



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 11 August 2025

by **Jonathan Bore MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 12 August 2025

Appeal Ref: APP/K0235/W/25/3365524

East End Farm, East End Lane, Wilden, Bedford, Bedfordshire, MK44 2QN

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a failure to give notice within the prescribed period of a decision on an application for planning permission
 - The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Taylor against Bedford Borough Council.
 - The application Ref is 24/02413/FUL.
 - The development proposed is the installation of a ground mounted solar panel array.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the installation of a ground mounted solar panel array at East End Farm, East End Lane, Bedford, MK44 2QN in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref 24/02413/FUL, and the plans submitted with it, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than 3 years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans: Site and Location Plan K1787-01; Elevation Plan JP648 rev A.

Preliminary Matters

2. The Council validated the application on 20 December 2024 but subsequently decided that it did not fall into the category of a householder application because it considered that the site of the array fell outside the domestic curtilage. The Council did not determine the application or offer any comment on the merits of the scheme for this appeal.

Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the scheme on the character and appearance of the site and the locality.

Reasons

4. East End Farm is a domestic house, not a farm, and the solar array would be positioned around half way down its very long rear plot. The plot is clearly distinct from neighbouring agricultural land, being separated from it by hedges on both sides and to the rear. I consider the whole plot to relate to the domestic use of the dwelling. The planning authority does not offer any convincing evidence to the contrary. The fact that one part of the plot is lawn, the remainder a grassy wildlife

area, makes no difference; householders may wish to use different parts of a large plot in different ways.

5. The solar array would be only about half the width of the plot. With the dimensions shown on the submitted drawings, it would easily be absorbed visually within the plot and would not significantly change the overall character of the site. Moreover, the existing surrounding hedging, which is generally mature and of good height, would largely limit its visual impact beyond the site, even in winter. The development would have no effect on the character and appearance of the wider landscape or the living conditions of neighbours.
6. The development would meet a proportion of the energy needs of East End Farm and would accord with the objectives of chapter 14 of the National Planning Policy Framework which recognises the contribution that small-scale renewable energy projects can make towards cutting greenhouse gas emissions. It would also accord with Policy 57 of the Bedford Local Plan 2030 which supports renewable energy projects and solar energy schemes, subject among other things to considerations of visual appearance, landscape character and amenity.

Conclusion

7. The scheme would have an acceptable effect on the character and appearance of the site and the locality. It would not affect the character of the landscape or neighbours' living conditions. It would accord with national and development plan policies for encouraging renewable energy and addressing the challenge of climate change. For all the reasons given above the appeal is allowed.

Jonathan Bore

INSPECTOR