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Report from the Head of Development Management to Development Control Committee

Application number: 7/2025/2209

Application type: Full Planning application

Applicant: Mr M Sleath, Lake District National Park Authority

Location: Threlkeld Station Site, Threlkeld, Cumbria, CA12 4TT

Grid reference: 332036, 524571

Proposal: Installation of additional solar photovoltaic array on two south-facing rooves, plus associated trenching works to connect to electricity shed

Report prepared by: Abigail Holt, Planner

Report agreed by: Kevin Richards, Planning Manager

Recommendation: APPROVE with conditions

1 About this report

- 1.1 The case planner has prepared this report, assessment and recommendation taking into account our policies (known as the Development Plan), written representations we have received, and any other material considerations.
- 1.2 Material considerations are things that are relevant to our decision making and which we are able to take into account – for example site specific factors, or Government planning policy (the National Planning

Policy Framework) and Government planning guidance (the National Planning Practice Guidance).

- 1.3 The Development Control Committee will determine the application at its meeting having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan, representations we have received, and all other material considerations, following a verbal and visual summary of the application by the case planner and, where applicable, after hearing any verbal representations made in accordance with our Policy for Public Speaking at Meetings.
- 1.4 Most applications are decided under powers delegated to the Head of Development Management. A small number of significant or more contentious applications are considered by our Development Control Committee as set out in our Scheme of Delegation.

2 Background and proposals

- 2.1 The application is being reported to Committee because it relates to property owned by the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA).
- 2.2 The LDNPA Northern Office is located at the Threlkeld Station Site, which is the former railway station and goods yard at Threlkeld Quarry. The site is just south of the A66 and there is a permitted path that runs along the north side of the site.
- 2.3 The site was acquired by the LDNPA in 1984 and converted into a ranger depot with a workshop building. This was remodelled under planning permission 7/2012/2280 with an additional office building.
- 2.4 This application seeks permission for the installation of an additional solar photovoltaic array on two south-facing roofs, plus associated trenching works to connect to the electricity shed.

3 Representations

3.1 Local Highway Authority – No objection

3.2 Lead Local Flood Authority – No objection

4 Development plan policies and other relevant guidance

4.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises:

- The Lake District National Park Local Plan 2020-2035

4.2 The following Lake District National Park Local Plan policies are relevant to this application:

- Policy 01: National and international significance of the Lake District
- Policy 02: Spatial strategy
- Policy 03: Development and flooding
- Policy 04: Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Policy 05: Protecting the spectacular landscape
- Policy 06: Design and development
- Policy 20: Renewable and low carbon energy

- Design Code Supplementary Planning Document

4.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

4.4 There is no community plan in this area.

5 Main issues and assessment

5.1 As an alteration to an existing building the proposals are in accordance with the spatial strategy set out in Policy 02 and are acceptable in principle. The main issues in this assessment are:

- Character and appearance of the area
- Impact on the amenity of neighbours
- Flood risk
- Trees
- Protected species

Character and appearance of the area

5.2 Policy 06 states that development must reinforce the importance of local character by having regard to scale, height, density, layout, appearance and materials.

5.3 Policy 20 gives support to proposals for renewable and low carbon energy installations where the development would be compatible with the existing landscape character.

5.4 The buildings at Threlkeld Station include the main office building to the west and a workshop building to the east. The office is constructed of horizontal timber cladding, stone, render, and a slate pitched roof, utilising local materials whilst also having some modern design features. There are existing inset solar panels on a section of the office roof on the south elevation. The workshop is constructed of stone and render with a slate pitched roof, and is connected to the main office via a covered glazed walkway.

5.5 The proposed solar panels would be located on the southern elevation of both the main office roof and the workshop roof. The existing panels

would be retained, resulting in almost the entire southern roof elevation of both buildings being covered. The panels would stand 100-150mm above the roof surface with no loss to the existing slate. There would be associated trench work to connect the panels to an existing electricity shed to the northwest of the site, with the existing concrete surfacing being reinstated once completed.

- 5.6 The site is publicly visible from the road running directly to the south; however, there is a hedgerow along the southern boundary which is more built up towards the east and provides some screening. Given the modern nature of the building and the fact that there are existing solar panels in a more publicly visible position than those proposed, I consider that additional panels would have no adverse impact upon the local character of the area and would support Policy 20.
- 5.7 I am satisfied that the development proposed is acceptable in terms of its impact on the character and appearance of the area and that it satisfies the requirements of Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 05, 06, 20, the Design Code SPD and the NPPF.

Impact on the amenity of neighbours

- 5.8 Policy 06 states that development must not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of adjoining residents and users of the proposed development, due to visual intrusion, overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts.
- 5.9 Carr Cottage sits approximately 50m to the southwest of the main office. Due to the separation distance, intervening trees, and the small-scale nature of solar panels, I consider that the proposals would not result in any impact upon the amenity of Carr Cottage.

- 5.10 Station House and Station Cottages sit approximately 40m to the northeast of the site, being screened by large trees at the boundary. The proposals would not impact upon their amenity.
- 5.11 I am satisfied that the development would not have an unacceptable impact on amenity due to visual intrusion, overlooking, overshadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts. A high standard of amenity for existing and future users of the building and neighbours would be maintained.
- 5.12 The development is acceptable in terms of its impact on amenity and satisfies the requirements of Local Plan Policy 06, the Design Code SPD and the NPPF.

Flood Risk

- 5.13 Part of the site is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment outlines that this flood risk is a result of drainage from the former railway line to the east of the site during extreme rainfall events. The proposed solar panels would be sited on the roof, whilst the proposed trench works would take five days to carry out with a tarmac surface reinstated once completed. As such, I am satisfied that the proposals would not increase flood risk on the site or elsewhere, and that the development meets the requirements of Local Plan Policy 03 in respect of flood risk.

Trees

- 5.14 The submitted Tree Constraints Plan identifies small hazel and willow shrubs on site, as well as three willow trees. All the trees are located to the north of the buildings, and the proposed trench work does not encroach into any of the root protection areas. I am satisfied that the works would not impact on the integrity of the trees.

Protected species

5.15 Under Article 12 of the EC Habitats Directive and Regulation 9(3) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 we have had regard to the requirements of the Habitats Directive. The applicant commissioned a bat survey which was submitted with the application. The survey found no evidence of bats using the site, and very limited roosting potential. As such the development is considered of low risk in respect of protected species, satisfying the requirements of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy 04.

6 Conclusion

6.1 Having regard to the provisions of the development plan, in particular Lake District National Park Local Plan Policies 01, 02, 03, 04, 05, 06 and 20, the Design Code SPD and other material considerations (including the provisions of the NPPF), the development is considered to be acceptable, subject to the conditions recommended.

Recommendation: APPROVE with conditions

Conditions/Reasons

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be commenced before the expiration of THREE years from the date hereof.

REASON: Imposed in accordance with the provisions of Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act, 1990.
- 2 The development hereby permitted shall not be carried out otherwise than in conformity with the following submitted plans and details:
 - Scoping bat survey
 - Flood risk assessment
 - Method statement for installing schletter roof hooks and rail system on a slate roof
 - Method statement for trench work
 - Tree constraints plan

- Solar panel proposal dwg no. RJS 25130
- Site location plan

REASON: For the avoidance of doubt.

NPPF decision notice requirements

Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)
(England) Order 2015 Article 35(2) statement.

The Local Planning Authority did not identify problems arising in relation to dealing with the application.

Background papers

Background papers are available for inspection on the planning application file unless otherwise specified on that file as confidential by reasons of financial/personal circumstances in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985.

7/2025/2209

Threlkeld Station Site, Threlkeld, Cumbria, CA12 4TT

Installation of additional solar photovoltaic array on two south-facing rooves, plus associated trenching works to connect to electricity shed

Site

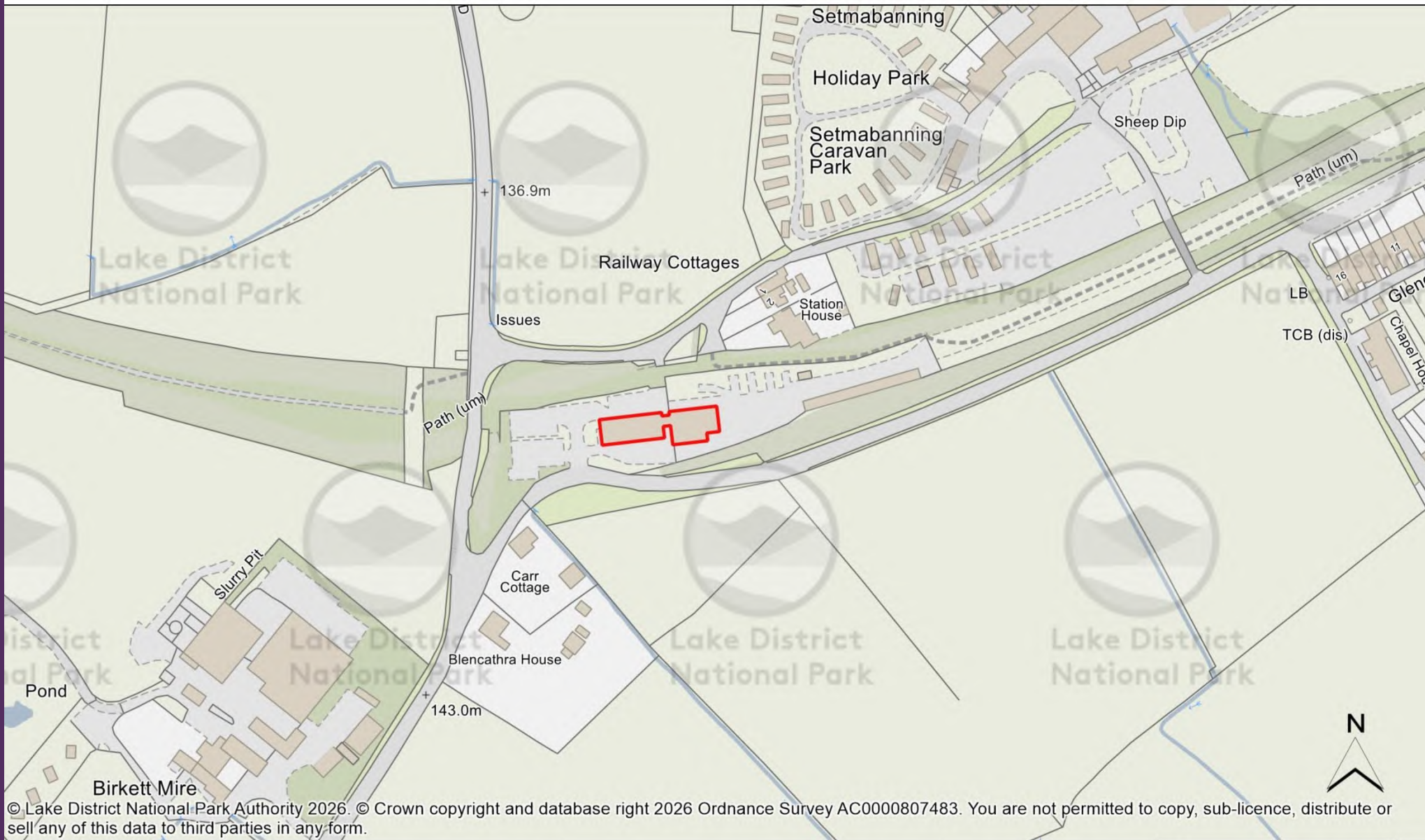


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National Park Authority



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Proposed Elevations



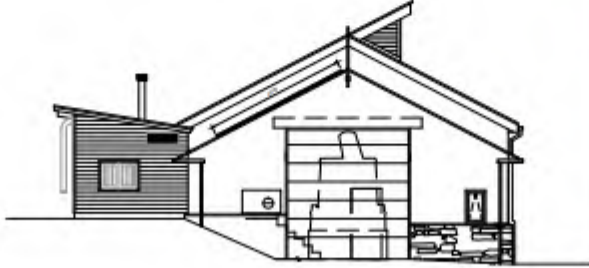
SOUTH ELEVATION



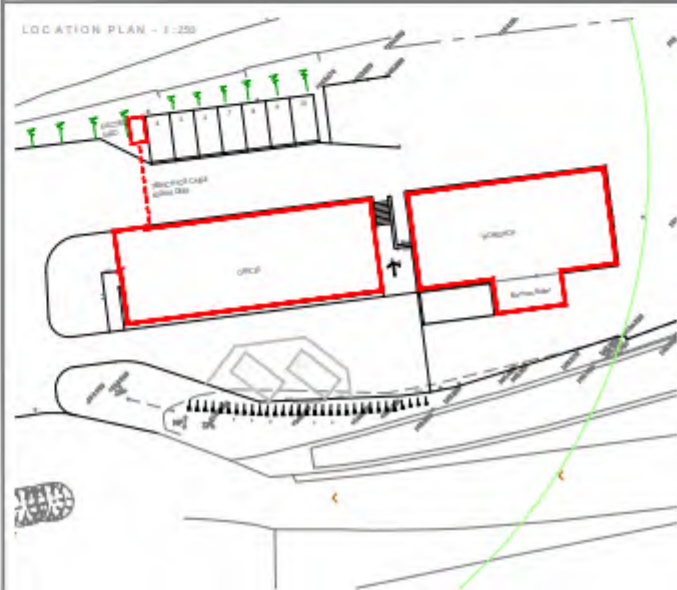
NORTH ELEVATION



OFFICE EAST ELEVATION



WORKSHOP EAST ELEVATION





Car park
12/24

5
Car park
speed limit

Lake District
National Park
Northern Office

SLOW
Road works
ahead



20

Minning 1/2
Museum 2 ↑
Open: Easter - October
10am - 5pm





← Main entrance

Northern Office



Proposed Elevations



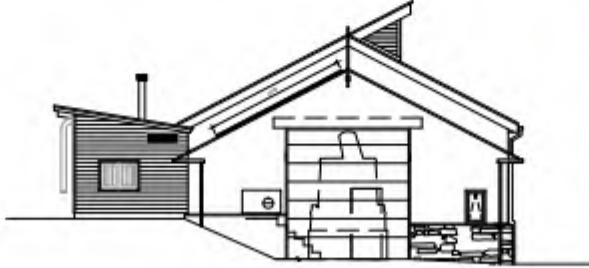
SOUTH ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION



OFFICE EAST ELEVATION



WORKSHOP EAST ELEVATION

