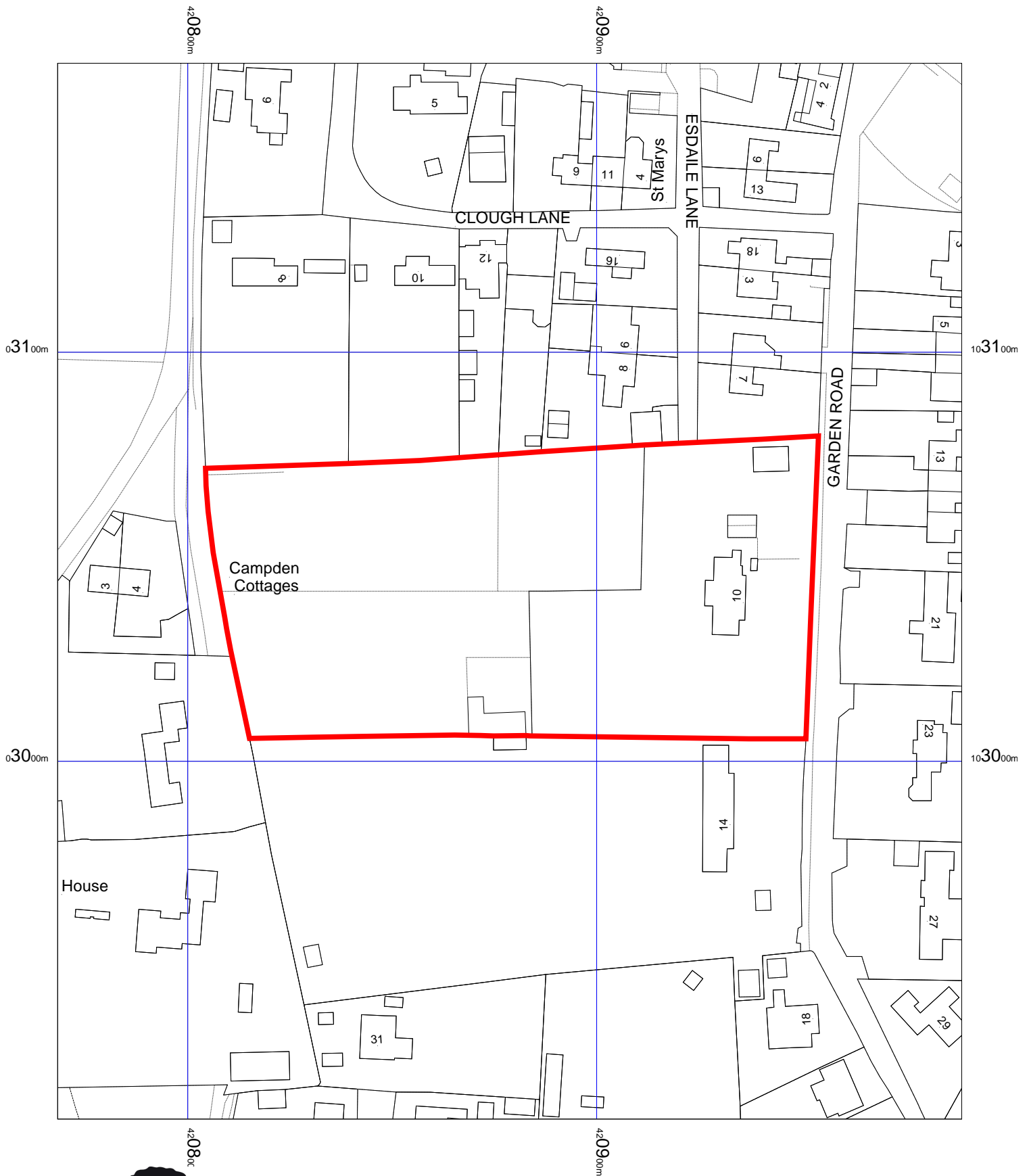
Reason: In the interests of safeguarding the long-term character and appearance of the area and as the solar array is only justified on the basis that it is necessary for small-scale energy provision for an individual household in accordance with Policy SP14 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016 - 2036

5. The hedgerow on the northern boundary of the site, shall be retained in perpetuity and maintained at a minimum height of 1.8 metres.

Reason: To ensure the appearance and setting of the development is satisfactory and to comply with Policy DP2 of the adopted New Forest National Park Local Plan 2016 - 2036 (August 2019).

Informative(s):

1. The applicant should note the Authority is not satisfied that the entire red line site area consists of the residential curtilage.



NEW FOREST
NATIONAL PARK

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