

Item 3

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| Application Reference | DC/089712 |
| Location: | Chapel House Farm, 33 Brickbridge Road, Marple, SK6 7BQ |
| PROPOSAL: | Installation of a ground mounted array of 20 no. solar PV modules within existing field. |

MARPLE AREA COMMITTEE (17TH APRIL 2024)

The webcast of the meeting can be viewed using the following link –

https://stockport.public-i.tv/core/portal/webcast_interactive/872345/start_time/1859000

The Planning Officer introduced the application and highlighted the pertinent issues of the proposal. The Planning Officer updated members as to an error within the report in respect of the date of referendum for the Marple Neighbourhood Plan.

There were no requests to speak in objection to the application.

The applicant spoke in support of the application. The key to the proposal was to protect the local and worldwide environment in respect of carbon reduction and zero carbon energy production. The proposal was in accordance with Stockport's Energy Plan and the aim was for the applicant to play their part in helping the environment. Alternatives had been assessed and solar PV was considered to be the most practical solution. It was advised that the scheme was chosen to minimise harm to the Green Belt and heritage assets, no change of use was proposed, there would be no impacts on the environment, ecosystems or wildlife, siting would be discrete and there would be no impact on neighbours.

Members sought clarification from the applicant as to whether or not the proposed energy production would be solely for the property or if it could be connected into the grid; and whether the proposed new hedgerow would include biodiversity gains. The applicant provided confirmation to the Member questions.

Members debated the proposal. It was noted that the applicant had done everything that Officers had asked them to do which was commended. Members felt that decisions on such renewable energy schemes should be able to be determined by Area Committees, rather than needing to be referred to Planning and Highways Regulation Committee. Members considered it admirable that private individuals and households were taking the lead on such projects which clearly had environmental and climate change benefits.

Following the debate, Members resolved to refer the application to the Planning and Highways Regulation Committee with a recommendation to grant.