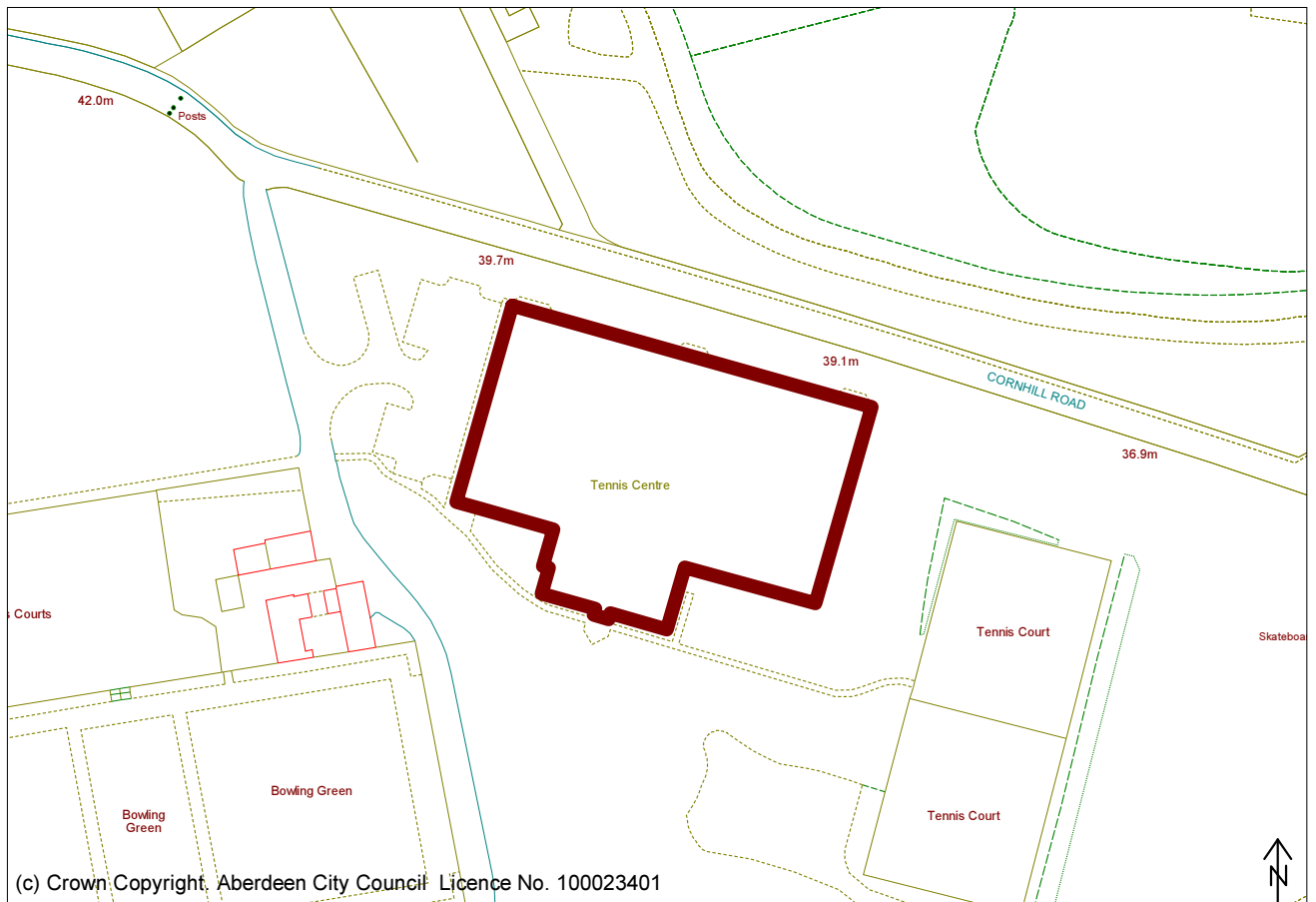


WESTBURN TENNIS CENTRE,
WESTBURN ROAD, WESTBURN PARK

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

For: Aberdeen City Council

Application Ref.	: P120769	Advert	: Section 60/65 - Dev
Application Date	: 01/06/2012	aff LB/CA	
Officer	: Frances Swanston	Advertised on	: 13/06/2012
Ward: Midsocket/Rosemount (B	Cornie/J	Committee Date	: 19 July 2012
Laing/F Forsyth)		Community Council	: No response received



RECOMMENDATION: Approve Unconditionally

DESCRIPTION

The Westburn Tennis Centre is situated to the north of Westburn Park, adjacent to the bowling greens and associated pavilion to the west and the park's outdoor tennis courts to the east. The Category A listed Westburn House is situated 70 metres to the south of the site, separated by a substantial tree belt. Cornhill Road adjoins the site to the north; this is a no-through road with very little traffic, but is used as a pedestrian route. The tennis centre building is finished with a cream render base wall with profiled metal sheeting coloured red, to the roof. The roof is pitched, with the main entrance feature to the south of the building. The closest residential properties to the building are flats to the north at Shaw Road, at a distance of some 125 metres away. The site falls within the Rosemount/Westburn Conservation Area.

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 south-facing roof plane of the Westburn Tennis Centre in four arrays sited next to each other. There would be a total of 427 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 facing, flush with the existing roof plane to maximise solar gain.

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 tennis centre building, but the building is set within the designed landscape of Westburn Park and as such is screened to a large extent by tree belts to the north and south. The panels would be flush with the roof due to the existing pitch, thus minimising the visual impact upon the building. The closest residential properties are 125 metres away and due to the screening provided by trees, there would be no impact upon residential amenity, nor would the installation of the panels affect the setting of the Category A Westburn House or the character of the Rosemount/Westburn Conservation Area.

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 tennis centre, but a minimal one upon wider area. This would not be detrimental to either visual or residential amenity, nor would it cause significant harm to the nearby listed building or character of the conservation area, 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 tennis centre and would not detract from the overall visual amenity of the area, the setting of Westburn House or the character of the Rosemount/Westburn Conservation 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.