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Development Management

Planning Service
Sheffield City Council
Howden House
1 Union Street
Sheffield
S1 2SH

Date: 2/2/2018

Our Ref: SRE1088

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Installation of Solar Rooftop PV Array at FCC Environment, Starnhill Close, Ecclesfield, Sheffield, S35 9TG

On behalf of the Applicant, FCC Environment, we are writing to apply for planning permission to erect a solar photovoltaic (PV) array on the roof of an existing building at FCC Environment's Ecclesfield facility.

The General Permitted Development Order 2015, as amended, sets out permitted development rights for rooftop solar PV proposals. Those provisions do not apply to the current proposal, as it involves installing panels less than 1 metre from edge of the roof, in order to maximise the generation of renewable energy.

Site Context

The host building is located within the Ecclesfield Business and Industrial Area between the A6135 and the East Coast main line. FCC's Ecclesfield facility accepts waste liquids for treatment. The wider site is surrounded by business and industrial uses, with Butterthwaite Industrial Estate to the east, the Ecclesfield Stagecoach Depot to the south, specialist engineering and warehousing to the west and north.

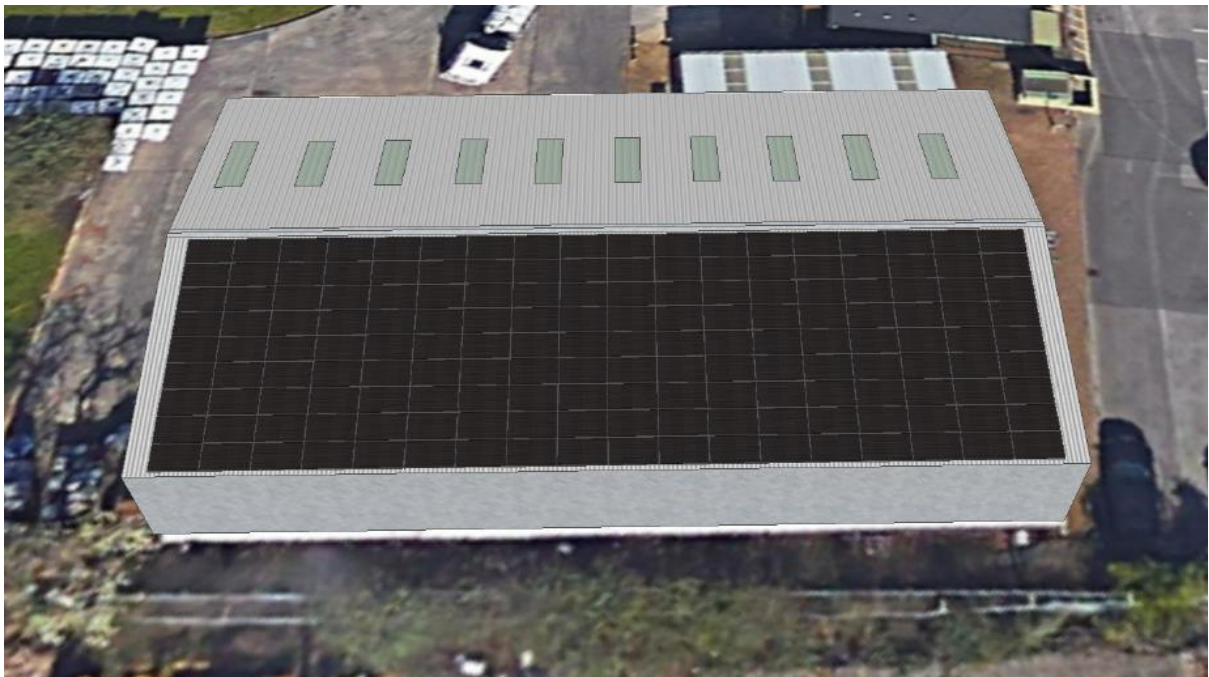
The host building, where the solar PV panels are proposed to be installed, is currently used by the applicant to store materials and chemicals for the liquid treatment process. It is a steel frame portal building on a concrete base with corrugated panels and blockwork to walls and corrugated sheet roofing with skylights and internal strip lighting.



Oblique aerial photograph of site from the south.

The Proposal

The proposal is to install an array of solar PV panels on the south-east facing slope of the host building. The total number of panels will be 162, arranged in 9 rows of 18 panels. The inverter will be installed within the building, allowing the power to be either consumed onsite or exported to the local distribution network for other users. The attached drawings illustrate the proposed layout of the rooftop array. The panels are manufactured by Bisol and are rated at 300Wp. The total capacity of the array will be 48.6kWp. The panels will be secured to the roof using aluminium rails that are designed specifically for this type of roof and made to withstand high wind and snow loads. Specification documents for the panels and mounting system are attached to this application.



Indicative Photomontage of Proposed Rooftop Array (not to scale)

Planning Policy Context and Justification

The local planning authority, Sheffield City Council, is required to determine planning applications in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The adopted development plan for Sheffield comprises the Core Strategy and saved UPD policies.

The Core Strategy supports the generation of renewable energy (S11.2, Policy CS63 & CS65) to help mitigate climate change, and making the best use of the natural features sites. The UDP Proposals map indicates the site lies within a General Industrial Area, and the 2013 Draft Proposals map shows the site lies in a Business and Industrial Area, areas the development plan seeks to provide support to the existing business community. Emerging policy on development and area character requires proposals to respond to architectural, historic and landscape character, and the surrounding neighbourhood context. The proposal represents an opportunity for the applicant to reduce the carbon footprint of its operations, and bring part of its energy needs under its own control, supporting future employment prospects. The industrial character of the site and surrounding uses mean that the site is less sensitive to character change. Nevertheless, the proposed siting and design of the array will fit seamlessly into an existing rooftop, with minimal effects on views of the building from surrounding areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework provides a presumption in favour in of sustainable development, and encourages planning authorities to approve development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. Paragraph 98 advises that when local authorities are determining planning applications, they 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 if the impacts are (or can be made) acceptable.”

The PV array will require little maintenance beyond occasional visits to clean, check and repair panels, by personnel using small vehicles (4x4 or Van). There is no perceptible noise from the operation of the panels which could impact on surrounding land uses. Regarding glint and glare, the panels are designed to absorb as much daylight as possible, and therefore have low reflectivity when compared to surfaces such as glass or water, further reducing potential impacts the surrounding area.

The proposed PV array represents an opportunity for Sheffield City Council to support the applicant’s plans to lower the carbon footprint of its operations, increase renewable energy generation in the city, and make best use of natural resources without adversely affecting neighbouring uses and local character.

This application will be submitted via the Planning Portal, and payment of the application fee of £95 will be made over the telephone.

Should you have any queries please contact the Sirius Planning team.

Many Thanks,

Toby Coke
Development Planner

PlanningConsultations@thesiriusgroup.com

For and on behalf of Sirius Planning Ltd

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Application Form

Cover Letter (this document)

Location Plan

Site Plan

Solar PV Panels and Mounting System Technical Specification Documents