

DESIGN AND ACCESS, HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT & PLANNING SUPPORTING STATEMENT

location	The Picturedrome, Market Walk, Holmfirth, HD9 7DA (Listed building and Conservation Area).
application	Erection of Solar Panels to South Facing Roof Slope
client/applicant	Picturedrome (Holmfirth)
job number	24/1114
date	January 2025

ARCHITECTURE | PLANNING | DESIGN

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INTRODUCTION

Paul Matthews Architectural Ltd have prepared this statement to assess how the proposals affect the special architectural or historical interest of the Picturedrome. As required by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) the purpose of this statement is to assess the nature, extent and importance of the building on the site and the contribution of the setting to its significance.

This Heritage Impact Assessment / Listed Building Consent forms part of the planning application for retrospective application for the proposed erection of 71 recessed solar panels to the South facing roof slope at The Picturedrome, Market Walk, Holmfirth, HD9 7DA (Listed building and Conservation Area).

The Picturedrome was originally known as the *Holme Valley Theatre* and was opened on Easter Monday, March 1st, 1913. The original plan of the theatre, which was actually designed as a cinema, seated 1040 people! 240 in the balcony and 800 downstairs.

The Valley Theatre closed in September 1967 and reopened as a bingo hall in December 1967. The bingo hall use continued for 26 years.

In 1997 the premises were purchased from the Valley Picture Theatre Company and leased to the current owners until 2003 when Mr & Mrs P Carr purchased the premises. The Cinema use was re-established with live performances also featuring. Over more recent years the performance venue has excelled and has a massive following, attracting well known artists and drawing crowds in from all over the country.

Located within the Holmfirth Conservation Area, the Picturedrome holds a prominent position along Victoria Street and is an iconic structure within the town's streetscape.

Its significance stems from its:

Architectural Value: A well-preserved example of Edwardian entertainment architecture, retaining much of its original fabric.

Historical Value: Its longstanding role as a community entertainment hub and part of Holmfirth's cultural identity.

Social Value: A venue of continuous importance for music, cinema, and public events, contributing to the town's vibrancy.

The building is situated in a prominent location in the centre of the town, fronting the River Holme.

The building is predominantly red brick with areas of natural stone and render, the building is covered with a blue slate roof.

The building and its use provides the Town of Holmfirth, and wider district of Kirklees, a massive economic boost drawing in thousands of visitors each year. Many visitors travel from far and wide with many staying overnight. These visitors provide a great economic boost to the area.

The building is Grade II Listed. The listed building record states;

Heritage Category: Listed Building

Grade: II

List Entry Number: 1391967

Date first listed: 18-May-2007

Statutory Address 1: THE PICTUREDROME, MARKET WALK

The scope of legal protection for listed buildings

This List entry helps identify the building designated at this address for its special architectural or historic interest.

Unless the List entry states otherwise, it includes both the structure itself and any object or structure fixed to it (whether inside or outside) as well as any object or structure within the curtilage of the building.

For these purposes, to be included within the curtilage of the building, the object or structure must have formed part of the land since before 1st July 1948.

Statutory Address: THE PICTUREDROME, MARKET WALK

District: Kirklees (Metropolitan Authority)

Parish: Holme Valley

National Grid Reference: SE 14222 08200

Details HOLME VALLEY

13/0/10024 MARKET WALK 18-MAY-07 THE PICTUREDROME

II Cinema, 1912-13, designed by P. Norman Brown of Holmfirth for Hawthorne and King. The building is in red brick, mainly rendered with exposed brick pillars, with a slate pitched roof. There is a louvre on the ridge towards the front of the building.

ELEVATIONS: main entrance at the gable end to the south-east. Two double doors with original oval glazing bars in upper halves and overlights are centrally placed, divided by a brick pilaster. Stone banded brick pilasters to each side support a balcony, formerly an external projection box. The pilasters continue to break the roof line with semi-circular caps. The balcony has three blocked openings and a window. There is a projecting stone band at first floor, and one window to each side on ground and first floor, with stone dressings. The raised apex of the gable carries a date stone of 1912 surmounted by a stone cartouche. Both sides of the building are rendered brick with exposed brick pilasters and various openings, some blocked. To the rear is a first floor entrance to the stage and gallery areas with altered external access stair.

INTERIOR: The doors open into an entrance foyer with an inserted reception desk at the rear. Stairs to the first floor gallery rise to the left with original green, yellow and white Art Deco tiling to each side. Doors to the Gentlemen's toilets to the left and the Ladies toilets to the right have original lettering in the glass. The main auditorium has a bar area to the rear beneath the gallery, modern seating in the central section and an open area at the front. The flattened proscenium arch around the screen has a decorative plasterwork band with a central cartouche. The lower portion on the right side has been restored using the original mould. The ceiling is a coffered segmented barrel vault in pressed tin, with ceiling roses forming part of the ventilation system. To either side of the stage are exit doors with raised pediments, with a further door on the right side of the auditorium, and shuttered (blocked) windows along each side. The gallery runs along the rear and right hand side of the auditorium: the curved front is decorated with ornate plasterwork. There is no seating, and a projection room has been inserted into the front part of the rear section. Some openings to a former projection room at the rear survive. Behind the screen are two small rooms to the left, and additional timber and steel work has been inserted to support a first floor room in the area of the former fly tower. Truncated remains of the fly equipment remain in the ceiling. There is an original emergency exit to the rear of the side gallery.

HISTORY: The cinema was the first purpose built cinema in Holmfirth, opened on March 1st 1913. It was then called the Valley Theatre, and originally seated 800 in the stalls and 240 in the gallery. The building incorporated a number of safety features, including the pressed tin ceiling, ventilation system and multiple emergency exits. It had an external projection and lighting box cantilevered over the main entrance, and its own electric plant with supplementary gas lighting. The stage was designed for live shows as well as films, and there were two small dressing rooms behind the stage.

The external projection room was removed in the 1920's and replaced with one inside the building: this survives but with no equipment. The first sound feature was presented in 1930, when a new screen was installed and projection and sound systems improved. By 1952 the seating capacity had been reduced to 779, and the cinema closed in 1967. It was opened as a Bingo hall and used as such until c.1993. It then remained closed until 1998 when after refurbishment it reopened as the Picturdrome. The building is still in use as a cinema with occasional live shows.

There are strong historical connections with the Bamforth family who originated in Holmfirth and were very early film makers. The firm was founded in 1870, making magic lantern slides, and by 1898 Bamforths were making films with Riley Brothers of Bradford. Some of their early films were shown at the Valley Theatre, and it has been suggested that professional members of the company also appeared live on the stage. Bamforths, whose studio was nearby in Holmfirth, went on to specialise in postcards, calendars and birthday cards, but their films are acknowledged as important in the early history of cinema, providing the earliest examples of British comic film. The financial involvement of the Bamforths in the theatre at its opening is unclear. Hawthorne and King are described as the proprietors, but Harry Vernon is variously described as manager and proprietor. Vernon knew the Bamforths and his obituary states that he gave the firm their first commission to film the Holmfirth Whitsuntide procession. Bamforths may have provided financial backing to the first owners, and the firm acquired an interest in the cinema after the First World War.

SOURCES: The Theatres Trust: Guide to British Theatres 1750-1950 (2000), p.79 Richard Brown: Film

and Postcards : Cross-Media Symbiosis in Early Bamforth Films, 236-252. Bamforth, James, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, 2004

SUMMARY OF IMPORTANCE The Picturedrome in Holmfirth was built in 1912, and is a small but little altered example of an early purpose built cinema. Its major features including gallery, proscenium, foyer and a rare pressed tin ceiling remain intact. Additionally, it has strong historical associations with the firm of James Bamforth of Holmfirth who was an important early film maker whose locally made films were shown here and who had some financial stake in the building. It is still in use as a cinema, despite an interval of use as a bingo hall and a period of closure.

The national criteria for buildings of this type focus on architectural quality, quality of decoration, rarity and novelty, historic associations and intactness. Any pre-1914 building should be seriously considered for listing. This cinema, although not of the highest architectural quality, has a rare feature in its pressed tin ceiling, is almost entirely intact, and has strong and important historical connections. It therefore meets the national criteria for designation. SE1422208200

PROPOSED WORKS

The proposal is to install 71 no. Viridian Solar PV16-M10 recessed solar panels to the South roof slope of The Picturedrome. It's important to note that the South side elevation of the property is well screened by the surrounding built fabric and would only be apparent at a much higher altitude around the Holme Valley. This South facing roof slope also offers the optimum location for solar panels which is demonstrated by the provision of 52% of the energy demands of the premises.

The Picturedrome was opened in 1913 as previously noted above and due to the age of the building, understandably requires some enhancement of its current energy systems. The applicant has carried out many sympathetic improvements to the premises which in turn ensures its continued existence for future generations to witness and enjoy.

The 71-no. proposed recessed solar panels will aid in bringing the energy consumption of The Picturedrome closer to a modern-day standard with renewable energy.

The 71 No. 335-watt solar panels are estimated to provide the Picturedrome with up to 20,931 kWh per year, 65% of which to be self-consumed energy and the remaining 35% sent back to the grid. This will allow the property to acquire up to 52% of its energy from a sustainable, renewable source which will help protect to the longevity of the Picturedrome for future years. In a current day economy where many local businesses are struggling with increasing energy prices, it is absolutely vital that measures are taken to help mitigate these costs to ensure the use of the building remains for both the locality and the heritage of Holmfirth.

Page 30 of Historic England document, "Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency" within chapter 96, it states that:

"Specialist consideration should be given to the impact on the roof of the additional weight of the panels, weather-tightness and risks of fire".

A structural assessment has been undertaken in order to determine the most feasible method of fixing and installation in relation to the historic significance of the Picturedrome. As the building is significantly over 100 years old, the existing roof structure would require a high level of structural enhancements/interventions resulting in unwanted disruption and change to the heritage asset. The estimated structural load of a surface mounted system would create a load weight of 58kg/m² which is a large increase from the existing current load of 38kg/m².

A recessed system however, following the safe removal of the slate within the proposed footprint of the solar panels would create a significant net reduction in dead load weight upon the existing roof structure. The assumed dead load weight following the installation of the solar panels is estimated to be 16kg/m², a reduction of over 50%. This would allow the recessed system to be implemented without the requirement of further construction. The existing slates are to be carefully removed and stored so if the system were to be removed, the roof plane could be easily returned to its original state.

A structural Note, prepared by SkyHooks Engineering, dated 19th December 2024, accompanies this planning and listed building application.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT

VISUAL IMPACT

The proposed location ensures minimal visibility of the panels from key viewpoints, including Victoria Street and the primary frontage of the building.

The elevated location of the proposed panels and confined town centre of Holmfirth effectively screens the panes from main public view points.

The use of non-reflective, dark-coloured panels ensures they do not detract from the traditional appearance of the roof or draw undue attention.



Views from higher vantage points, such as the hillside areas surrounding Holmfirth, have also been considered. While the panels may be partially visible from these locations, their discreet design and placement ensure they do not adversely affect the character or setting of the conservation area not the Listed Building.



The historic use of the Picturedrome was a theatre/cinema. These uses still continue with the theatre (performing arts) use continuing in the form of musical artists.

The building has also been used as a bingo hall.

The current use as a music venue and base for Holmfirth Film festival provides a valuable asset to the local community and the economy. This use has proved very successful with indications that this will continue to thrive.

The interior of the building is unaffected by the proposals.

The building's appearance externally is one of uniqueness which adds to the character and makes it an individual stand out building in the Holmfirth centre/conservation area.

Previous repairs and works to the property, by the current owners/the applicant have enhanced the appearance and lifted/reinstated the significance of this prominent building which has become a landmark for the town centre principal given its use.

The use of render and red brickwork within Holmfirth town centre, and in fact the wider locality, is unusual but the characteristic variation of the appearance of the bricks and their patina of age ensures the building sits comfortably in its predominantly stone-built surroundings.

The building, given previous and sympathetic works/repairs, makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of the Holmfirth Conservation Area.

IMPACT ON HISTORIC FABRIC

Paragraph 195 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires that the Local Planning Authority identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage assets affected and take this into account when considering the impact of the proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

The installation has been designed to respect the property and structure. The incorporation of the proposed solar will use non-invasive fixing methods that preserve the underlying historic fabric. The reversibility of the work ensures that no permanent changes or damage is made to the building/structure.

What is the impact of the proposals on the heritage assets affected?

Paragraph 109 of the NPPF states *"Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:*

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and

d) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place."

We contend the proposals aim to protect the property from any future decay or neglect by improving the energy standards and raising them to a modern-day standard. The solar panels can be removed at any point in future with little to no detriment to the existing aesthetic.

It is also worth noting other buildings in the near and immediate locality have similar type renewable energy interventions.

See image overleaf of nearby Yew Tree Mill Holmbridge, a Grade II listed building, a much more prominent roof plane when viewed from public spaces;



The justification and genuine requirement of renewable energy is clear, demonstratable and provides a real public benefit and benefit to the longevity of the asset. We contend this benefit outweighs any perceived harm to the designated heritage asset or the conservation area.

The visual impact, as noted previously, has been considered and reduced as far as practically possible with the proposed secluded location of the panels on the south facing elevation which is also obviously a benefit for solar panel performance levels.

CUMULATIVE IMPACT

The proposal aligns with the building's ongoing use as an active venue and community asset. By integrating renewable energy solutions, the Picturedrome will remain environmentally and economically sustainable, supporting its long-term viability.

CONSERVATION AREA IMPACT

The Holmfirth Conservation Area derives its character from the harmony of traditional materials and vernacular architecture. This proposal maintains the visual integrity of the conservation area by ensuring the panels are unobtrusively located and designed to complement the building's materials and aesthetic.

JUSTIFICATION / PRECEDENT

JUSTIFICATION

The installation of solar panels represents a critical step in reducing the environmental footprint of the Picturedrome while safeguarding its future as a key cultural venue in Holmfirth.

Careful consideration has been given to ensure the installation does not compromise the building's architectural or historical significance, while addressing modern energy needs in a manner consistent with heritage conservation principles.

The proposal is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), particularly the provisions that promote the adaptation of heritage assets to support sustainable energy solutions. It also aligns with local planning policies, including Kirklees Council's "Policy LP35: Historic Environment", which supports sensitive adaptation of listed buildings to meet environmental challenges.

LP35 (Historic Environment) of the Kirklees Local Plan states that;

"Development proposals affecting a designated heritage asset (or an archaeological site of national importance) should preserve or enhance the significance of the asset. In cases likely to result in substantial harm or loss, development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the proposals would bring substantial public benefits that clearly outweigh the harm"

We contend that the heritage of The Picturedrome will be preserved and enhanced through the implementation of a renewable energy source. A more sustainable energy source which will provide greener and significantly cheaper energy to the asset will ensure the building can perform to a greater standard and make sure the building can remain in business, as an asset to the locality of Holmfirth for years to come.

Page 30 of Historic England document, "Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency" within chapter 97, it states that:

"Installation of panels will generally be acceptable if hidden from view.

Locations which will normally have very minimal or no impact include valley roofs and behind parapets on flat or low-pitched roofs."

The Picturedrome has a parapet wall to the front (principal) elevation as evidenced on the google earth street view image overleaf.

This parapet wall assists in screening the proposed solar array.



As previously stated, the panels are to be installed to the existing roof slope which is the most hidden from view from around the centre of Holmfirth and is also part of the same elevation that has seen new built works for safety. This if/when seen from the ground level outside and around the Picturedrome would aid in masking the proposed solar panels.

Views from higher vantage points, such as the hillside areas surrounding Holmfirth, have also been considered. While the panels may be partially visible from these locations, their discreet design and placement ensure they do not adversely affect the character or setting of the conservation area.

Page 30 of Historic England document, “Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency” within chapter 98, it states that:

“Installation of panels will generally not be acceptable on principal roof slopes, if they would be visible and would detract from the building’s special interest.

As the front elevations of buildings are generally the most important and the most prominent, they will usually be the most sensitive place to site photovoltaic and solar thermal panels. In some cases, other elevations and their associated roof slopes will be equally, or more, sensitive.

Exceptions may include buildings whose significance may be less sensitive to the installation of such panels (for example, certain industrial buildings). Steps should be taken to reduce the visual impact of panels in these locations as far as is possible. For example, using black frames, avoiding silvered or reflective panels and avoiding irregular or stepped panel layouts”

The installation of the solar panels will not be to a principal roof slope, on the contrary it will be installed to the elevation which is the least prevalent to the building.

As can be seen within the accompanying product information lists regarding the solar panel choices, the black panels chosen will aim to adhere to this point and as the system is proposed to be recessed, this also helps reduce visual framing.

The 71, 335-watt solar panels are estimated to provide the Picturedrome with up to 20,931 kWh per year, 65% of which to be self-consumed energy and the remaining 35% sent back to the grid. This will allow the property to acquire up to 52% of its energy from a sustainable, renewable source which will help protect to the longevity of the Picturedrome for future years.

To put context to the proposed benefit of solar implementation upon The Picturedrome, the output of renewable energy is estimated to reduce annual CO₂ by 5 tons! Over the lifetime of the new proposed system the equivalent CO₂ of 154,054 miles over car journeys will be avoided, the equivalent benefit of 990 planted trees and the same CO₂ reduction as removing 110 long haul flights.

JUSTIFICATION – SOLAR, A PUBLIC BENEFIT

The public benefit of installing solar panels on the Picturedrome in Holmfirth can be framed in terms of environmental, economic, and cultural gains. These benefits align with local and national policies supporting sustainability and the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings.

The installation of solar panels on the Picturedrome provides significant public benefits by supporting environmental sustainability and the long-term viability of this iconic cultural venue. By generating renewable energy on-site, the project reduces the Picturedrome's reliance on fossil fuels, thereby lowering its carbon footprint and contributing to local and national efforts to combat climate change. As a high-profile listed building within the Holmfirth Conservation Area, this initiative demonstrates how heritage assets can adopt modern sustainable technologies without compromising their historical significance. This sets an important precedent for similar discreet projects, encouraging wider adoption of renewable energy solutions across the community.

Economically, the installation will help lower energy costs, allowing the Picturedrome to allocate more resources toward cultural programming, staff, local suppliers, and diverting finance into the maintenance of the listed Building itself. This strengthens the venue's financial sustainability and ensures it can continue operating as a vital hub for music, cinema, and community events. The project also preserves and enhances the Picturedrome's role as a key contributor to the vibrancy of Holmfirth, securing its relevance for future generations. By integrating sustainability with heritage conservation, this proposal balances environmental responsibility with the need to protect and maintain an important community asset.

PRECEDENT

Solar panels are becoming increasingly popular on listed buildings in the UK due to a blend of environmental, economic, and technological factors. Key reasons include:

Climate Action: Supporting the UK's net-zero targets and reducing the carbon footprint of historic buildings.

Cost Savings: Lowering energy bills and benefiting from incentives like the Smart Export Guarantee (SEG).

Improved Technology: Discreet, heritage-sensitive solar panels, such as slate-effect tiles, that blend with historic roofs.

Policy Support: National and local planning policies encouraging sustainable energy solutions on heritage assets.

Public Benefits: Enhancing the viability of listed buildings while showcasing leadership in sustainability.

These adaptations ensure historic buildings remain relevant, resilient, and usable in a low-carbon future.

The recently commenced works to York Minster can be assessed when exploring the feasibility of installing solar panels to a heritage asset and allows review of the positive outcomes.

York Minster is taking a significant step towards sustainability with the installation of 184 solar panels on its South Quire roof. These panels are estimated to generate nearly 70,000 kWh of energy annually, meeting approximately one-third of the Minster's energy needs and cutting carbon emissions by about 13 tonnes of CO₂ each year. The estimations of potential gain from the installation of solar panels aligns with the projections which are proposed in relation to this application, 184 panels to achieve 70,000kWh and a 13-ton CO₂ reduction whereas the Picturedrome is estimated to achieve 21,000kWh and a reduction of 5 tons of CO₂ for 71 panels.

This installation complements existing solar initiatives across the area. In 2021, York Minster secured planning and Listed Building Consent for the first solar slates on a Grade II Listed Building in York. These were installed on the roof of the York Minster Refectory, the Minster's solar energy systems are expected to produce 118,000 kWh annually, equivalent to the energy needed to power 44 average UK homes.

Harnessing solar energy forms a key part of the Minster's commitment to reducing its carbon footprint, aligning with the Church of England's goal to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2030. This initiative is one of several innovative projects under the precinct's Neighbourhood Plan, adopted in 2022 after extensive public consultation and a referendum. The Plan, which recently earned the "*Innovator of the Year*" award from the Future for Religious Heritage network, emphasises addressing the climate emergency through renewable energy adoption and extensive retrofitting to decarbonize the site.

The works to York Minster emphasise the importance of providing a renewable energy source to heritage assets and highlight the continued acceptance and favourability of renewable energy sources to such prominent structures. The Minster has furthered the "green" initiative following the positive outcome of the implementation of solar panels by working with City of York Council, Historic England and other key stakeholders to create a suite of bespoke planning policies enabling other initiatives, including the retrofitting of many of the historic buildings under the Minster's care, to improve their energy efficiency, a water recycling system for the Minster's new stone-cutting saws, the introduction of electric car chargers, and improvements to the green spaces around the Minster.

Similarly, Westborough Methodist Church, a Grade II listed building in Scarborough, has applied to install 48 solar panels on its roof, along with a battery storage system. This initiative aims to reduce

the church's carbon footprint while respecting its historical significance, much the same as is intended with the proposals for the implementation of solar panels to The Picturedrome.

In a more local context, a recent planning application by Paul Matthews Architectural Ltd, [2023/62/92343/W](#), for the conversion of a Grade II Listed Church Building to a dwelling recently received planning approval for the implementation of recessed solar panels to the roof of a listed building. This application is also within The Wooldale Conservation Area with a much more prominent roof slope to the public view albeit with much less surrounding pedestrian traffic. This application however is still within the same Ward district and the works are also to a Grade II listed building within a Conservation Area.

POLICY CONTEXT & JUSTIFICATION

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Kirklees Local Plan Policy LP 1 requires that when considering development proposals, the council will take a positive approach that reflects the presumption in favour of sustainable development contained in the National Planning Policy Framework. The council will always work pro-actively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Paragraph 167 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

“Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.”

We believe that significant evidence has been provided within this document to justify the proposed solar panels in relation to their estimated environmental benefit to The Picturedome and to the locality of Holmfirth.

Further to this, NPPF paragraph 168 reiterates the weight that should be given in favour of renewable energy generation by stating:

“When determining planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon energy developments and their associated infrastructure, local planning authorities should:

- a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation and the proposal’s contribution to a net zero future;*
- b) recognise that small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions;”*

Paragraph 210 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to

sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local

character and distinctiveness.

We contend that Installing solar panels ensures the Picturedrome remains economically viable and environmentally sustainable, balancing conservation with modern needs. The impression of sustainability that can be omitted from such a prominent community focal point will provide communication of renewable energy to the local public and highlight the importance of green initiatives.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Kirklees Local Plan Policy LP26 States that;

Renewable and low carbon energy proposals (excluding wind) will be supported and planning permission granted where the following criteria are met:

a. the proposal would not have an unacceptable impact on landscape character and visual appearance of the local area, including the urban environment;

b. the proposal would not have either individually or cumulatively an unacceptable impact on protected species, designated sites of importance for biodiversity or heritage assets;

c. the statutory protection of any area would not be compromised by the development;

d. any noise, odour, traffic or other impact of development is mitigated so as not to cause unacceptable detriment to local amenity;

e. any significant adverse effects of the proposal are mitigated by wider environmental, social and economic benefits.

We contend that all the aforementioned criteria are considered and achieved through the solar panels being installed to an elevation which is not visible to the public eye from a public road, the panels can be removed at a later date with little to no disruption or damage to the existing building, there are no adverse effects (the effects are to the contrary), does not harm or disrupt biodiversity and achieves a greater renewable source of energy for the building, protecting its use for the future.

The expand on this, Policy Justification 12.6 of LP26 states that;

The NPPF requires Local Plans to plan positively to deliver renewable and low carbon technology developments. This is to help tackle climate change and address the environmental role of planning as set out in the NPPF. This helps to meet the UK's legally binding target to reduce carbon emissions by 80% on 1990 levels by 2050.

This shows the intent from National Planning Policy to provide buildings with renewable energy sources where possible, we contend that in this instance it is even more important, providing a historic building with modern renewable energy sources.

Kirklees Local Plan Policy LP24 “Design” states;

“Good design should be at the core of all proposals in the district and should be considered at the outset of the development process, ensuring that design forms part of pre-application consultation of a proposal. Development briefs, design codes and masterplans should be used to secure high quality, green, accessible, inclusive and safe design, where applicable. Where appropriate and in agreement with the developer schemes will be submitted for design review.”

We believe that the discreet placement of the panels and their material choice harmonize with the existing roof structure, ensuring the character of the Picturedrome and the wider Holmfirth Conservation Area is maintained.

Kirklees Local Plan Policy LP48 “Community facilities and services” which States that;

“Proposals will be supported for development that protects, retains or enhances provision, quality or Accessibility of existing community, education, leisure and cultural facilities that meets the needs of All members of the community.”

We believe that The Picturedrome is a key cultural facility for Holmfirth. Making the venue more sustainable helps ensure its long-term operation and relevance to the community.

Kirklees Local Plan Policy LP52 “Protection and improvement of environmental quality” encourages development proposals that minimize their environmental impact and contribute to environmental sustainability states that;

“Proposals which have the potential to increase pollution from noise, vibration, light, dust, odour, shadow flicker, chemicals and other forms of pollution or to increase pollution to soil or where environmentally sensitive development would be subject to significant levels of pollution, must be accompanied by evidence to show that the impacts have been evaluated and measures have been incorporated to prevent or reduce the pollution, so as to ensure it does not reduce the quality of life and well-being of people to an unacceptable level or have unacceptable impacts on the environment.

Where possible, all new development should improve the existing environment.”

We believe that installing solar panels reduces the carbon footprint of the Picturedrome, demonstrating environmental responsibility and sustainability. Using a focal point of Holmfirth to communicate sustainable values.

USE

The use of the building will not change as a result of this application. The proposed solar panels will provide a sustainable energy solution for a historic building, ensuring the building can perform to modern standards and ensure the longevity of The Picturedrome.

PROPOSED INSTALLATION (Appearance)

The materials of the proposed solar panels are recessed dark grey / black metal casing which will similarly match the existing roof tiles colour.

It's important to note the South side elevation of the building is discreet, it is surrounded by other large/tall buildings which assists in screening the panels from public eye, the parapet wall to the principal elevation of the building also assists in providing a screen from the proposed solar panels.

MEANS OF ACCESS

There is no proposed change to means of access from this application.

LANDSCAPING

There is no proposed change to the landscaping to the site.

LAYOUT

There is no proposed change to the layout of The Picturedrome from this application.

SCALE

There is no proposed change to the scale of the host building.

CONCLUSION

The Picturedrome, which operates mainly as a live concert venue and cinema provides a massive support to the local and wider economy. The installation of solar panels on the Picturedrome is a thoughtful and sustainable adaptation that respects its heritage significance while addressing contemporary environmental challenges. By harnessing renewable energy, the proposal contributes to reducing the carbon footprint of this iconic building, aligning with both local and national commitments to combat climate change.

The proposed works have been carefully designed to minimize visual and physical impact, ensuring that the Picturedrome's architectural integrity and contribution to the Holmfirth Conservation Area remain undiminished. The placement of the panels on a less visible section of the roof and the use of reversible fixing methods demonstrates a sensitive approach that prioritizes the preservation of the building's historic fabric.

Furthermore, this adaptation supports the long-term viability of the Picturedrome as a cultural and community hub, safeguarding its continued use as a vital entertainment venue in Holmfirth. By integrating renewable energy, the proposal ensures the building remains relevant, economically sustainable, and environmentally responsible for future generations.

In balancing the need for heritage conservation with the pressing demand for sustainable energy solutions, the proposal aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework and Kirklees Local Plan policies, demonstrating a commitment to preserving the past while embracing the future.

Should any further information be required please don't hesitate to contact us.

It would be appreciated if you could contact Paul Matthews Architectural Ltd prior to drafting up your recommendation for determination.