

Design & Access Statement

Seven Stones Inn solar panel array

Seven Stones Inn, Lower Town, St Martin's, TR25 0QW

Proposal

This proposal is for the installation of solar PV panels in two rows on the sloping ground parallel to and behind the main pub building, hidden from pub view and customers on the pub terrace.

Background

The Seven Stones Inn Ltd has been trading for 6 years while continually improving the current facilities including the recent addition of a function / dining room to the east end of the pub (P/16/132/FUL) to cater for summer demand as well as providing a year round hub for the local island community. As well as gaining planning permission for the Boat Bothy (P/19/084/FUL), a building to serve as facilities for visiting sailors, day trippers, and additional toilets at Lower Town.

Increasing facilities and subsequently footfall to the pub brings with it more pressure for electric power.

Current annual electricity usage and bills (£11K - £12K per annum) are increasing every year, demanding that action is taken soon to combat the rising costs. Being eager to find more sustainable and renewable solutions to running the pub more efficiently and reduce our operating costs have led us to investigate many options, finally concluding, given the ideal geographical location of the pub, that a solar PV array installation would be the answer. This combined with the BEES funding currently available has spurred us on to act now.

This is also part of a wider business plan to be as low impact as possible in the future and reduce the carbon footprint of the business. Another part of transitioning the business towards a more sustainable future is to invest in an electric vehicle that will be charged from the energy harvested from this solar from a charge point at the pub. We need a solar array of this scale to make any significant impact on the demands of the pub kitchen, as we have moved away from using gas and oil as a source of fuel and are purely powered by electricity.

Investing in renewable energy now means the business will free up money in the future to be able to invest more in our staff, offering more employment opportunities to the local and seasonal community, and making a positive contribution to the sustainability of the islands.

The Site

The Seven Stones Inn sits on an elevated site in Lowertown, off the main spine road running west to east on the Southern side of St Martins.

The field behind the pub has been empty and not used since the pub was constructed in 1975. It was a cattle field before, and has been untended & unused ever since.

The field is a south facing slope, offering the PV panels the most favourable location and angle to harvest any and all solar rays that hit the site, optimising the energy gathered to be used by the pub business.

The installation site has been specifically chosen to collect the most energy from the sun, whilst considering the importance of preserving Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. As well as the location, the colour and appearance of the modules has been considered to ensure they are as low impact as possible.

The location has also been chosen so there would be no significant adverse effects on air traffic, shipping or vehicular routes and lines of sight whilst operating in the nearby area.

Every possible factor has been considered to ensure the solar panels are in the ideal location.

Site Waste Management Plan

It is the aim of this project to produce as little waste as possible. Any that does arise will be separated on site and then treated according to council guidelines. The only waste anticipated will be small cable offcuts.

Design

The scale of development on site has been determined by the equipment necessary to efficiently generate renewable energy.

Two strings of panels will be arranged in two rows 12m x 4m running from east to west. The panels will be fixed to very large oak railway sleepers (3900mm x 250mm x 150mm) so minimal impact on the ground,

The use of sleepers has been chosen over concrete so there is no need for groundworks and at the end of life can they be removed, leaving the field to revert to it's original state.

It is considered that the benign appearance of the panels and the degree of natural screening afforded to the site, that the proposals would not have an unacceptably adverse impact on the visual or amenity value of the surrounding environment.

The Duchy of Cornwall has been consulted on the design, location and plans. Full support for the proposal and installation has been given.

Access

The Seven Stones Inn is located at the end of a vehicular access road which in turn becomes a public footpath to Tinkler's Hill. The proposed new solar array will only require access via foot.