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**Application Ref: NP/14/0013**

<b>Application Type</b>	Full
<b>Grid Ref:</b>	SM82172391
<b>Applicant</b>	Mr J Heron
<b>Agent</b>	Mr N Brown, Brown Partnership
<b>Proposal</b>	Installation of 16 solar panels in 4 rows in field adjacent to cottage, change of use of field to residential curtilage & retrospective engineering works to alter ground levels
<b>Site Location</b>	The Cheese House, Lochvane, Pen Y Cwm, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 6BA
<b>Case Officer</b>	Andrew Richards

**Summary**

The application is reported to the Development Management Committee because the views of the Brawdy Community Council are contrary to the recommendation of your officers.

Planning permission is sought to change the use of part of an agricultural field to the north of the Cheese House to domestic curtilage and allow installation of 16 no. solar panels. The application also seeks retrospective permission for engineering works to alter ground levels within this area. The proposed area for change of use and installation of the solar panels is located 15m from the boundary of the Cheese House and would be connected via only a narrow area of footpath. It is considered that the proposal to change the use of this piece of land to residential curtilage, by reason of its position unrelated to and divorced from the original curtilage, constitutes an undesirable extension into the open countryside that both by itself and combined with its use for a solar panel array and associated ground works results in a development that would be out of character with the surrounding area and pattern of development contrary to policies 8 (c), 15 (b) and 30 (d) of the Adopted Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (September 2010).

**Consultee Response**

**Brawdy Community Council:** Support the application as the panels are being removed from the host dwelling and that the change of use of land is for residential curtilage only.

**PCNPA Tree & Landscape Officer -** Further information required in respect of proposed excavations & landscaping

**PCNPA Rights of Way Officer:** No objection

**Ecologist - Pembrokeshire County Council:** No adverse comment

**Public Response**

The application has been advertised by site notice and neighbour notification. A letter has been received from the neighbour at Long Barn. The letter indicates that there is no objection if the proposal is to replace the existing

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panels on the front roof of West Barn (sited on an adjacent building outside of the red line) as they have spoilt the appearance of the whole hamlet. Also requests that the proposed panels be sited away from the boundary fence.

### **Policies considered**

Please note that these policies can be viewed on the Policies page Pembrokehire Coast National Park website - <http://www.pembrokeshirecoast.org.uk/default.asp?PID=549>

LDP Policy 01 - National Park Purposes and Duty

LDP Policy 07 - Countryside

LDP Policy 08 - Special Qualities

LDP Policy 11 - Protection of Biodiversity

LDP Policy 15 - Conservation of the Pembrokehire Coast National Park

LDP Policy 29 - Sustainable Design

LDP Policy 30 - Amenity

LDP Policy 33 - Renewable Energy

PPW5 Chapter 04 - Planning for Sustainability

PPW5 Chapter 05 - Conserving and Improving Natural Heritage and the Coast

PPW5 Chapter 12 - Infrastructure and Services

SPG05 - Sustainable Design

SPG06 - Landscape

SPG14 - Renewable Energy plus Addendum on Field Arrays

TAN 05 - Nature Conservation and Planning

TAN 08 - Renewable Energy

TAN 12 - Design

### **Officer's Appraisal**

#### **Background and History**

The Cheese House is a traditional stone farm building that was converted into a dwelling in 1990. The property is located to the north of the lane that runs through Lochvane approximately 3 miles to the east of Solva. The property has a number of solar panels fitted to the west elevation of the slate roof that were fitted under the permitted development rights of the property. The house has a relatively large flat garden area to the north of the house enclosed with timber rail fencing. The land then falls gradually to the north.

Within the field directly to the north of the house a rectangular area of land has been altered approximately 15m from the northern boundary of the property. The land level has been flattened with a timber structure and gravel laid within it to form a platform.

Several applications have been determined on this site and these relate to the conversion of the Cheese House to a dwelling approved under planning reference NP/527/90. A proposal for a nature pond approved under reference NP/13/0154.

A similar proposal to the current application for the installation of 16 solar panels in 4 rows on field adjacent to cottage, change of use of field to residential curtilage and retrospective engineering works to alter ground levels was refused under planning reference NP/13/0139. This application was refused as the proposal by reason of its position unrelated to the original curtilage, constitutes an undesirable extension into the open countryside that would be out of character with the surrounding area and pattern of development.

The current application is submitted following a recent pre-application enquiry under reference PA/13/0353 for the same proposal in which the Authority clearly indicated the reasons why the proposal in its current form cannot be supported. Officers also indicated that there are alternative options open to the applicant to explore in this instance such as erecting ground mounted solar panels within the existing residential curtilage either through a formal planning application or the permitted development route under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (Wales) Order 2012, Part 40, Class B.

### **Constraints**

- Biodiversity issue
- Safeguarding Zone
- Rights of Way Inland within 50m
- Hazardous Zones
- Nat Trust Covenants
- Recreational Character Areas

### **Current Proposal**

Planning permission is sought for the change of use of an area of field to the north of the Cheese House to residential curtilage and for the installation of 16 solar photovoltaic (PV) panels in 4 rows. Retrospective permission is also sought for the gravelled engineered platform area within the field that is proposed to be used as a base for the PV panels.

### **Key Issues**

**The main issues to be considered in this case are:**

- Principle
- Siting and Impact on the Landscape of the National Park
- Neighbour Amenity
- Other Material considerations

***Principle:***

The change of use of land to domestic curtilage as an extension to an existing dwelling is acceptable in principle subject to this being appropriately related to the host dwelling and not resulting in encroachment into open countryside or in a form that is out of character with its context. Furthermore any additional curtilage area should not result in adverse effects to neighbouring properties.

Policy 33 refers to renewable energy and states that small scale renewable energy schemes, such as this proposal under consideration, will be considered favourably, subject to there being no over-riding environmental and amenity considerations. Therefore the principle of development is acceptable subject to the works not resulting in adverse effects on the character of the area or on neighbouring amenity.

***Siting and Impact on the Landscape of the National Park:***

In this instance, consideration needs to be given firstly as to whether the extension of the curtilage into the adjacent land is acceptable in the landscape and secondly whether its use for a solar panel array is in keeping with its surroundings and causes any harm to adjoining properties.

Policy 8 of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (LDP) refers to the special qualities of the National Park and lists priorities to ensure that these qualities will be protected and enhanced. Policy 15 of the LDP seeks the conservation of the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park with criteria 'a' and 'b' resisting development that would cause significant visual intrusion and/or, that would be insensitively and unsympathetically sited within the landscape. Policy 30 relates to amenity and amongst other things requires development to not be permitted where it is for a use inappropriate to where people live or visit, where it is of a scale that is incompatible with its surroundings and where the development is visually intrusive.

In this instance, the proposed extension of the domestic curtilage is situated some 15m from the Cheese House with a narrow access way being provided to link the existing garden to this area along the eastern field boundary. It is considered that this narrow link to a separate curtilage area appears contrived, unrelated to the dwelling and also fails to reflect the established pattern of development in the surrounding area. The pattern of Lochvane consists of a tight group of mixed agricultural and domestic buildings within the existing coastal hinterland landscape with a small wooded valley to the north and gentle undulating landform between the coastal slope and Lochvane. The surrounding areas have historical and archaeological features present that underpin an outstanding cultural value. This cultural value is further supported by the continuous tract of open access National Trust land that surrounds Lochvane to the west and south.

The proposed development therefore constitutes an undesirable residential curtilage extension into the open countryside that would be out of character

with the surrounding area and pattern of development contrary to policies 8, 15 and 30 of the Adopted Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (September 2010). This view is expressed irrespective of whether the land is to be used for providing a solar panel array.

The above concerns are further exacerbated by the proposal to utilise the extended curtilage for the erection of a solar panel array and associated ground works. This development results in an alien intrusion into the surrounding landscape, which is completely at odds with the open countryside character of this area and pays no regard either physically or visually to the host dwelling. As such it is not considered that the proposal is acceptable in the landscape and would be contrary to the above listed policies.

***Neighbour Amenity:***

It is considered that the proposal in its current position would have little impact upon the amenity enjoyed by neighbouring properties due to their orientation in relation to the proposals and the distances involved.

Officers are unable to act on the request of the neighbour from Long Barn to remove the existing panels on the adjacent West Barn as these do not form part of the current application site and also have been provided on this property through permitted development rights. In respect of the siting of the proposed panels, officers' consideration is given in the main report below.

***Other Material Considerations:***

It is understood that the applicant is unhappy with the appearance of the PV panels on the roof of the property and wishes to remove them for aesthetic reasons. It is also appreciated that the proposed location has been chosen to reduce the visibility of the PV panels from the Cheese House and neighbouring properties by using the existing hedgerow to the east as a screen and setting the platform into the landscape.

However, it is necessary to consider the benefits of the renewable energy source and those of re-locating the panels from the existing roof against the impacts that arise to the landscape through a separate provision in a divorced location from the host dwelling. In this case, it is considered that this provision unrelated to the existing dwelling and its curtilage is an unsympathetic location for this development and also out of character with the surrounding area and pattern of development contrary to policy 8( c), 15(b) and 30 (d) of the Adopted Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (September 2010). It is considered that this outweighs the benefits of the project and in this instance results in a development that cannot be supported.

**Conclusion**

The proposal to change the use of this piece of land to residential curtilage, and the development of that land for the erection of a solar panel array and associated development by reason of its position unrelated to the original

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curtilage, constitutes an undesirable residential curtilage extension into the open countryside that would be out of character with the surrounding area. This is further exacerbated by the development of the land for a solar panel array and the development is therefore considered to be contrary to adopted planning policy. Whilst the benefits of the scheme are noted, these are not considered sufficiently compelling to overcome the impact on the landscape in this instance.

**Recommendation**

That the application be refused

**Reason**

The proposal to change the use of this piece of land to residential curtilage, both by itself and combined with its use for a solar panel array and associated ground works results in a development that would constitute an undesirable extension into the open countryside and which would be out of character with and alien to the surrounding area and pattern of development contrary to policies 8 (c), 15 (b) and 30 (d) of the Adopted Pembrokeshire Coast National Park Local Development Plan (September 2010).



**KEY**

— Proposed site

— Outline of existing, sprawling garden boundaries

- 9 JAN 2014

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Item 6b

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**Brown Partnership**  
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**GARDEN BOUNDARY PLAN - SCALE 1/1250**

APPLICATION FOR SOLAR PANELS AND ASSOCIATED  
ENGINEERING WORKS AT, THE CHEESE HOUSE, PEN Y CWH,  
HAVERFORDWEST, PEMB. SA62 6BA  
FOR MR J HERON TEL. 07538 923279

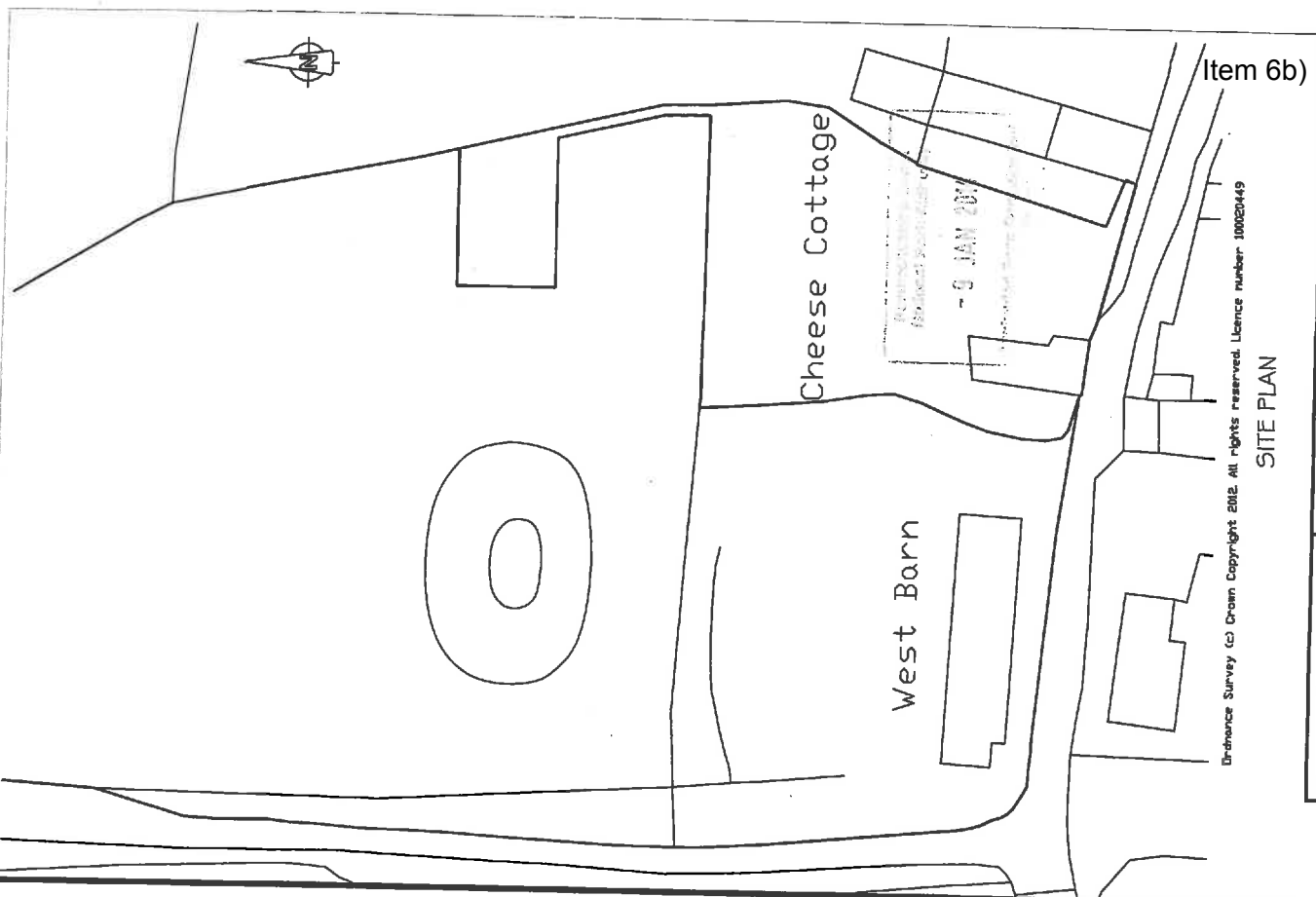
Drng No.  
BF276/2/4

NP 14 0 13



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LOCATION PLAN



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SITE PLAN

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LOCATION PLAN - SCALE 1/1250  
 SITE PLAN - SCALE 1/500

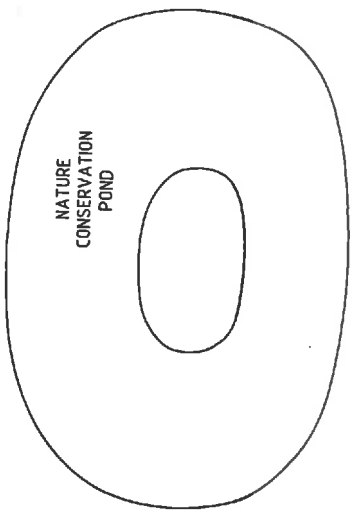
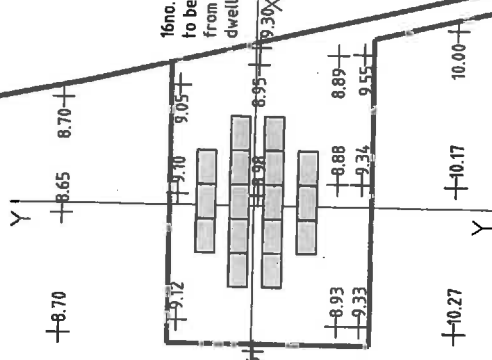
APPLICATION FOR SOLAR PANELS AND ASSOCIATED  
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 HAVERFORDWEST, FERBS, SA62 6BA  
 FOR MR J HERON TEL: 07538 923279  
 Dwg No.  
 BF.2.78/2/3





**KEY**  
 +7.24 - SITE LEVEL  
 [Symbol] - 1600mm x 900mm solar PV panel

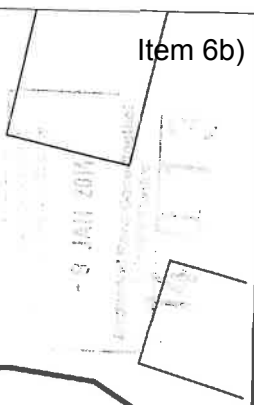
16no. Solar panels in 4 rows to be located here, obscured from view from adjacent dwellings



Vest Barn

Cheese Cottage

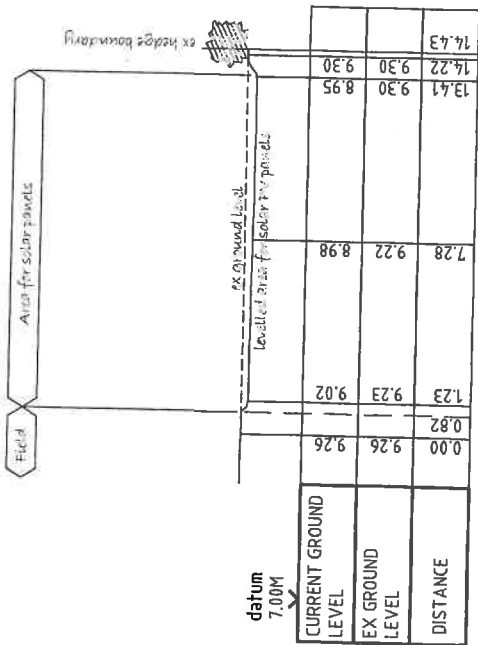
Item 6b)



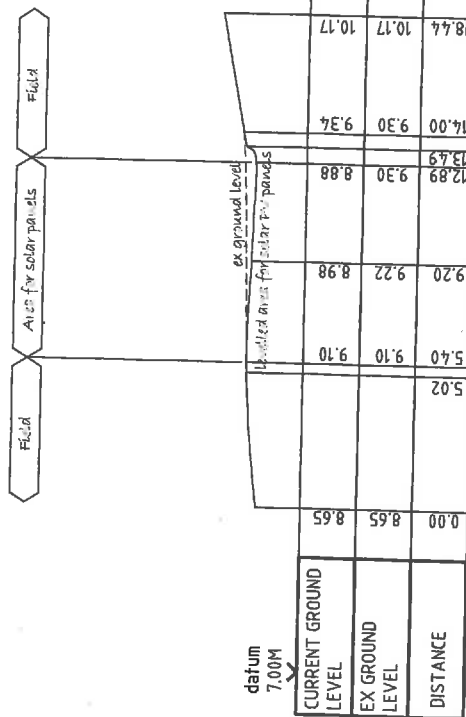
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**TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY PLAN - SCALE 1/250 (A3)**

APPLICATION FOR SOLAR PANELS AND ASSOCIATED ENGINEERING WORKS AT, THE CHEESE HOUSE, PEN Y CWM, HAVERFORDWEST, Pembrokeshire, SA62 6BA  
 FOR MR J HERON TEL: 07538 923279  
 Dwg No. BP278/2/1

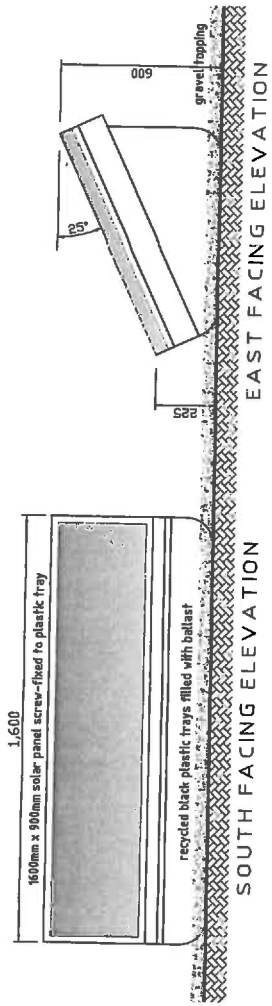


CROSS SECTION X-X



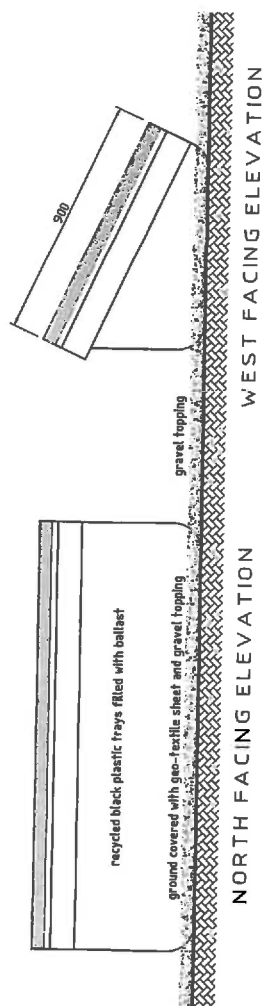
CROSS SECTION Y-Y

NOTE:  
Example shown is for a single panel installation, for multiple panel installations they simply bolt together at each end.



SOUTH FACING ELEVATION

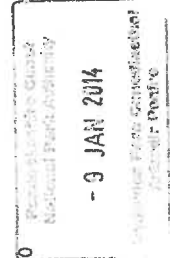
EAST FACING ELEVATION



NORTH FACING ELEVATION

WEST FACING ELEVATION

PANEL DETAILS - SCALE 1/20



SECTIONS - SCALE 1/200

Item 6b)

17 14 0 13

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**PROPOSED SECTIONS & PANEL DETAILS**  
 -SCALES AS INDICATED(A3)

APPLICATION FOR SOLAR PANELS AND ASSOCIATED ENGINEERING WORKS AT, THE CHEESE HOUSE, PEN Y CWH, HANERFORWEST, FERIES, SA62 6BA  
 FOR MR J HERON TEL. 07538 923279

Drig No. BP278/2/2