

**Committee Date:**  
**09.02.2010**

NEWBRIDGES  
(Dalwood)

09/2423/FUL

Target Date: 05.02.2010

Applicant:

The Management Committee, Dalwood Community Shop and Post Office

Location:

Dalwood Community Shop and Post Office

Proposal:

Installation of 12 solar photovoltaic modules on rear south west facing tiled roof

### **CONSULTATIONS**

#### County Highway Authority

Does not wish to comment

#### East Devon District Council - Senior Estates Surveyor

No objection however consent will be required from the Council's housing officer on behalf of the Council as lessor of the Community shop prior to undertaking this development.

### **TOWN/PARISH COUNCIL**

Comments are awaited at time of compiling this report and will be reported to Members verbally at the Development Management Meeting.

### **WARD MEMBER(S)**

The initial comments of the Ward Member(s) are -

"I fully support the use of renewable energy (and) support the application"

In the event that this application comes to Committee I would reserve my position until I am in full possession of all the relevant facts and arguments for and against.

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

There has been no third party correspondence received on this application.

### **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

The shop was extended under permission granted in 2004 - 04/P0904.

### **PLANNING POLICIES**

#### Government Guidance

PPS 22 - Renewable Energy

Devon Country Structure Plan (2001-2016)

Policy CO3 – Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy CO6 - Quality of New Development

Policy CO12 - Renewable Energy Developments

East Devon Local Plan (1995-2011)

Policy S4 - Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries

Policy D1 – Design and Local Distinctiveness

Policy EN1 - Development affecting Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Policy C6 - Renewable Energy

**SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

The location for the proposed solar panels (photovoltaic rather than solar thermal) is the south west facing roof slope of the village community shop and post office. The building is located on the north west edge of the village with a row of residential dwellings to the south. Seaward's Coach depot is located just to the north. Parking for the store is found immediately to the east, through which public footpath no 15 crosses and exits from the rear of the site on to open fields. The whole village and surrounding countryside is within the Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The existing building is split in two with a domestic garage in the rear half away from the road, and the shop in the southernmost half. The whole building is finished in cream coloured render with modern concrete tiles to the shop section of the roof. The section of roof above the garage is finished in grey coloured fibre cement or similar.

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The scheme seeks planning permission for the siting of 12 no solar panels which would be sited on the south west facing roof slope - i.e. to the rear side of the building - covering an area approximately 6.5m by 2m. The panels would have an up stand of approximately 150mm above the existing roof plane and are in individual modular form. A picture of the proposed panels is enclosed for Members' attention.

**CONSIDERATIONS AND ASSESSMENT**

Background

The application is brought to the Development Management Committee as East Devon District Council own the building.

## Highway Issues

The County Highway Authority has advised that they do not wish to comment on the application. It is considered that the proposal would bring no highway issues.

## Impact on Landscape

As the proposal will be sited on the rear roof slope of the shop it will be largely hidden from the public road to the south east. It will however be visible from the fields to the north-west including the public footpath. However there is some screening on the boundary of the site and taking into account that the proposal would not raise the height of the roof significantly it is considered there not be any significant harm to the character of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. When viewed from this direction the roof slope will be seen in the context of this part of the village and the dwellings to the south.

## Impact on Residential Amenity

The nearest residential dwelling is located immediately to the south of the site - a photo showing the section of roof where the panels are proposed together with this dwelling in the background is attached. Although the roof will have a different appearance than a conventionally tiled roof it is not considered there will be any significant effect to the amenity of occupants of this dwelling, taking into account the marginal increase in height of the roof by only 150mm.

## Justification

The Community Shop Association, which is an entirely voluntary association are seeking to fit the solar panels to the building to reduce their electricity bill by half, and diminish their footprint on the environment by reducing their emissions by up to one tonne. The Association would also like to use the panels as a permanent example of a community renewable energy project.

Both PPS22, Structure Plan and Local Plan Policies fully support the provision of renewable energy development provided the amenity of third parties is not unduly affected and there is no significant effect on the character of the area.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The application proposes an array of 12 solar panels. Due to their location and minimal alteration to the building it is considered that the amenity of neighbouring dwellings would not be significantly affected nor would the character of the landscape be harmed.

The application is therefore recommended for approval subject to a condition that if the use of the panels ceases for a period of more than 6 months, they should be removed and the roof returned to its original condition, and an informative note that consent is also required from the Housing Officer on behalf of East Devon District Council as lessors of the building.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

APPROVE subject to the following planning conditions

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission and shall be carried out as approved.  
(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. Within 6 months of the approved solar panels ceasing to be used for the production of electricity the solar panels and associated infrastructure shall be permanently removed from the site and the roof restored to its former condition.  
(Reason - In the interest of the character and appearance of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty).

#### Informative

The applicant is advised that written consent is required from the Housing Officer on behalf of East Devon District Council as lessors of the Community Shop and Post Office

#### Reasons for approval

In granting permission for this development the following is a summary of reasons for the decision:

The proposal complies with the Devon Structure Plan 2001 to 2016 Policies C03 (Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty), CO6 (Quality of New Development) and CO12 (Renewable Energy Developments).

The proposal complies with the adopted East Devon Local Plan 1995 to 2011 Policies S4 (Development within Built-Up Area Boundaries), D1 (Design and Distinctiveness), EN1 (Development affecting Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and C6 (Renewable Energy).

The proposal does not adversely affect the privacy or amenity of neighbouring properties

The design and external appearance of the proposal does not harm the visual amenity of the site and surrounding area

The proposal does not harm the natural beauty of the landscape designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

#### Approved Plans

-Location Plan

-Plan no 2009 / 31 Revision C

-Indicative plan showing modules proposed

#### List of Background Papers

Application file, consultations and policy documents referred to in the report.

