

# PLANNING STATEMENT & HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

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location	So Dough Pizzeria, 54-56 Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth, HD9 3JH (Within a Conservation Area).
application	Erection of Surface Mounted Solar Panels
client/applicant	So Dough Pizzeria C/O William Prady
job number	25/1125
date	August 2025

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Ltd  
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## INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement and Heritage Impact Assessment forms part of the planning application for the proposed erection of 16 surface mounted solar panels to the South West facing roof slope at 54/56 (So Dough), Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth, HD9 3JH.

The property is situated within the Holmfirth Conservation Area.



The property is occupied as a pizza restaurant having historically changing hands through numerous forms of retail and food, formerly the Holme Valley Express (newspaper) printers.

The building was constructed in the early 1900s and is not listed, although there are listed buildings within the immediate vicinity.

The building is situated in a prominent location in the centre of the town, fronting the Huddersfield Road high street.

The building follows the vernacular of Holmfirth being constructed in natural coursed stone and a natural slate roof covering with feature tall/narrow windows with swept heads. The property is a two-storey property although built into the topography. The subject building has a lower eaves and roof apex than that of the adjoining terrace of properties.

The adjoining terrace of older properties are traditional two-storey properties to the frontage (Huddersfield Road elevation) yet four-storey properties to the rear (Norridge Bottom).

The immediately adjoining property, No. 58 Huddersfield Road, is of a differing appearance with larger openings, a shop frontage (most probably replacing a previous smaller window) with a concrete tile roof covering. This adjoining property is a grade II listed building.

## PROPOSED WORKS

The proposal is to install 16 no. Aiko Neostar 2S 460W All Black ABC N-Type Mono solar panels with 5.12kWh battery storage.

It is proposed that the solar panels will be surface mounted (not recessed) and will not impact on the fabric of the heritage asset. The panels are proposed to be located on the South roof elevation of the property to provide optimum energy with the aim of significantly improving the renewable capabilities of the building.

The property is not a listed building. It was constructed in the early 1900s therefore improvement of the energy efficiency of the building is greatly required due to the age/construction form. The addition of 16 surface mounted solar panels will provide a significant improvement to the overall energy performance of the building and allow the system to be removed, if required, at a later date without damage or disruption to the host structure/fabric.

The 16, 460-watt solar panels are estimated to provide the host property with up to 6410 kWh per year, 80% of which to be self-consumed energy. It is estimated that the existing consumption of the building is approximately 20,000kWh, which equates to around 25% of the consumption being provided by the proposed system. This will allow the property to acquire a significant amount of its energy from a sustainable, renewable source. These proposals will aid in providing the building with a more financially efficient means of energy consumption. The proposed 20% feed back into the grid forms a positive contribution to zero carbon which in turn provides a direct public benefit.

The property forms part of the historic core of Holmfirth, contributing to the townscape through its traditional stone construction and roof form. Its location adjacent to the Picturedrome and No 58 Huddersfield Road, two listed buildings, means that any alterations have potential to affect the special interest and setting of these heritage assets.

The Picturedrome, one of the most prominent buildings within Holmfirth, has recently seen planning permission and listed building consent granted for similar works for the installation of recessed solar panels. (App – [2025/90246](#))

The PV panels will be fixed via a non-penetrative, rail-based surface-mounting system. Installation will sit above the existing roof covering without removal of historic slates/stone tiles. Panels will follow the existing roof pitch and be positioned to minimise visibility from key public viewpoints, particularly in relation to the nearby listed buildings and the principal elevation which fronts the Holmfirth centre high street.

Structural calculations have already been carried out to determine the feasibility of the proposals on the existing roof structure. The permitted dead load for the existing roof being 0.785kN/m<sup>2</sup>. The weight of the proposed solar panels, mounting system and the existing roof covering amount to circa 0.47kN/m<sup>2</sup> which shows that the system can be installed without further structural intervention or disruption to the host structure.

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



## IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The location of the building, and existing orientation of the roof mean that the panels will only be visible to the public from a small area of the side elevation facing Victoria Street to the South. To ensure efficient outcomes, it would not be suitable to install solar panels to the opposite roof slope as they would face North and be partly shaded by the taller adjoining property.

View of the panels from the principal elevation which adjoins the high street (Huddersfield Road) would not be possible due to the front gable and water tabling to front gable. The adjoining structure to the North and the topographical level changes to the East would ensure the panels are also not visible from these orientations. It is accepted the proposed solar panels will be visible from a South West view but we contend this to be a positive in the sense of promoting zero carbon.

The interior of the building will be unaffected by the proposals.

The addition of solar panels would not dramatically change the overall aesthetic of the building. The architectural and historical values would remain due to the panels not being visible to the public on some of the more distant approaches, furthermore the panels are located at a high level that will ensure they are discreet from the adjoining frontage/pavement and Norridge bottom areas.

Although the building is not listed, it is important to assess how the proposals could impact on the adjoining property (No. 58) and The Picturedrome which are both Listed Buildings.

Paragraph 203 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:*

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

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

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

*g) 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 panels can be removed with little to no detriment to the existing aesthetic due to the surface mounting system. It is also important to note that solar panels have recently been approved for the Picturedrome as previously stated, which provides significant evidence that the installation of solar panels is seen as a significant benefit to historical heritage assets and therefore should be seen as equally, if not more suitable to install on surrounding unlisted buildings.

The proposed installation, by virtue of its modular surface-mounted form, is independent of the building's primary structure and will not result in any loss of historic fabric. Minimal intervention is required to accommodate the proposal, limited to discreet fixings to the existing roof covering.

The requirement for renewable energy generation is clear, demonstrable, and delivers a tangible public benefit, contributing to the environmental resilience of the property and the wider community. This benefit, combined with the low-impact and reversible nature of the proposal, is considered to outweigh any perceived harm or impact on the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings or the character and appearance of the Holmfirth Conservation Area.

The 16, 460-watt solar panels are estimated to provide the host property with up to 6410 kWh per year, 80% of which to be self-consumed energy. It is estimated that the existing consumption of the building is approximately 20,000kWh, which equates to around 25% of the consumption being provided by the proposed system. This will allow the property to acquire a significant amount of its energy from a sustainable, renewable source. Many high street stores are changing hands frequently and unfortunately succumbing to financial troubles, which can also be seen in Holmfirth. The proposals will aid in providing the building with a more financially efficient means of energy consumption.

The installation of solar panels on this property provides significant public benefits by supporting environmental sustainability and the long-term viability of a valued building within the Holmfirth community. By generating renewable energy on-site, the project reduces its reliance on fossil fuels, lowering the building's carbon footprint and contributing to local and national efforts to address climate change.

The subject building is situated within the Holmfirth Conservation Area and in close proximity to listed buildings, the proposal demonstrates how renewable technologies can be introduced in a heritage context without compromising the setting of nearby historic assets. This sets a positive example for similar projects, encouraging wider adoption of sustainable energy solutions across the locality.

Economically, the installation will help reduce operating costs, allowing the current and future building's owners to reinvest resources into core activities and maintenance upkeep associated with older properties, local employment, and local suppliers. This strengthens the property's long-term sustainability and ensures it continues to play an important and meaningful role in the life of the town.

The project reinforces the site's contribution to the vibrancy and resilience of Holmfirth, securing its relevance for future generations. By integrating sustainability with heritage sensitivity, the proposal balances environmental responsibility with the need to preserve the area's historic character.

## POLICY CONTEXT

### Kirklees Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Policy LP 1 of the Kirklees Local Plan states that, when assessing development proposals, the council will adopt a positive approach in line with the National Planning Policy Framework's presumption in favour of sustainable development. The council will work proactively with applicants to identify solutions that enable proposals to be approved wherever possible, ensuring that developments contribute to improving the area's economic, social, and environmental well-being.

Paragraph 165 of the NPPF states that:

*To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:*

- a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);*

We believe that the proposals provide a positive strategy to ensure the longevity of the important building along the Holmfirth street scene. The panels would not be visible from all public view points given the topography and elevated location thus minimising the visual impact of the proposals.

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 the proposals will achieve a significant environmental benefit to the host property through the use of solar panels and that precedent is set by the recent approval of solar panels being installed to the nearby Picturedrome, a Listed Building within the conservation area which is more of a heritage asset than an unlisted building within the same conservation area. We also consider it important to note the Picturedrome planning/Listed Building application included for recessed solar panels whereas this application is for surface mounted solar panels having less impact on the fabric of the structure.

NPPF paragraph 168 states that weight 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 contest that installing solar panels ensures the building remains economically viable and environmentally sustainable.**

**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 criteria here are met. We believe that the renewable energy and demonstration of sustainability that will proceed the proposed works will be a benefit to the wider community.**

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.

## **USE**

The use of the building will not change as a result of this application.

## **PROPOSED INSTALLATION (Appearance)**

The black solar panels will be visible from some areas of the town, however the colour will aid in masking the overall visual impact on the existing roof covering of dark natural slate.

Solar panels by virtue are usually visible upon installation which is in most cases difficult to mitigate however the existing built fabric of Holmfirth allows the panels to not be seen as an overbearing addition.

## **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 building from this application.

## **SCALE**

There is no change of scale as result of the proposals.

## **CONCLUSION**

The proposed works represent a low-impact, reversible intervention that sustains the character of the Holmfirth Conservation Area and safeguards the setting of adjacent listed buildings, while enabling the property to make a positive contribution to climate change mitigation.

We believe that significant weight has been demonstrated within this statement as to how NPPF and Kirklees Local Plan strategies are met and should be seen to provide a far greater benefit to the building and wider community than any perceived harm.

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.

**APPENDIX A**  
PROPERTY PHOTOS





