

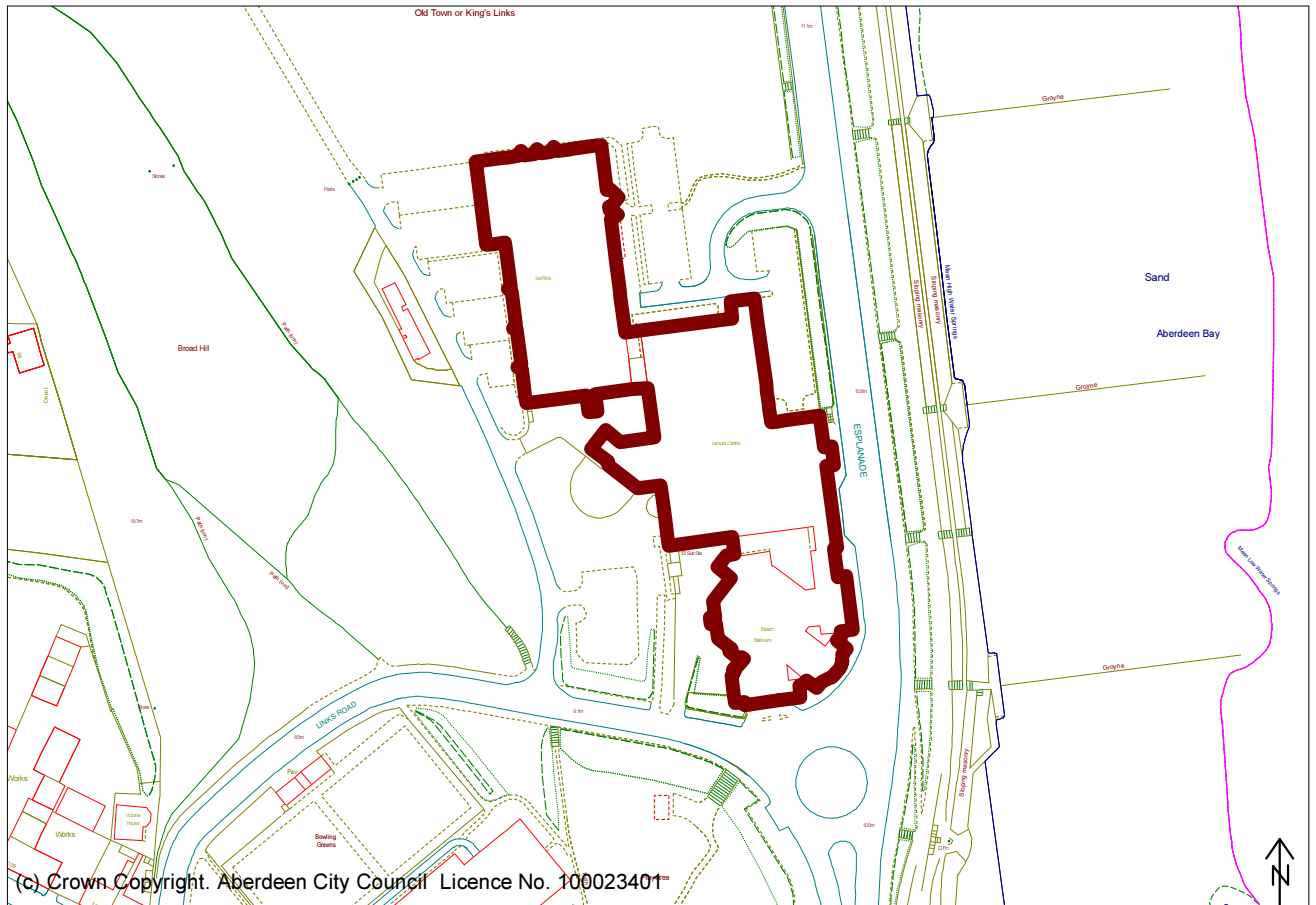
**BEACH LEISURE CENTRE, ESPLANADE,
ABERDEEN**

**THE INSTALLATION OF SOLAR
PHOTOVOLTAIC (PV) PANELS ON THE
EAST FACING ROOF OF THE PROPERTY.**

For: Aberdeen City Council

Application Ref. : P120528
Application Date : 19/04/2012
Officer : Frances Swanston
Ward: George Street/Harbour (A May/J
Morrison/N Morrison)

Advert : Full Notify not poss.
(neighbours)
Advertised on : 02/05/2012
Committee Date : 19 July 2012
Community Council : No response received



RECOMMENDATION: Approve Unconditionally

DESCRIPTION

The Beach Leisure Centre is situated on the beach Esplanade between Links Road and the Beach Ballroom to the south, the open Links to the north and west and the beach and sea to the east. The leisure centre complex comprises three main buildings and houses a variety of leisure and entertainment uses as well as the Beach Ballroom, which is Category B listed. The two modern buildings to which this application relates are predominantly two-storeys in height and clad in beige and light brown brick with profiled metal sheeting details, coloured blue. Both the pool and ice rink entrances have a glass canopy feature. There are two car parks associated with the centre, both to the east side of the buildings. There is an access road to the rear (west). The roofs of the leisure centre have a slight pitch to them, sloping down (westwards).

HISTORY

Aberdeen City Council is the first local authority in Scotland to apply for the 'Rent a Roof' scheme and is in the process of installing solar panels on 90 public buildings around the City, which include sheltered housing developments, schools, offices and Council depots. The scheme involves the Council buying the electricity generated by the panels to power Council buildings. 12 of the buildings require planning permission to install the solar panels primarily due to the size/number of the panels involved.

PROPOSAL

Detailed planning permission is sought for the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof of the Beach Leisure Centre in two principal locations: 5 arrays of 16 rows of 10 panels on the ice rink building to the north of the site and 192 panels in one array/block on the western half of the adjoining (swimming pool) building to the south east. There would be a total of 992 individual panels installed. The solar panels would be joined together in lines and would be fixed to a frame mounting system and would be positioned south-east facing at a tilt of 30 degrees to maximise solar gain. The highest part of the panels would sit approximately 1 metre above the roof.

Each solar panel would measure 1650mm by 941mm with a thickness of 46mm and would appear dark blue in colour.

REASON FOR REFERRAL TO SUB-COMMITTEE

The application site is owned by Aberdeen City Council and therefore the application does not fall within the Council's agreed Scheme of Delegation and requires to be determined by the Development Management Sub-Committee.

CONSULTATIONS

ROADS SECTION – No comments.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH – No comments received.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL – No comments received.

REPRESENTATIONS

None.

PLANNING POLICY

Aberdeen Local Development Plan

Policy R8 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments – the development of renewable and low carbon energy schemes is supported and applications will be supported in principle if proposals:

- Do not cause significant harm to the local environment, including landscape character and the character and appearance of listed buildings and conservation areas.
- Do not negatively impact on air quality.
- Do not negatively impact on tourism.
- Do not have a significant adverse impact on the amenity of dwelling houses.

Policy D 1 Architecture and Placemaking - To ensure high standards of design, new development must be designed with due consideration for its context and make a positive contribution to its setting. Factors such as siting, scale, massing, colour, materials, orientation, details, the proportions of building elements, together with the spaces around buildings, including streets, squares, open space, landscaping and boundary treatments, will be considered in assessing that contribution.

EVALUATION

Sections 25 and 37(2) of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (as amended) requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Policy R8 states that the development of renewable and low carbon energy schemes is supported and applications will be supported in principle subject to a number of criteria. The proposed solar panels would have some visual impact upon the leisure centre building and would be visible from points along the Esplanade and from the Links, but given the height of the building, from ground level, the visual impact would be minimal as would be their impact upon the amenity of the wider site. The orientation of the panels reflects the optimum solar gain. Having the panels tilted would increase the visual impact of the panels, but this impact would not be an adverse one. The installation of the panels would have a neutral impact upon the setting of the listed Beach Ballroom building.

The agent in supporting information states that the installation of the solar panels would have a positive contribution in raising awareness to the needs of renewable energy. The solar panels would not negatively impact on air quality or on tourism, given their proposed location in accordance with Policy R8.

Therefore in conclusion, the solar panels would have some visual impact upon the leisure centre building as a whole and wider area, but this would not be detrimental to the appearance of the building or the visual amenity of the area, or

the setting of the listed Beach Ballroom, in accordance with Policy R8. The panels have been sited with due consideration for their context and would make an overall positive contribution to their setting, in accordance with Policy D1 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve Unconditionally

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

that the visual impact of the proposed solar (PV) panels would be acceptable upon the appearance of the school building and would not detract from the overall visual amenity of the area in accordance with Policy R8, and as such have been designed with due consideration for their context, in accordance with Policy D1 of the Aberdeen Local Development Plan.

Dr Margaret Bochel

Head of Planning and Sustainable Development.