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IP11 2AG

**Your ref:**  
**Our ref:** DC/25/2382/PREAPP  
**Date:** 4 August 2025  
**Please ask for:** Eleanor Attwood  
**Direct dial:** 07385 407101  
**Email:** [planning@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:planning@eastsuffolk.gov.uk)

## Pre-application planning advice

**Application no.:** DC/25/2382/PREAPP  
**Location:** 274 High Street, Walton, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 9DS  
**Proposal:** Pre Application Advice - Installation of 42 solar panels, battery storage in a cupboard under the stairs. Replacing the existing air conditioning unit with a new one in same situation. Replacing 2 single glazed windows, with double glazed upvc windows to match other windows in property.

### Officer advice

The pre-application enquiry seeks advice for solar panels, ASHP, and replacement windows.

The subject building is located at the corner of High Street and Falcon Street, within the settlement boundary of Felixstowe. It also lies within the Walton High Street (SCLP4.12). The building was partly converted into three flats under permission received through application C/06/0610. The rear portion of the building remains as a Community Hall.

It is understood that the building is completely within the ownership of the Town Council, and that the flats are rented out.

The site does not fall within the curtilage of a listed building, on article 2(3) land nor is it classified as a scheduled monument.

### Solar Panels

The proposal seeks to install up to 42 solar panels on the east and west facing roof slope of the section of the roof over the Community Hall.

So long as the panels are only on the non-domestic part of the building, it may be possible to use permitted development rights under Class J. Under Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J (b) of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 solar panels are allowed to be installed on non-domestic buildings subject to compliance with the relevant criteria.

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The proposal would not be considered permitted development if:

- the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a pitched roof and would protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof slope;
- the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a roof and within 1 metre of the external edge of that roof;

From the information submitted, it is not clear whether the solar panels would protrude below the 0.2 metre limit; this should be checked with the supplier prior to installation.

It is also not clear whether the solar panels would be over one metre from an external edge of the roof; this should be checked with the supplier prior to installation.

If the proposal complies with the above limits, it can then be considered permitted development. However, it must also comply with the below conditions:

- (a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment must, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area; and
- (b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment is removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.

The solar panels would be placed on the east and west roof slopes. Those on the west roof slope would be visible within the public realm as they face the highway. If there is a strong justification for the quantity of solar panels and the need to have solar panels on both roof slopes, then condition a) would likely be satisfied - as it would be accepted that it would not be viable to place the required number of solar panels in an area which is less visible.

In conclusion, from the information supplied it appears as though the proposal could be installed under Class J (b) and therefore would not require planning permission. However, if any of the above criteria or conditions are not met, planning permission would be required.

### **Air Source Heat Pump**

It is also proposed to install a replacement air source heat pump.

Schedule 2, Part 12, Class A of the Town and Country (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 allows for the erection or construction and the maintenance, improvement or other alteration by or on behalf of a local authority or by or on behalf of an urban development corporation of—

- (a) any small ancillary building, works or equipment on land belonging to or maintained by them required for the purposes of any function exercised by them on that land otherwise than as statutory undertakers;
- (b) lamp standards, information kiosks, passenger shelters, public shelters and seats, telephone boxes, fire alarms, public drinking fountains, horse troughs, refuse bins or baskets, barriers for the control of people waiting to enter public service vehicles, electric vehicle charging points and any

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associated infrastructure, and similar structures or works required in connection with the operation of any public service administered by them.

The reference in Class A to any small ancillary building, works or equipment is a reference to any ancillary building, works or equipment not exceeding 4 metres in height or 200 cubic metres in capacity.

It is this Officer's opinion that the replacement of the ASHP could be possible under (a) of the above - as small equipment. This is so long as the ASHP is on land belonging to or maintained by the Town Council, and the ASHP is required for the purposes of any function exercised by the Town Council on that land.

However, even if the ASHP is permitted development, it should comply with the MCS Planning Standards. Care should be taken to ensure that any ASHP installed will not have unacceptable impact on neighbour's residential amenity through noise from the ASHP. Noise from fixed plant or machinery (e.g., heat pumps, compressors, extractor systems, air conditioning plant or refrigeration plant) can be annoying and disruptive. This is particularly the case when noise is impulsive or has tonal characteristics.

### **Replacement Windows**

It may be possible to replace the windows without requiring planning permission, so long as the new windows have the same appearance as the existing. For avoidance of doubt, 'appearance' refers all features of the existing windows including size, aperture, form, profile, glazing arrangement and framing.

However, it is this officer's opinion that a change from single-glazed timber windows to double-glazed UPVC windows will have a different appearance, as this will result in a bulkier window. A UPVC window would also appear different from the other windows on the building, which are currently timber, resulting in a material change to the appearance of the building. Therefore, it is this officer's opinion that planning permission is required to replace windows with UPVC.

We would strongly encourage the use of timber for any replacement windows. Although an unlisted building, it appears to be an attractive building with a traditional appearance; It appears that other windows on the building are currently timber and some timber, sash windows are still in place on the building. The use of UPVC would introduce a more modern element and would create an inconsistent appearance across the building. This would remove some of the traditional character and may lower the positive impact that the building has on the streetscene.

An application for replacement windows should contain sufficient information for officers to assess the visual change between the existing and proposed windows. This should include:

- a) Close up photographs or drawings showing the existing windows, doors and their surroundings at a scale of 1:10 and horizontal and vertical cross-section drawings at a scale of 1:2 showing the details of the glazing bars, sills, heads, methods of opening and glazing
- b) Drawings showing proposed windows, doors and their surroundings at a scale of 1:10 and horizontal and vertical cross-section drawings at a scale of 1:2 showing the details of the glazing bars, sills, heads, methods of opening and glazing.

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And

c) a supporting elevational drawing(s) or annotated photograph(s) identifying which windows each of these photographs/drawings relates to.

### **Way Forward**

Details on how to submit a planning application can be found here: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications-and-enforcement/how-to-submit-a-planning-application/>

If you require a formal planning decision on the lawfulness of the proposed works, then you would need to apply for a lawful development certificate in respect of proposed development to certify that the works are permitted development; this is optional and up to each individual developer/applicant. Please note that the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that the proposal is lawful.

Validation guidance on what would need to be submitted with an application can be found here: <https://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications-and-enforcement/local-validation-list/>

### **Planning policy**

National Planning Policy Framework 2024

SCLP11.1 - Design Quality (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

SCLP11.2 - Residential Amenity (East Suffolk Council - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, Adopted September 2020)

As with all pre-application advice, the Council is not bound with regard to its final decision on any future application. Please note – this pre-application advice is given on the basis of National and Local Planning Policies applicable on the date the advice is given.

Additional Planning and Building Control information can be found online at [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk). If a planning application is needed online applications can be submitted at the same address.

**Case Officer:** Eleanor Attwood, Planner (Development Management), 07385 407101

**Authorising Officer:** Joe Blackmore, Planning Manager (Development Management)



**Ben Woolnough MRTPI | Head of Planning and Building Control**  
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