

Planning Officer's Report – LDCA NOVEMBER 2021

APPLICATION	2021/81 – Proposed Installation of Solar Panels & Tanks
PERMISSION SOUGHT	Permission in Full
REGISTERED	22 nd September 2021
APPLICANT	Housing Section, St Helena Government
PARCEL	HTH0321
LOCALITY	No. 8 RE Yard, Ladder Hill
ZONE	Intermediate
CONSERVATION AREA	Heritage Coast Conservation Area
CURRENT USE	Existing House
PUBLICITY	The application was advertised as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Sentinel Newspaper on 23rd September 2021▪ A site notice displayed in accordance with Regulations.
EXPIRY	7 th October 2021
REPRESENTATIONS	None Received
DECISION ROUTE	Delegated / LDCA / EXCO

A. CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

1. Sewage & Water Division	No Objection
2. Energy Division	No Objection
3. Fire & Rescue	No Response
4. Roads Section	No Objection
5. Property Division	No Response
6. Environmental Management	No Objection
7. Public Health	No Response
8. Agriculture & Natural Resources	No Response
9. St Helena Police Services	Not Consulted
10. Aerodrome Safe Guarding	Not Consulted
11. Sustainable Development	No Response
12. National Trust	No Response

13. Sure SA Ltd

No Response

14. Heritage Society

Objection - Comments

B. PLANNING OFFICER'S APPRAISAL

LOCALITY & ZONING

The application site is at No.8 Re Yard at Ladder Hill, where the building situated adjacent to Ladder Hill Fort. The plot is designated within the Intermediate Zone and within the Heritage Coast Conservation Area.

Diagram 1: Location Plan



THE PROPOSAL

The application is to install two solar panels and tanks to provide a heating system for water at this property. The proposal was to have a system on the north and southern elevation of the property. The installation is in keeping with the Infrastructure and Housing Management Office policy of using greener technology for Government Landlord Housing, where the intention is to reduce electricity costs for tenants. The benefit also is the improvement to health and safety aspect by removing the use of geysers and oil stoves.

Diagram 2: Layout of Panels & Elevations

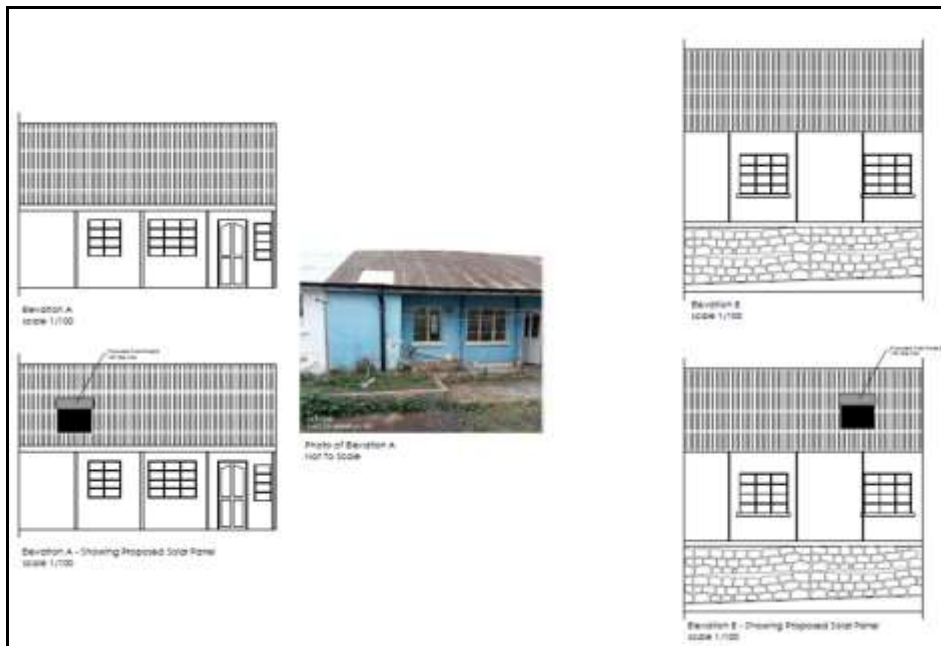


Diagram 3: Photograph of Street Elevation



STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

No representations was received from the public. Comments was recieved from the Heritage Society.

Heritage Society: the representation states:

‘The proposal to put a tank on the roof particularly on the side of Ladder Hill Fort is contrary to the spirit of the Conservation Area and specifically LDCP Energy policy E5

and it will be detrimental to the character of the Conservation Area and the setting of Ladder Hill Fort as it is likely to be visible from a number of places including the area of the Police Club, the top of Jacobs Ladder and both exists from the Fort.

The reasons given for using the roof location, that residents would be required to be home in case of maintenance, is not good justification as this is the case for just about all domestic maintenance. In any case solar tank maintenance is not normally a regular requirement if it is properly installed. As this is a Government application we understand the public officers are legally obliged to comply with the LDCP. That being case we would ask that extra care be taken to find a more suitable location.'

POLICY CONSIDERATION

The proposed development is assessed against the LDCP Policies set out below:

- Energy Policy: E5
- Built Heritage Policy: BH1 c)

OFFICER ASSESSMENT

Policy E5 states that; 'Development permission will be granted for the installation on existing buildings of solar hot water and solar electrical generation panels and related equipment. In the case of buildings of architectural or historic interest and in National Conservation Areas, the design and siting of the panels are to be such that they do not adversely affect the character of the building; and solar hot water installations in such cases shall generally not have external tanks...'

In this assessment of the proposal, consideration is given to the impact on the building and its effect on the setting within the conservation area. The rationale for the installation of two solar hot water tanks externally on the roof rather than inside is due to ease of installation and maintenance as well as the existing roof having asbestos sheeting, which may cause a potential health risk due to installation or during maintenance being undertaken inside the roof space. Where the colour of the tank cover is grey to match the colour of the roof, in principle this would reduce the potential impact and make the proposal more acceptable on the roof and in the context of the area.

Considering the panel and tank on the northern elevation facing the street elevation, the panel would be acceptable however the issue is the impact of the tank. The applicant has reviewed the option in light of the objection raised and the concerns expressed by the officers, the proposal would now be a single panel and tank on the southern elevation, which faces in the court yard area of this complex. It is considered that the proposal will not adversely impact the setting of a conservation area as it will not be readily visible from the main road.