



**Application for installation of 23 solar panels
to roof of rear elevation of existing barn**

**Bonwycks Place Ifield Wood Ifield Crawley
RH11 0LE.**

Planning and Design and Access Statement

Application Site

The application site itself on which the solar panels are to be located is an existing detached barn building. The barn itself is used as a detached outbuilding for ancillary purposes for the existing main dwellinghouse known as Bonwycks Place.

The Council confirmed within a Pre Application enquiry letter dated 2 March 2026 that the detached barn building was not considered to form part of the curtilage of the main house and stated the following:

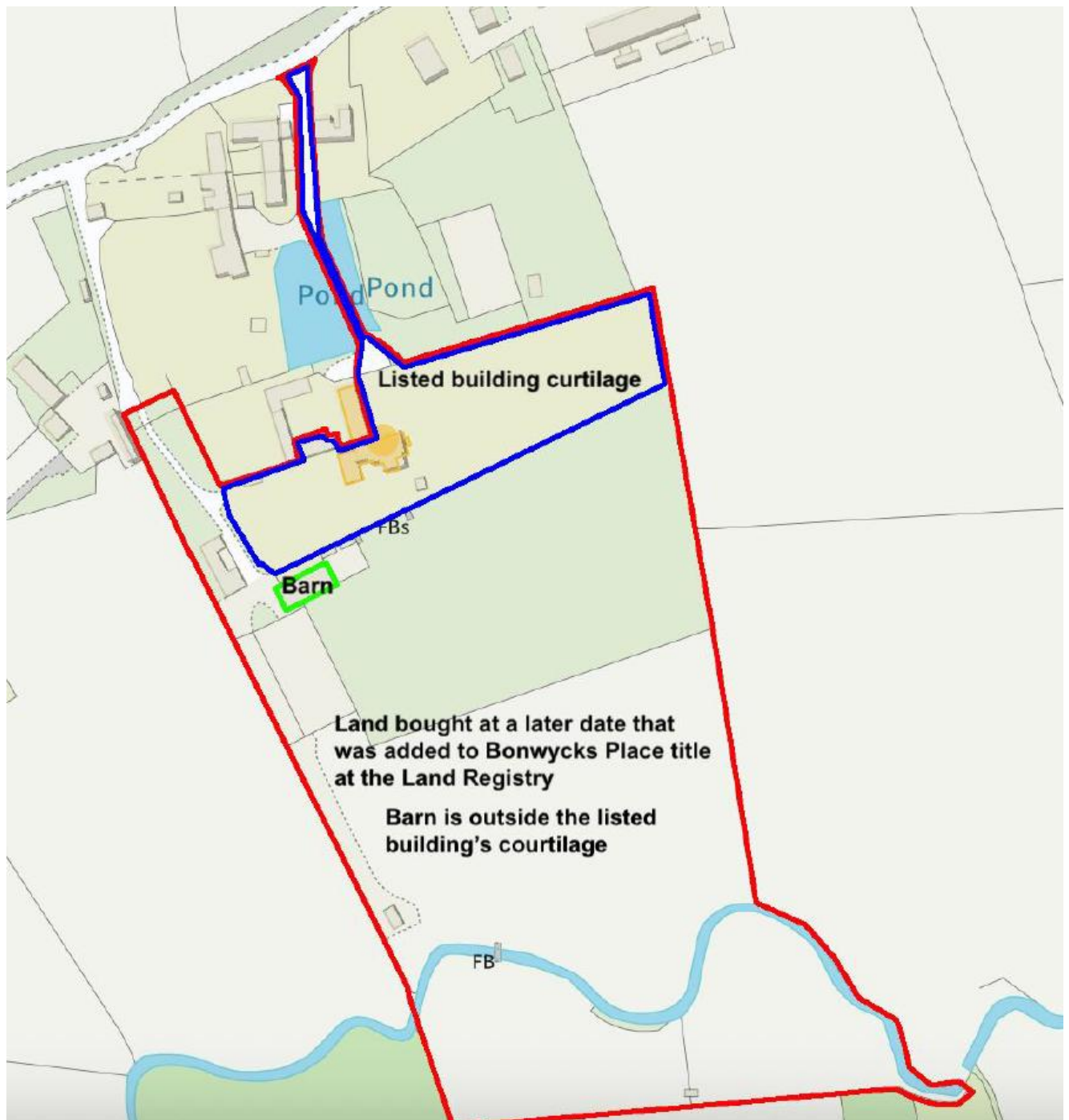
“The application building is not considered to form part of the curtilage of the listed building, given the physical separation and boundary treatment to Bonwycks Place- historic aerial photography demonstrates this distinct separation over time. Thus, the building is considered to be a nonresidential outbuilding.”

The existing detached barn/ outbuilding is located within the land registry title of Bonwycks Place, title number WSX260522. The house and surrounding land was sold at auction in 1973, in several lots. At a later date in the 1980's it appears that the previous owners bought the additional land which was then added to Bonwycks Place title and included the detached barn/outbuilding.

Site image of existing detached barn / outbuilding and location of proposed solar panels:



The Listed Building's curtilage is shown on the site plan below and outlined in blue. The whole of the site under the Applicant's ownership, including the detached barn/outbuilding is shown within the red line site boundaries:



The Proposal:

The applicant is seeking planning permission to install 23 solar panels onto the existing pitched roof. The panels would be Infinity Renewables - Aiko 495 W ABC solar panels cell black modular Solar panels. There would be a total of 23 panels as indicated on the submitted drawings. They would include anti-reflection coating, high transmission, low iron tempered glass in anodized aluminum alloy frame.

The existing roof is roof slate and suitable clamp fixings would be fitted as per the manufacturers specifications.

Planning History:

There is a variety of applications in the area and at the site for alterations and works but nothing of significant relevance to this proposal.

Assessment:

The following policy and guidance documents are recognised as primary considerations for the decision of the associated application at the site location:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 25 - Strategic Policy: The Natural Environment and Landscape Character
Policy 26 - Strategic Policy: Countryside Protection
Policy 28 - Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside
Policy 31 - Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 32 - Strategic Policy: The Quality of New Development
Policy 33 - Development Principles
Policy 34 - Cultural and Heritage Assets
Policy 40 - Sustainable Transport
Policy 41 - Parking

Rusper Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2031
RUS1: Spatial Plan
RUS2: Rural Diversification
RUS3: Design
RUS4: Local Heritage Assets
RUS5: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
RUS6: Walking, Cycling and Equestrian Routes
RUS7: Local Green Spaces
RUS8: Landscape Character and Local Gaps

Horsham District Local Plan (2023-40) (Regulation 19):

Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use
Policy 17: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity
Policy 19: Development Quality
Policy 20: Development Principles
Policy 21: Heritage Assets and Managing Change within the Historic Environment
Policy 24: Sustainable Transport
Policy 25: Parking
Policy 45: Replacement Dwellings and House Extensions in the Countryside

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF explains that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

i) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

ii) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

iii) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has a general presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF confirms that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development and that development that accords with the development plan should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para 11 of the NPPF (and footnote 8) also advises that where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, permission should be granted unless there are specific policies in the NPPF that indicate that development should be restricted. This applies to a variety of designations, including SSSIs, Green Belt, AONBs, designated heritage assets and locations at risk of flooding.

The Government's new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force on 12th December 2024. This sets out revised guidance and policies for planning across England.

Policy 37 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) states that proposals must seek to improve the sustainability of development. To deliver sustainable design, development should incorporate measures that, among other things, maximise energy efficiency and integrate the use of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy.

Policies 35 and 36 of the HDPF state that all development will be required to contribute to clean, efficient energy, including the use of decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy supply systems.

The use of renewable energy resources are supported within national and local planning policy, where it considers that increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to secure a reliable energy supply, and also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Policy 36 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) 2015 seeks to ensure that the Council permits schemes for renewable energy (e.g. solar) where they do not have a significant adverse effect on landscape and townscape character, biodiversity, heritage or cultural assets or amenity value.

Policies 32 and 33 of the HDPF seek to ensure that development promotes a high standard and quality of design in order to enhance and protect locally distinctive characters. The policies also seek to ensure that the scale, massing and appearance of development relates sympathetically with the built surroundings, landscape, open spaces and routes within and adjoining the site, including any impact on the skyline and important views.

In this case the application seeks to install solar panels onto the roof of the existing detached barn/outbuilding which is located some distance from the Listed Building and as previously stated does not fall within its curtilage.

The proposal aims to reduce the carbon footprint of main dwelling by the proposed use of this renewable energy source. The principal of solar panels to support the energy requirement of the main house is in our view considered to be acceptable.

Policy 34 of the HDPF states that *“The Council recognises that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource, and as such the Council will sustain and enhance its historic environment through positive management of development affecting heritage assets”*. It expects applications which affect heritage assets to *“Make a positive contribution to the character and distinctiveness of the area, and ensuring that development in conservation areas is consistent with the special character of those areas”*. As well as *“Retain and improves the setting of heritage assets, including views, public rights of way, trees and landscape features, including historic public realm features.”*

Historic England have issued guidance on ‘Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency’ (2024), which includes advice on solar panels on land associated with a listed building. The guidance sets out that: -

- The installation of panels away from the listed building can often be done without any direct harm to the building’s special interest.

- However, consideration will still need to be given to the effect of an installation on the setting of the listed building.

- Where an installation can be made away from the listed building, and would cause no, or less, harm to its special interest, there will be less justification to install panels on the building itself.

-Consideration should be given to reducing the visual impact of ground mounted panels in the setting of listed buildings, for instance using hedges to screen them and designing unobtrusive security measures.

In this application the proposed solar panels are designed and located to significantly reduce their visual impact on the nearby Listed Building and its setting. The installation location has been chosen carefully and is away from the Listed Building in conformity with the Historic England Guidance.

Policy RUS3 of the Neighbourhood Plan concerns design and states that proposals for new development, including extensions to existing buildings and schemes for renewable energy must be of the highest design standards, and will be required to reflect the character and scale of surrounding buildings. The Policy also supports the provision of renewable energy stating that *"Proposals will be expected to make the fullest contribution to minimising carbon dioxide emissions and make efficient use of natural resources"*

The Applicant is proposing through Infinity Energy to install 23 panels, each panel measures 1762 x 1134 x 30 mm, so this covers an area of 15.876m x 2.896m.

It is noted that if the panels were fitted and placed 0.2m above the ridge tiles (as per Horsham's Pre Application Advice response letter), then planning would not be required. However, this would be ugly, particularly from the house side. A better solution is now suggested which is to lower the solar panels by 0.4m.

Another suggestion was also considered but ruled out due to significant adverse impacts upon the character of the area and the setting of the Listed Building. One solar company the Applicant's approached quoted/proposed installing 50 solar panels in the field. This would be harmful and would not in our opinion be sited to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area.

As seen in the indicative images below, supplied by the Applicant's the current proposal is much more in keeping and much less harmful to the character of the area and its setting than what could potentially be completed as a fallback position under permitted development tolerances:



Solar Panels layout – without planning required, this complies with Horsham Planning letter



Solar Panels layout – proposed to lower the lower edge threshold from 1.0m to 0.6m

With regards to how the panels are fixed to the existing roof and what projection they have the fixings are minimal. Please see a link to the Renusol (mounting manufacture) website below. It is proposed to use the Genius Speedflash flashing with their roof hook and rail system. There is the option to use black anodised rails over using silver aluminium rails, with a slight cost increase, however due to the way the panels are mounted there will be usually be less than 50mm of protruding rail from the edge of the solar array: <https://www.renusol.com/en/solar-panel-mounting/pitched-roof-tiles-fibre-cement-etc/vs/>

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity:

Policy 33 of the HDPF states that permission will be granted for development that does not cause unacceptable harm to the amenity of the occupiers/users of nearby properties and land.

Although the siting and layout of the proposed solar panels would introduce a modern feature within a rural setting, as discussed above they are sensitively located and designed to reduce and minimize any adverse impacts.

With regards to any potential glare from the solar panels there is some information available on solar panels generally, and the Sunpower statement from 2009 explains the glare of solar panels vs tradition building materials, at a time when solar panels were typically much more reflective and much lower efficiency. There has been improvements over time since 2009 in glare reduction over the panel described in the Sunpower technical note.

Solar photovoltaic modules are specifically designed to maximise the absorption of solar radiation and therefore minimise reflection. This characteristic is widely documented in industry literature. For example, a technical memorandum published by SunPower Corporation titled “Solar Module Glare and Reflectance” (SunPower Technical Notification T09014, 2009) explains that photovoltaic modules utilise high-transmission, low-iron solar glass, which absorbs more light and reflects less light than standard architectural glazing. The memo states that solar module glass produces significantly lower glare and reflectance than standard window glass or other common reflective building materials, and that the reflected energy percentage from solar glass is comparatively low relative to common surfaces such as glass façades or metal roofing.

The proposed development would utilise AIKO all-back-contact (ABC) photovoltaic modules. These modules incorporate several design characteristics that further reduce potential reflection when compared with conventional photovoltaic modules. In particular, ABC technology places all electrical contacts on the rear of the cell, meaning there are no metallic busbars or ribbons on the front surface of the panel. This increases the proportion of the module surface dedicated to light absorption and reduces reflective elements on the panel face. The modules also utilise anti-reflective, textured solar glass, which functions in a similar manner to the textured or stippled glass described in the SunPower technical memorandum, transmitting a greater proportion of incident light to the solar cells while diffusing any reflected light.

Consequently, the reflective characteristics of the proposed AIKO ABC modules are expected to be comparable to or lower than those described in the SunPower technical study, due to the absence of front-side electrical conductors and the use of modern anti-reflective solar glass technologies. As with all photovoltaic installations, the panels are mounted at a fixed tilt and orientation designed to optimise solar energy capture, meaning that any limited reflected light is primarily directed upward toward the sky rather than toward surrounding receptors.

It is considered that the siting and layout of the proposal, the extensive screening and the resulting relationship with adjoining properties would be sufficient to prevent any unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity.

As such, the proposal would comply with Policy 33, as it would not result in unacceptable harm to neighbouring amenity through adverse visual impact nor the erosion of the area's established character and appearance.

Water Neutrality

The nature and scale of the proposed development would not result in a more intensive occupation of the dwelling necessitating an increased consumption of water that would result in a significant impact on the Arun Valley SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The grant of planning permission would not therefore adversely affect the integrity of these sites or otherwise conflict with policy 31 of the HDPF, NPPF paragraph 180 and the Council's obligations under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

Biodiversity Net Gain

In accordance with the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024, all householder applications are current exempt from the statutory requirement to demonstrate a 10% net gain in biodiversity.

Conclusion:

Following a review of the applicable policy for this application and all material considerations it is of our professional view that the development is in compliance with all applicable policies as previously illustrated above. The development is appropriate development that is not harmful to the character or appearance of the surroundings.

We see no reason for the council to refuse our request for planning approval and kindly request for a timely decision to be made in line with applicable guidance of the NPPF.

Should any further information be requested to assist in the council's assessment of the proposal, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Thank you,

Kind regards,

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