

**KIRKLEES METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
INVESTMENT & REGENERATION SERVICE**

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) – SECTION 70

DELEGATED DECISION TO DETERMINE PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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| Reference No: | 2025/62/92350/W |
| Site Address: | So Dough Pizzeria, 54-56, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth, HD9 3JH |
| Description: | Installation of 16 surface mounted solar panels (within a Conservation Area) |
| Recommending Officer: | Joanna Rednall |

DECISION – CONDITIONAL FULL PERMISSION

I hereby authorise the approval of this application for the reasons set out in the officer's report and recommendation annexed below in respect of the above matter.

Emma Thompson

AUTHORISED OFFICER

Date: 28-Oct-25

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The Site

The application site comprises a two-storey end-terrace building situated within Holmfirth Town Centre. Constructed from natural coursed stone and topped with a slate pitched roof, the building presents as single-storey from the front elevation and two-storey from the rear due to the sloping topography of the site. While the building itself is not listed, it is located within close proximity to several designated heritage assets, including No. 58 Huddersfield Road, a Grade II Listed Building that adjoins the property to the north.

The Proposal

The applicant is seeking planning permission for installation of 16 surface mounted solar panels (within a Conservation Area).

The proposed solar panels will be arranged in a linear configuration along the south-facing roof slope. According to the submitted heritage statement, the installation will comprise Aiko Neostar 2S 460W All Black ABC N-Type Mono solar panels, supported by a 5.12kWh battery storage system.

The panels are to be mounted using a non-penetrative, rail-based surface system, ensuring that the installation sits above the existing roof covering without the removal of historic slates/stone tiles.

History of Negotiations

No amendments have been sought in the processing of this application as it was considered acceptable as submitted.

Planning History

There is no planning history for the site which is considered relevant to the current proposal.

Publicity & Representations

The Council are currently undertaking the legal statutory publicity requirements, as set out at Table 1 in the Kirklees Development Management Charter. As such, this application has been publicised via a site notice and a press notice.

Final publicity date expired: 23rd October 2025.

4 letters (which includes hand-written letters, e-mails and on-line representations) of representation have been received. These are summarised as follows:-

Letters of Support

- The solar panels set a good example and will not detract from the appearance of the building.
- Renewable energy is a necessity in the current times. We should encourage local business' to take up renewable energy as it is an economic benefit to the business therefore a benefit to the local economy.
- This is a very good idea to improve the environmental efficiencies to the business.
- The proposal would not impact the general aesthetics of the building or area.
- This is a positive step that will not only help the business reduce its carbon footprint but also set a strong example for other local businesses in embracing sustainability.
- So Dough Pizzeria is an important part of our community, and by investing in renewable energy, they are showing real commitment to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and contributing towards our area's climate goals. The addition of solar panels will lower their energy costs, allowing them to remain a thriving local business while making an environmentally responsible choice.
- Approving this application would benefit both the business and the wider community, helping to create a greener, more sustainable local economy.

Parish/ Town Council Comments

Holme Valley Parish Council: No comment.

Consultations

KC Conservation and Design: The proposal would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the conservation area through the introduction of solar panels on an otherwise uninterrupted roof plane, which is visible from broader public vantage points.

Allocation & Policies

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The statutory Development Plan for Kirklees is the Local Plan (adopted 27th February 2019) and the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan (adopted 8th December 2021).

Local guidance and policy is provided by the Kirklees Local Plan (adopted February 2019) as such the following policy, guidance and legislation is considered relevant to the determination of this application:-

Kirklees Local Plan (LP)

- LP1 Achieving Sustainable Development
- LP2 Place Shaping
- LP21 Highway Safety
- LP22 Parking Provision
- LP24 Design
- LP26 Renewable and low carbon energy
- LP30 Biodiversity
- LP35 Historic Environment

Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan

The following policies of this plan are considered most relevant:

- Policy 1 – Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape Character of the Holme Valley
- Policy 2 – Protecting and Enhancing the Built Character of the Holme Valley and Promoting High Quality Design
- Policy 12 – Promoting Sustainability
- Policy 13 – Protecting Wildlife and Securing Biodiversity Net Gain

National Policies and Guidance

National planning policy and guidance is set out in National Policy Statements, primarily the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published 12th December 2024, the Planning Practice Guidance Suite (PPGS) first launched 6th March 2014 together with Circulars, Ministerial Statements and associated technical guidance.

The NPPF constitutes guidance for local planning authorities and is a material consideration in determining applications. Considered to be of relevance to the consideration of this application are policies within the following chapters:

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- Chapter 2 – Achieving sustainable development
- Chapter 9 – Promoting sustainable transport
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Chapter 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Supplementary Planning Guidance

Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan

Legislation

The Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that in considering planning applications the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Section 72 of the Town & Country Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

When making a recommendation in respect of a planning application affecting a Listed Building or its setting, attention must be given to Section 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 which requires the Local Planning Authority to 'have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of a special architectural or historic interest which it possesses'

Assessment

The following matters are considered in the assessment below –

1. Principle of development
1. Impact upon visual amenity
2. Impact upon residential amenity
3. Impact upon highway safety
4. Other matters
5. Representations
6. Conclusion

1 – Principle of development:

Policy LP1 states 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. LP1 goes on further to stating that:

The Council will always work pro-actively with applicants jointly to find solutions which mean that the proposal can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions in the area.

Policy LP2 sets out that all development proposals should seek to build on the strengths, opportunities and help address challenges identified in the Local Plan. Policy LP24 of the KLP is relevant and states that "good design should be at the core of all proposals in the district".

In this case, the principle of development in this application is acceptable and shall be assessed against the applicable material planning considerations within the following report.

2 – Impact upon visual amenity

Policy LP24 (Design) of the Council's adopted Local Plan sets out that proposals should promote good design by ensuring the form, scale, layout and details of all development respects and enhances the character of the townscape, extensions are subservient to the original building, are in keeping with the existing buildings in terms of scale, materials and details and minimise impact on residential amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers. Paragraph 135 of the NPPF is also of relevance to the consideration of this application.

Policy LP26 states that renewable and carbon energy proposals will be supported and planning permission granted would not have either individually or cumulatively unacceptable impact on protected species, designated sites of importance for biodiversity or heritage assets.

Policy 1 of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan HVNP sets out that development proposal should demonstrate how they have been informed by the key characteristics of the Local Character Assessment (LCA).

Policy 2 of the HVNP states that new development should protect and enhance local built character and distinctiveness, strengthen the local sense of place by respecting the existing grain of development in the surrounding area, use local materials and detailing which add to the quality or character of the surrounding environment, respect the scale, mass, height and form of existing buildings in the locality and their setting. Furthermore this policy sets out that development should sit in with and neither dominate or have a detrimental; impact on its surroundings and neighbouring properties.

The application site is within Landscape Character Area 4, the River Holme Settled Valley Floor.

One key characteristic of the area is framed views from the settled valley floor to the upper valley sides and views across to opposing valley slopes and beyond towards the Peak District National Park.

- Framed views from the settled valley floor to the upper valley sides and views across to opposing valley slopes and beyond towards the Peak District National Park.
- Boundary treatments comprised largely of millstone grit walling. The stone walling which runs parallel with Upperthong Lane is representative of local vernacular detailing.
- A network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) including the Holme Valley Riverside Way which follows the River Holme from Holmbridge through Holmfirth and downstream. National Cycle Route no. 68 follows minor roads through Upperthong towards the centre of Holmfirth before climbing the opposing valley slopes.
- Mill ponds reflect industrial heritage and offer recreation facilities.

Key built characteristic of the area are

- Mill buildings, chimneys and ponds, including Ribbleden Mill with its chimney, associated mill worker houses and ashlar fronted villas link

the area to its industrial and commercial heritage and are a legacy of the area's former textile industry.

- Terraced cottages and distinctive over and under dwellings feature on the steep hillsides with steep ginnels, often with stone setts and narrow roads.
- Narrow winding streets with stepped passageways, stone troughs and setts characterise the sloping hillsides above Holmfirth town centre.
- Small tight knit settlements on the upper slopes are characterised by their former agricultural and domestic textile heritage.
- There are mixed areas of historic and more recent residential and commercial developments.

The application site is located within Holmfirth Conservation Area. Section 72 of the Town & Country Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires Local Planning Authorities to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character of appearance of Conservation Areas. This is echoed within policy LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan and Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF requires that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset the Local Planning Authority should give great weight to the heritage asset's conservation irrespective of the level of harm.

LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan requires that proposals should retain those elements of the historic environment which contribute to the distinct identity of the Kirklees area and ensure they are appropriately conserved, to the extent warranted by their significance, also having regard to the wider benefits of development. Consideration should be given to the need to ensure that proposals maintain and reinforce local distinctiveness and conserve the significance of designated and non-designated heritage assets.

At paragraphs 214 – 216 the NPPF is clear, that where development leads to substantial harm, this is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or, in the case of less than substantial harm this should be weight against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

In this context, preservation means not harming the interest of the building itself, or the wider conservation area within which it is set.

The proposed development would see the introduction of 2 lines of solar panels to the south-facing roof plane of 54-56 Huddersfield Road. The proposed installation of 16 surface mounted solar panels on the southern elevation of the building would introduce a modern intervention to the heritage asset within the Holmfirth Conservation Area. While the panels will be partially visible from wider public viewpoints from Huddersfield Road and Victoria Street junction, their placement would provide some level of screening to pedestrians on the street. The panels would be set a sufficient distance above

the eaves and the ridge and follow the roof pitch reducing their visual impact on the heritage asset from distant views, on the setting of other adjacent listed buildings and the wider conservation area. 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. The submitted structural calculations demonstrate the system can be installed without further structural intervention or disruption to the host structure, therefore would not compromise the historic fabric of the original building.

It is considered necessary to condition the colour finish of solar panels and frames, as well as for the panels to be finished in an anti-reflective coating in order to minimise the visual impact of the panels in the interests of preserving the setting of the Conservation Area.

It is therefore considered that, subject to conditions, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm, however the level of harm is considered to be at the lower end of the scale, as it would not impact key architectural features of the building.

Public Benefits

Paragraph 215 of the NPPF states that where less than substantial harm is identified, it must be weighed against public benefits.

In this case, the applicant has put forward an environmental and economic justification. A set out in the heritage statement: *'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 measures would reduce the historic buildings reliance on fossil fuels and contribute to sustainability targets at both local and national levels.

Economically, the building has historically supported a range of uses and delivered social value to the community. The proposal would enhance its long-term viability by lowering operational costs. While the financial benefits cited by the applicant has not provided detailed supporting evidence, the anticipated reduction in energy costs aligns with established principles of the long term viability of the building. Continued active use of the building reinforces the vitality of Holmfirth Town Centre and helps safeguard the property from potential disuse due to rising operational expenses.

The proposal offers clear public benefits by enhancing environmental sustainability and supporting the long-term viability of a prominent building in Holmfirth Town Centre. Economically, the solar installation would reduce operating costs, enabling reinvestment into maintenance, local employment, and suppliers by strengthening the building's sustainability and its continued role in the town's community and economy.

Overall, the limited harm caused by the installation of 16 solar panels is outweighed by the clear public benefits associated with environmental sustainability, energy efficiency and the long-term conservation of the heritage asset. Therefore, on balance, the proposal is considered acceptable and in accordance with Policies LP24 and LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan and Chapter 16 of the NPPF.

3 – Impact on residential amenity:

Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan and Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to ensure development has an acceptable impact upon the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

Policy 2 of the HVNP sets out that proposals should be designed to minimise harmful impacts on general amenity for present and future occupiers of land and buildings and prevent or reduce pollution as a result of noise, odour, light and other causes. Light pollution should be minimised and security lighting must be appropriate, unobtrusive and energy efficient.

The proposed solar panels will be located to the southern elevation of the roof slope facing No.36, a commercial building. Therefore, given the surrounding properties to the site are predominantly commercial with the only residential properties nearby screened by surrounding buildings, the direct line of sight to the panels would be limited, and any potential glare impact would be negligible.

Furthermore, any residual reflection from the panels would be directed skyward due to their recessed positioning and pitched roof installation, rather than towards nearby properties. As the proposal would not introduce additional height, overshadowing or noise, it is concluded that there would be no adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

It is therefore considered that in terms of residential amenity, the proposed would comply with Policy LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan and advice within Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

4 – Impact on highway safety:

Policies LP21 and LP22 of the Kirklees Local Plan and policies within chapter 9 of the NPPF relate to access and highway safety and are considered to be relevant to the consideration of this application.

In this case as the works would be located to the roof of the building, there would be no significant impact on the current operation of the highway and parking arrangements within the vicinity of the site.

5 – Other matters:

Ecology

Policy 13 (Protecting Wildlife and Securing Biodiversity Net Gain) of the Home Valley Neighbourhood Plan sets out that development proposals should demonstrate how biodiversity will be protected and enhanced including the local wildlife, ecological networks, designated Local Wildlife Sites and habitats.

Chapter 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework are relevant, together with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which protect, by law, the habitat and animals of certain species including newts, bats and badgers.

Policy LP30 of the Kirklees Local Plan requires that proposals protect Habitats and Species of Principal Importance. Whilst it is acknowledged that the site is located within an identified bat alert area, the proposals are relatively modest, and therefore considered unlikely that the proposals would have an impact on the bat population. An informative has been provided however, making the applicant aware that if bats are discovered on site during the works, any development shall cease and the applicant is advised to contact Natural England for advice on how to move forward.

In terms of Biodiversity Net Gain as set out by the statutory framework introduced by Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021). The development is considered to benefit from the de-minimus exemption as set out by The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Exemptions) Regulations 2024 and there is no required for BNG to be provided in respect of the aforementioned legislation.

Climate Change

On 12th November 2019, the Council adopted a target for achieving 'net zero' carbon emissions by 2038, with an accompanying carbon budget set by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research. National Planning Policy includes a requirement to promote carbon reduction and enhance resilience to climate change through the planning system and these principles have been incorporated into the formulation of Local Plan policies. The Local Plan pre-dates the declaration of a climate emergency and the net zero carbon target, however it includes a series of policies which are used to assess the suitability of planning applications in the context of climate change. When determining planning applications the Council will use the relevant Local Plan policies and guidance documents to embed the climate change agenda.

The ability to generate renewable energy on-site enhances the long-term viability of the venue, discretely incorporating sustainability measures in a heritage asset. The proposal, therefore, represents a balanced approach addressing climate change objectives while ensuring the continued preservation and operational sustainability of the building. The proposed development would therefore comply with Chapter 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

6 – Representations:

- The solar panels set a good example and will not detract from the appearance of the building.
- Renewable energy is a necessity in the current times. We should encourage local business' to take up renewable energy as it is an economic benefit to the business therefore a benefit to the local economy.
- This is a very good idea to improve the environmental efficiencies to the business.
- The proposal would not impact the general aesthetics of the building or area.
- This is a positive step that will not only help the business reduce its carbon footprint but also set a strong example for other local businesses in embracing sustainability.
- So Dough Pizzeria is an important part of our community, and by investing in renewable energy, they are showing real commitment to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and contributing towards our area's climate goals.
- The addition of solar panels will lower their energy costs, allowing them to remain a thriving local business while making an environmentally responsible choice.
- Approving this application would benefit both the business and the wider community, helping to create a greener, more sustainable local economy.

The above comments of support are noted.

7 – Conclusion:

The NPPF has introduced a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The policies set out in the NPPF taken as a whole constitute the Government's view of what sustainable development means in practice.

This application has been assessed against relevant policies in the development plan and other material considerations. It is considered that the development would constitute sustainable development and is therefore recommended for approval.

Recommendation

APPROVE

Decision Authorisation - Delegated Powers

Application Number: 2025/92350

Officer Recommendation: Approve.

Conditions

1. The development hereby permitted shall be begun within three years of the date of this permission.

Reason: Pursuant to the requirements of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

1. The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in complete accordance with the plans and specifications schedule listed in this decision notice, except as may be specified in the conditions attached to this permission, which shall in all cases take precedence.

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt as to what is being permitted and to accord with Policies LP01, LP02, LP21, LP22 & LP24 of the Kirklees Local Plan, Policies 1, 2, 12 & 13 of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Development Plan and Policies within Chapters 2, 9, 12 and 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. The solar panels shall be constructed using black glass and black frames and retained as such thereafter.

Reason: To conserve the significance of the Conservation Area in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies LP24 and LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan and policies within Chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. Notwithstanding the submitted information the solar panels hereby approved shall have an anti-reflective coating applied prior to their installation which shall be retained thereafter.

Reason: To conserve the significance of the Conservation Area in the interests of visual amenity in accordance with Policies LP24 and LP35 of the Kirklees Local Plan and policies within Chapters 12 and 16 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

NOTE: Due to its location, a bat roost may be present on site. Bats are a European protected species under regulations of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. It is an offence for anyone intentionally to kill, injure or handle a bat, disturb a roosting bat, or sell or offer a bat for sale without a licence. It is also an offence to damage, destroy or obstruct access to any place used by bats for shelter, whether they are present or not. If bats are discovered on site development shall cease and the applicant is advised to contact Natural England for advice.

Plans and specifications schedule:-

| Plan Type | Reference | Version | Date Received |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Location Plan | 25/1124/01 | - | 27/08/2025 |
| Existing Block Plan | 25/1124/02 | - | 27/08/2025 |

| Plan Type | Reference | Version | Date Received |
|---|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Proposed Block Plan | 25/1124/05 | - | 27/08/2025 |
| General Arrangement as Existing | 25/1124/03 | - | 27/08/2025 |
| General Arrangement as Proposed | 25/1124/04 | - | 27/08/2025 |
| Planning Statement & Heritage Impact Assessment | 25/1125 | - | 27/08/2025 |
| So Dough PV & Battery Project Report | - | - | 27/08/2025 |
| Climate Change Statement | - | - | 27/08/2025 |
| Application form | - | - | 27/08/2025 |

Pursuant to article 35 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) Order 2015 and guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework, the Local Authority have, where possible, made a pre-application advice service available, complied with the Kirklees Development Management Charter 2024 and otherwise actively engaged with the applicant in dealing with the application. No amendments were sought as it was considered that the proposal was acceptable as submitted.

Report Dated: 24/10/2025