

DELEGATED FILE NOTE

CASE OFFICER: ...Melissa Tyler.....

APPLICATION REFERENCE	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT	APPLICATION SITE
25/00603/FP	Installation of solar panels to roofs of function room building and former stables building.	Offley Place Kings Walden Road Offley Hitchin Hertfordshire SG5 3DX

Submitted Plan Nos

PV06732-Offley Place-PV-001A-P3 - Existing elevations stables PV06732-Offley Place-PV-001B-P3 -
Proposed elevations stables. PV06732-Offley Place-PV-002A-P3 - Existing elevations function suite
PV06732-Offley Place-PV-002B-P3 - Proposed elevations function suite Location Plan PL01 - Proposed
Site Plan

1.0 **Policies**

2.0 **Site History**

2.1 Extensive history – see file

2.2 **225/00604/LBC** Installation of solar panels to roofs of function room building and former stables building. TBD

3.0 **Representations**

3.1 **Conservation Officer** - There are no objections to the proposal due to the location of the panels on the function suite. The proposed panels for the stable block although visible that visibility would be mitigated due to the location of the stable block is located behind the principal elevation of Offley Place. And the method of mounting and colour of panels.

3.2 **NH Ecology** - I've read through the report and note that no bats were found to be using the buildings so works to install solar panels can be undertaken without risk of harm to a protected species. Recommendations are made in the report and I suggest that these are attached as an informative

4.0 **Planning Considerations**

4.1 **Site and Surroundings**

4.1.1 Offley Place consists of a group of listed buildings which are situated on the north western side of Kings Walden Road, the buildings being set in expansive grounds which extend to a total of approximately 14 hectares in area.

4.2 **Proposal**

4.2.1 The application is described as:

Installation of solar panels to roofs of function room building and former stables building.

4.3 **Key Issues**

Design and Heritage

- 4.3.1 The main issue is to consider the impact of the works on the special character of the listed building and upon the Conservation Area.
- 4.3.2 The proposed solar panels are supportable on both buildings for the following reasons. The function suite building is not listed, being a modern construction but does link to the main building of Offley Place. The proposal would see no loss or intervention into historic fabric of significance and therefore is it considered that there is less than substantial harm to and on the setting of the host building.
- 4.3.3 The proposed solar panels to the curtilage listed stable block although prolific as would cover most the area of the roof is supportable. Although visible this would be somewhat mitigated by the flush mounting and colour of the proposed panels, and its location behind the principal elevation of Offley Place. This is considered to be at the lower end of less than substantial harm.
- 4.3.4 The works are considered to have no public view and therefore will not cause harm to the character of Gt Offley Conservation Area.

4.5 **Conclusion**

- 4.5.1 In the absence of material planning reasons to the contrary it is my view that planning permission is **GRANTED**.

5.0 **Recommendation**

- 5.1 That planning permission be **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

- 1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 3 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: To comply with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 2. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out wholly in accordance with the details specified in the application and supporting approved documents and plans listed above.

Reason: To ensure the development is carried out in accordance with details which form the basis of this grant of permission.

Biodiversity Net Gain

This development is not subject to the statutory Biodiversity Gain Plan condition because it is considered exempt under the statutory exemptions (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/biodiversity-net-gain-exempt-developments>) or transitional arrangements in respect of the biodiversity gain condition.

Proactive Statement:

Planning permission has been granted for this proposal. Discussion with the applicant to seek an acceptable solution was not necessary in this instance. The Council has therefore acted proactively in line with the requirements of the Framework (paragraph 38) and in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Informative/s:

It is recommended that a suitably qualified Ecologist is present on Site to supervise the initial works and ensure that no roosting bats are present prior to commencement.

If any indication of roosting bats is found during the works, then the works should cease immediately, and the Ecologist will advise on how to proceed.

Works should be undertaken outside bird nesting season i.e. during the period September to February (inclusive - as a guide). If this is not possible, all areas impacted should first be checked for active nests by an ecologist or other suitably qualified individual. In the event that nesting activity is identified, certain aspects of the work in the vicinity of the nest will need to cease until the birds have finished nesting and the young have fledged.

In addition, barn owls were observed in the parkland to the east of the buildings. Machinery should not encroach any further than necessary in this direction to prevent any disturbance to surrounding barn owls.

Signed  Anne McDonald	Development Management North Hertfordshire District Council Council Offices Gernon Road Letchworth Herts SG6 3JF
Determining Officer Date: 16 October 2025	