PLANNING STATEMENT/DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Erect 29 Panel Roof Mounted Solar Array on Existing Carport and Stable Block

Lawn Lodge, Fonthill Gifford, Salisbury, SP3 6SF

Wessex ECOEnergy

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Planning Statement/Design and Access Statement

Introduction

1.0 This statement is submitted in support of a householder planning application for the installation of 29 roof mounted solar panels on an existing detached carport and stable block. The existing carport and stable block is located within the residential curtilage of the property which is Grade II listed. The electricity generated will help offset the electricity used at the property.

Site Description

2.0 Lawn Lodge is a detached dwelling located within a relatively isolated position, approximately 1.6km to the northwest of Tisbury. The dwelling is situated immediately to the north of a minor road that links Hindon Lane, to the northeast, with Newtown, located 1.3km to the southwest. Lawn Lodge is situated to the south of Fonthill Abbey Wood and the associated remnants of old Fonthill Abbey and new Fonthill Abbey.

2.1 The dwelling is located within a broadly triangular plot between a now redundant access track to Fonthill Abbey and the public highway.

2.2 The area is characterised by farmland laid to pasture, bound by mature hedgerows and linear tree belts that link larger areas of woodland.

2.3 Land levels on and around the application itself are relatively level but land levels rise gently immediately to the north east of the

site.

2.4 The closest residential property to the application site is Lawn Quarry Cottage, located approximately 270 metres to the south.

2.5 The application site is situated within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3.0 Planning Policy and National Guidance

Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity)

In respect of biodiversity enhancement, policy 50 states that *"All development should seek opportunities to enhance biodiversity. Major development in particular must include measures to deliver biodiversity gains through opportunities to restore, enhance and create valuable habitats, ecological networks and ecosystem services. Such enhancement measures will contribute to the objectives and targets of the Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) or River Basin/ Catchment Management Plan, particularly through landscape scale projects, and be relevant to the local landscape character."*

Core Policy 51 (Landscape)

Core policy 51 states *"Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact upon landscape character, while any negative impacts must be mitigated as far as possible through sensitive design and landscape measures. Proposals should be informed by and sympathetic to the distinctive character areas identified in the relevant Landscape Character Assessment(s) and any other relevant assessments and studies. In particular, proposals will need to demonstrate that the following aspects of landscape character have been conserved and where possible enhanced through sensitive design, landscape mitigation and enhancement measures:*

i. The locally distinctive pattern and species composition of natural features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland, fi eld boundaries, watercourses and waterbodies.

ii. The locally distinctive character of settlements and their landscape settings.

iii. The separate identity of settlements and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe.

iv. Visually sensitive skylines, soils, geological and topographical features.

v. Landscape features of cultural, historic and heritage value.

vi. Important views and visual amenity.

vii. Tranquillity and the need to protect against intrusion from light pollution, noise, and motion.

viii. Landscape functions including places to live, work, relax and recreate.

ix. Special qualities of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) and the New Forest National Park, where great weight will be afforded to conserving and enhancing landscapes and scenic beauty.

Proposals for development within or affecting the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), New Forest National Park (NFNP) or Stonehenge and Avebury World Heritage Site (WHS) shall demonstrate that they have taken account of the objectives, policies and actions set out in the relevant Management Plans for these areas. Proposals for development outside of an AONB that is sufficiently prominent (in terms of its siting or scale) to have an impact on the area's special qualities (as set out in the relevant management plan), must also demonstrate that it would not adversely affect its setting."

Core Policy 58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment)

Core Policy 58 states that "Development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment. Designated heritage assets and their settings will be conserved, and where appropriate enhanced in a manner appropriate to their significance, including:

i. nationally significant archaeological remains

ii. World Heritage Sites within and adjacent to Wiltshire

iii. buildings and structures of special architectural or historic interest

iv. the special character or appearance of conservation areas

v. historic parks and gardens vi. important landscapes, including registered battlefields and townscapes.

Distinctive elements of Wiltshire's historic environment, including non-designated heritage assets, which contribute to a sense of local character and identity will be conserved, and where possible enhanced. The potential contribution of these heritage assets towards wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits will also be utilised where this can be delivered in a sensitive and appropriate manner in accordance with Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping). Heritage assets at risk will be monitored and development proposals that improve their condition will be encouraged..

Access

4.0 Site access for installation will utilise the existing vehicular access off the public highway that serves the property.

Proposal

5.0 The proposal seeks to install 29 solar PV panels on the roof of the existing detached carport and stable building. 8 Panels will be installed on the south facing roof slope of the proposed carport, as shown on drawing no.WE/LL/01B. The southern elevation of the existing carport is shown in Photograph 1 below.



Photograph 1 – View looking north showing the southern elevation of the existing carport.

5.1 A further 21 panels will be installed on the east, south and west facing roof slopes of the proposed stable building as shown on drawing no. WE/LL/01D. The east facing roof slope of the stable building is shown in photograph 2 below.

5.1 A detailed specification of the panels to be installed is shown in Appendix 1.

5.2 The panels will be installed on a rail system mounted onto the existing roof tiles. When mounted, the panels will project approximately 75mm above the plane of the existing roof.

5.3 The 12kW system will help to offset the electricity used at the property.



Photograph 2 – View looking west showing the eastern elevation of the existing stable building.

Biodiversity

6.0 The existing carport and stable building are relatively modern structures of single skinned timber construction. The roof covering consists of bitumen sheeting with no gaps or cracks that could be used as access and egress points. There are no loft voids and the ceilings are vaulted. Therefore, the proposed development will not adversely impact upon any ecological interests within the locality. The proposal is in accordance with Policy 50 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, 2015.

Landscape/Visual Impact

7.0 The application site is situated within the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB. The site of the proposed solar panels is well screened from wider views in the surrounding area due to the changing land levels and the presence of surrounding mature vegetation. The south facing roof slope of the existing carport is partially visible during the winter months from a small section of the highway directly opposite the site as shown in photograph 3 below. The proposed panels on the east facing roof slope of the stable block are well screened from views along the public highway by a mature hedgerow as shown in photograph 4 below.



Photograph 3 – View looking north from the highway where the existing carport is partially visible during winter months from a short section



Photograph 4 – View looking west along the public highway towards the application site.

7.1 Having regard to the general appearance and scale of the proposed array, combined with the presence of significant screening vegetation, it is considered that the proposed development will not be detrimental to landscape character and visual amenity of the locality. The proposed array will not be overly prominent from any location in the surrounding area and any views will be limited in extent. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy 51 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, 2015.

Heritage Designation and Impact

8.0 Lawn Lodge is Grade II listed and was first listed on 6th July 1987. The official listing description is as follows:

"Lodge, to Fonthill Abbey, now detached house. Circa 1860, by William Burn for the Marquess of Westminster. Limestone ashlar, Welsh slate roof, ashlar stacks. T-plan. Two-storey, one window to each gabled wing. Shouldered planked door with moulded architrave in porch with hipped roof in angle between two wings, 8- pane sash to side of porch, gabled wing to right has 12-pane sash in roll-moulded architrave to ground and first floor. Wing to left has 8-pane sash to side, canted bay with sashes to ground floor of gable end facing drive and 12-pane sash and Westminster crest over. Left return has slightly projecting stack and 8-pane sash, gabled wing has 12-pane sashes, roofs are gabled with coped verges and ball finials. To rear is 1970s two-storey extension in similar style and materials, reusing roll-moulded architraves and sashes. Interior has winding stone stairs with cast-iron balusters and handrail, 4-panelled doors in beaded architraves, large stone semi- circular archway between original build and extension, fireplace in extension reuses window architrave as surround. One of two lodges by Burn on driveways to Fonthill Abbey (1846 by Burn and demolished 1955)."

8.1 Lawn Lodge is situated within a Grade II* Park and Garden, first listed on 1st September 1987. The official listing description is as follows:

"Landscape park developed c.1740 onwards by Alderman William Beckford and c.1793 onwards by his son William Beckford, with further development c.1850. At most extensive c.2,000ha. Now in divided ownership and in varied use - mainly parkland, woodland, and agricultural, and with several separate residences. The present Fonthill House is not within the area covered by the erstwhile Beckford estate, nor has it any connection with that estate.

The main buildings at Fonthill have a complex relationship. On a site 1km south of Fonthill Bishop church, and some 200m west of Fonthill Lake (NGR ST9331), successive houses were built, enlarged or modified (1) for Sir John Mervyn, who bought

the nucleus of the estate 1553, (2) for Sir Francis Cottington, who bought it in 1631 and added a stable block, (3) for Alderman William Beckford (1709-70), who bought the estate c.1736 and enlarged and altered the Cottington mansion. This was burnt 1755, and rapidly replaced by (4) a new mansion, Fonthill splendens, designed by 'Mr Hoare' and more or less complete by 1770. Main building and east service wing demolished 1801-07. West service wing incorporated into a further building by Wyatt and Brandon 1848-49 for James Morrison. This last nowdemolished. William Beckford (1760-1844), born in Fonthill splendens, considered building a Gothic 'chapel' or tower on Stop's Beacon in the early 1790s, and a mock convent ruin on Hinckley Hill 1km south-west of Fonthill splendens. In 1796, work on the latter (designed by James Wyatt) began, and this project rapidly evolved as the nucleus of Fonthill Abbey, elaborated, enlarged and repaired by Wyatt with Beckford's participation until c.1817, and using much of the material from Fonthill splendens in its construction. Beckford sold Fonthill Abbey in 1822, and moved to Bath, where he built, and gardened, again (see Register entry for Beckford's Ride, Avon). The main tower of Fonthill Abbey collapsed 1825, and much of the vast structure was rapidly demolished, leaving only the western end of the Abbey inact, including the Oratory, Sanctuary and Lancaster Tower. Another mansion (also named Fonthill Abbey) 300m south-east of Beckford's Fonthill Abbey, was built for the Marquess of Westminster 1846-52 by William Burn, and demolished 1955. The adjacent stables, also by Burn, were converted to a private residence c.1978, and mid-C19 terraces with 2 sculptural groups remain to the south-west of the site of the Burn mansion. C19 walled kitchen garden 400m further south-east.

Extensive garden and landscape development in the Fonthill estate was undertaken for Alderman Beckford in the mid-C18. Fonthill Lake was enlarged from earlier fishponds to a length of 1?km, by means of a weir at the southern end. Near the head of the lake are a Boathouse (or possibly 'Water Temple'), and adjacent bridge reached via causeway with 2 large stone vases. 100m west of the Boathouse and spanning the public road from Fonthill Bishop, the Entrance Gateway with twin flanking pavilions probably c.1750, and late C19 approach walls on northern side. Alderman Beckford also built Holy Trinity Church at Fonthill Gifford, 1748, which formed part of the landscape scheme. This replaced in 1866 by another church by T H Wyatt.

On both sides of Fonthill Lake, c.1km south of the Boathouse, are cave or grotto works, probably made for the 2nd William

Beckford. Those on the west side include the Hermit's Cave and the Hermit's Cell, with the Hermitage ('a rude erection in imitation of a Cromlech') on higher ground above the caves. Tunnel under roadway nearby. Opposite - i.e. on east side of lake - the Landing Stage, with 4 large stone vases, probably c.1750 - and 100m south, using a quarry site, the main grottoes extending on 3 levels with several entrances and chambers. These described in William Beckford's Modern Novel Writing, 1796, II, vi, and probably created by Josiah Lane 1794. An 'Alpine Garden' was made above ground in this area, now mainly beech wood.

Apart from these grottoes, William Beckford's park and garden activity was mainly west of Fonthill splendens, ranging widely round the Abbey. Beginning in 1793, he surrounded a large area of the estate with a wall (he did not wish his neighbours to hunt through his grounds), and by c.1797 some 800ha were enclosed. Both this area and outer parts of the estate were crossed by over 40km of paths, some of which can no longer be traced. The wall now mainly demolished. Sections are visible on east side of Newtown/Hindon road, north of Stone Lodge. In the 1790s, his tree plantation was extensive - 'above a million of Trees' in 1796. He made Bitham or Bittern Lake km south of the Abbey, erecting a dam across a steeply falling valley. Uphill from and north of Bitham Lake, a winding rockwork channel, now grown over by rhododendron from the 'American Plantation' to north-east of the Lake where Beckford established trees and shrubs recently introduced to England. Mature deodar, Wellingtonia, swamp cypress, araucaria remain, with undergrowth of rhododendron. Some of this planting may date only from mid- or late C19. Most of Beckford's smaller garden features have gone - glasshouses, rosarium, thornery, herb garden - with the destruction of the Abbey. On Stop or Stop's Beacon, 1km south-west of the Abbey, foundations of a tower remain, which may date either from c.1760, or from 1794-95, when Wyatt made plans for a 'chapel' to be built there."

8.2 The proposed solar panels will be installed on two contemporary ancillary buildings within the curtilage of the listed building. Consideration is therefore given to the extent to which the setting of the listed building contributes to its overall significance as well as the potential harm the proposed development may have on this setting.

8.3 Whilst significantly extended in the 1970's, the original scale and form of Lawn Lodge is clearly identified. Lawn lodge was

one of four lodges located at the entrance to the estate. Notwithstanding the buildings' age and manner of construction, it is clear that much of its historical significance is derived from its direct association with the estate. It is clear that the setting of Lawn Lodge, being positioned in isolation and located directly adjacent to a former access to the grounds of the Abbey, contributes to this significance.

8.4 The curtilage of the property includes an open garden area to the north of the house and a more enclosed garden area to the east. Beyond these defined garden areas there is a gradual transition to areas of less structured and formalised domestic use. This includes a meadow/garden area to the north within which a pond has recently been created. The existing timber carport and stable block are located approximately 35 metres to the east and form a group of ancillary buildings and structures which also include a greenhouse, fruit cage and large shed.

8.5 By virtue of the degree of physical separation and the presence of screening features, it is considered that there will be only limited visual connectivity between the proposed development and the garden areas to the north and east of the property. The provision of these panels on the south facing roof slope of the car port will not appear intrusive or impact on the more intimate garden areas that serve the dwelling. Whilst the proposal introduces a more contemporary element, the development is sufficiently removed from the listed building and of a scale that would not change the existing relationship between the outbuildings and the listed building.

8.6 Having regard to the dwellings position at a former entrance to the Abbey grounds, it is noted that the proposed panels (and associated ancillary outbuildings) are located in the least sensitive location, being located away from the junction of the public highway with the former access leading north into Fonthill Woods. Combined with the limited scale of the development and its limited impact on the wider landscape, it is considered the proposal will not harm the setting of Lawn Lodge.

8.7 The application site is located at the very southern edge of the Grade II* park and garden. It Is noted that the designation is particularly extensive, extending to approximately 2000 ha. The proposal is considered to be represent small scale domestic

development that is directly connected to existing contemporary structures within the curtilage of the listed building. In addition, the proposed development is well screened from the surrounding area and has an extremely limited impact on visual amenity and wider landscape character.

8.8 In developing the proposed solar installation, consideration has been given to the siting of the proposed array. Its location and configuration has been chosen to maximise energy production with its associated sustainability benefits. It is considered that the proposed development balances the sensitivities and constraints of the site whilst maximising these sustainability benefits. Having regard to the scale and nature of the proposed development and its physical relationship with the listed building, it is considered that the array will not unduly impact on the aesthetic appearance or harm the setting of the listed building. For the reasons detailed above, it is considered that the proposal will not adversely impact on the setting of the listed building or the significance of the Grade II* Park and Garden. The proposal is seen to accord with Policy 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, 2015.

Conclusion

9.0 It is considered that the proposed solar array will not adversely impact on any ecological interest within the locality, will not adversely impact on the significance of the heritage asset and will not be detrimental to the landscape character and visual amenity of the locality. The proposals are seen to be in accordance with Policies 50, 51 and 58 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy, 2015.