

SOLAR PANELS

POLICY FOR SOLAR PANELS

Adopted by Planning Committee on 26 September 2023

Both the current Huntingdonshire District Local Plan and the Buckden Neighbourhood Development Plan make no specific reference to Solar Panels. However, the Neighbourhood Plan, which currently has legal priority, is concerned, in Section 14, with "Preserving the Rural Setting of the Village, Protecting and enhancing Valued Landscapes". That is set out in 14.7 Policies Landscape 1 and 2.

Recently HDC has consulted through its Local Plan Issues Engagement Paper of April 2023. In answer to the question regarding renewable and low carbon energy Buckden Parish Council replied

"We believe that wind power is more efficient than solar power, is less intrusive and takes less valuable land and that solar power should be restricted to roofs, industrial sites and brownfield sites. A good example are the solar panels provided at the Park and Ride Sites. We note that no mention is made of hydro power, particularly from the Great Ouse."

At the Council Meeting there was both a generally expressed concern about placing Solar Panels on agricultural land as well a desire to have a mix of renewable energy sources.

This is what has been agreed:

1. Overall, the district strategy for renewable energy should result in a mix of wind, hydro and solar. BPC recommendations should reflect this.
2. Any installation must have a minimal impact on the environment and not be overly visually intrusive.
3. Any installation should not be adjacent to or immediately visible to residential properties unless it is on existing roofs.
4. Solar panels should be constructed on existing buildings and brownfield sites.
5. Solar panels should not be installed on greenfield sites and the Parish Council will strongly oppose any application for them on agricultural land of Grade 3 or better.
6. The Parish Council will seek support from Principal Councils and its local MP to make the installation of solar panels on roofs of new properties to be a planning condition.
7. solar panels must be sustainably sourced.
8. The impact on water run-off and drainage needs to be considered.
9. The problems of glint and glare from solar panels needs to be covered.

It was considered that existing policies in the BNDP (page 73) and the HLP (Policy LP3) were sufficient to protect the Ouse Valley.

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VERSION CONTROL

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Date amended	Reason for version change	Amended by
26 September 2022	Version 1 adopted by Planning Committee	Planning Committee