

11. THE INSTALLATION OF SOLAR PANELS ON THE SOUTH FACING ASPECT OF OUR GARAGE ROOF, AIR SOURCE HEAT PUMPS TO THE HOUSE AND PARTIAL SECONDARY GLAZING AT CHURCHDALE COTTAGE BASLOW ROAD ASHFORD IN THE WATER (NP/DDD/0126/0102) RD

APPLICANT: DR AND MRS SIMON AND JANE DANIELL

Summary

1. The proposals are for the installation of solar panels on the south facing aspect of the garage roof, air source heat pumps to the house and partial secondary glazing.
2. The proposed secondary glazing and air source heat pumps would not give rise to harm to the listed building, and would support climate-change objectives as detailed in the Authority's adopted policies.
3. However, the proposed roof-mounted solar array would cause harm to the setting of the Listed Churchdale Cottage.
4. The solar array proposals therefore conflict with adopted heritage and renewable-energy policies, and the application is therefore recommended for refusal.

Site and Surroundings

5. Churchdale Cottage is a Grade II listed property occupying an isolated rural position approximately 60 metres south of the A6020, opposite the junction to Great Longstone, and around three-quarters of a mile north-east of Ashford-in-the-Water.
6. The listed building comprises a traditional double-fronted cottage with dormer windows set within the principal roof slope, reflecting its early 19th century origins. Attached to the cottage is a former barn and associated outbuildings which have been converted to ancillary residential accommodation, forming a cohesive domestic group.
7. The property stands within approximately 1.5 acres of land, including garden areas and open grounds that reinforce its rural character and historic relationship with the surrounding landscape. There are no neighbouring residential properties in close proximity, and the site benefits from a high degree of privacy.
8. The site lies outside the Ashford Conservation Area, and therefore is not subject to conservation area controls.

Proposal

9. Planning permission is sought for the installation of solar panels on the south facing aspect of the garage roof, air source heat pumps to the house and partial secondary glazing.
10. It is proposed that a secondary glazing system be attached to the inside of a number of windows.
11. It is proposed to install a number of solar collectors on to the South facing pitch of the roof to the Garage that was built in 2002, on the site of the previous Barn.
12. It is proposed to install two air source heat pumps, to be located on the West façade at the rear of the Stable block, towards the garden, against areas with a blank area of wall.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the application be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1. Harm to the Setting of the Listed Building

The proposed roof-mounted solar array, by virtue of its scale, elevated position and visibility, would cause less-than-substantial harm to the setting and significance of the Grade II listed Churchdale Cottage. Whilst weight has been attached to the public benefits of reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources this is not found to outweigh the arising harm. The proposal therefore conflicts with Policies CC2, DMC5 and DMC7 of the Peak District National Park Local Plan and paragraphs 212 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Key Issues

- Impacts on heritage assets
- Climate Change mitigation benefits

Relevant Planning History

March 2024 – PE\2024\ENQ\49570: Installation of Solar Panels to the South-Facing Roof of the Barn (Listed)

May 2019 – NP/DDD/0519/0498: Proposal for erection of a greenhouse – Granted Conditionally

June 2014 – NP/DDD/0614/0603: Listed Building consent - internal alterations - additional support for horizontal beam in breakfast room – Granted Conditionally

March 2001 – DDD0301099: Conversion of hay barn to additional bedroom and alterations to outbuildings including reroofing and creation of garage – Granted Conditionally

March 2001 – 0DDD0301100: Listed Building Consent - provision of new main entrance, conversion of hay barn to additional bedroom and alterations to outbuildings including provision of garage – Granted Conditionally

October 1983 – WED1083447: C/U OF GARAGE & STOREROOM TO OPTICIANS WORKSHOP – Granted Conditionally

May 1983 – WED0583202: ALTERATIONS & CONVERSION TO FORM DEPENDANT RELATIVE UNIT – Granted Conditionally

Consultations

13. DCC Highway Authority: There appears to be no material impact on the public highway and therefore the Local Highway Authority (LHA) has no further comments to make.
14. Parish Council: Ashford in the Water Parish Council has no objection to this application.
15. PDNPA Built Environment: In their current form, the proposals for solar panels would be contrary to the aims of paragraphs 212 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework and PDNPA Policies DMC5 and DMC7.

Representations

16. 47 letters of support have been submitted, in summary relating to:

- Strong endorsement of renewable energy adoption, particularly small-scale domestic solutions like solar panels and heat pumps.
- Recognition of the urgent need to address climate change, with the proposal seen as a positive, responsible contribution.
- Support for improving energy efficiency in older or listed buildings, acknowledging the challenges and praising efforts to modernise sensitively.
- Alignment with national and local sustainability goals, including warm-home initiatives and carbon-reduction targets.
- Belief that the proposals are low-impact and sympathetic to the character of the property, especially given the discreet placement of panels and secondary glazing.
- Encouragement for planning authorities to enable environmentally beneficial upgrades, even within heritage contexts.
- Community approval of homeowners taking proactive steps to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and lower emissions.
- General sentiment that such measures should be supported, not hindered, to help meet broader environmental commitments.

Main Policies

17. Relevant Core Strategy policies: DS1, GSP3, CC1 and CC2
18. Relevant Development Management policies: DMC3, DMC5 and DMC7
19. Supplementary Planning Document for Climate Change and Sustainable Building, 2013.

National Planning Policy Framework

20. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is a material consideration. Development plan policies relevant to this application are up-to-date and in accordance with the NPPF and therefore should be given full weight in the determination of this application. As well as the current proposals.
21. Paragraph 189 of the NPPF states: Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks.

Assessment

Principle of Development

22. The proposal comprises the installation of solar panels on the south-facing roof slope of a garage within the curtilage of a listed building, the installation of air source heat pumps to the main dwelling, and the introduction of partial secondary glazing to the garage. The key considerations in establishing the principle of development relate to the balance between supporting renewable and low-carbon technologies and safeguarding the

special interest of designated heritage assets. Policies CC1, CC2, DMC5, and DMC7 of the Peak District National Park Local Plan provide the relevant policy framework.

23. Policy CC1 encourages proposals that reduce energy consumption and enable the use of renewable or low-carbon technologies. The installation of air source heat pumps and secondary glazing at Churchdale Cottage aligns with these aims by improving the building's thermal performance and reducing reliance on fossil-fuel heating.
24. Policy CC2 supports small-scale renewable and low-carbon energy proposals where they contribute to reducing carbon emissions and improving energy efficiency, provided they are sensitively sited and do not harm the valued characteristics of the National Park. The proposed scheme demonstrates a strong intention to contribute to climate-change mitigation through domestic scale interventions.
25. Policies DMC5 and DMC7 require that development affecting a listed building or its setting conserves or enhances its significance.
26. The proposed development represents domestic-scale interventions that would contribute positively to climate-change mitigation and therefore accords with the above policies subject to conserving the valued characteristics of the Park and the historic and architectural interest of the listed building and its setting. These matters are discussed below.

Impact on Heritage Assets

27. Policies DMC5 and DMC7 require that development affecting a listed building or its setting conserves or enhances its significance. This includes demonstrating an understanding of the building's special architectural and historic interest and ensuring that any alterations are sympathetic, proportionate, and avoid harm where possible.
28. Churchdale Cottage is a Grade II listed building whose significance derives from a combination of architectural, historic, and evidential values. Although the building has undergone alterations over time, it retains clear vernacular character, craftsmanship in its stone construction, and a legible relationship between the domestic cottage and the adjoining former barn. The inscribed date of 1647 above the principal door contributes further evidential interest, suggesting earlier origins or historic associations. The cottage sits within a wider historic landscape containing several other listed buildings and the Grade II Registered Park and Garden of Thornbridge Hall, although the Authority's Conservation Officer considers that only Churchdale Cottage itself has the potential to be affected by the current proposals.

Solar Collectors

29. The proposal includes the installation of 20 solar collectors arranged in two rows on the south-facing roof slope of the modern garage to the north of the cottage. While the garage is a contemporary structure and therefore unaffected in terms of historic fabric, the key consideration is the impact of the panels on the setting and appreciation of the listed building.
30. The proposed roof-mounted array would be clearly visible from the public footpath to the east due to its elevated position, scale, and proximity to the listed building. The panels would introduce a large, prominent, and non-traditional feature in direct juxtaposition with the immediately adjacent listed cottage. This relationship would be apparent from public viewpoints, and would be seen in the context of the principal and most significant elevation of the listed building. This would detract from the historic character of the listed building, and the functional and ancillary appearance of the garage, which is currently recessive to the listed building. The potential for reflectivity further contributes to visual

intrusion. As a result, it is concluded that the proposal would cause harm to the setting of Churchdale Cottage.

31. The Authority's Supplementary Planning Document for Climate Change and Sustainable Building includes guidance on solar installations and emphasises that in cases involving historic buildings, ground-mounted solutions are generally preferable, and that roof-mounted panels on modern outbuildings should only be considered where no suitable ground-mounted options exist.
32. The applicant's Heritage Statement includes an options analysis (Appendix E) assessing several potential locations for ground-mounted solar arrays. This analysis concludes that roof-mounting on the garage would have the least impact. However, the Authority's Conservation Officer disagrees with this conclusion and considers that the lower main lawn represents a viable and preferable alternative. This area would not require tree removal, would be centrally located within the garden, and would benefit from natural screening from mature boundary trees. While some limited impact on setting would still occur, this would be materially less than the impact arising from roof-mounted panels.
33. Officers also sought to negotiate a reduction in the scale of the roof-mounted array, but no response was received from the applicant.
34. In their current form, the solar proposals are therefore considered contrary to Policies DMC5 and DMC7, and to paragraphs 212 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

Air Source Heat Pumps

35. Two air source heat pumps are proposed on the west elevation of the cottage. The units would be dark green in colour and screened with planting. Although further details of mounting and service routes would be required, these would be secured by condition to ensure that interventions occur through mortar joints and avoid harm to historic stonework. The Officer considers the proposed location to be the most discreet available and concludes that the pumps would have a limited and acceptable impact on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Secondary Glazing

36. The proposed secondary glazing is internal, reversible, and would not affect historic fabric. This element of the scheme would not result in harm to the significance of the listed building and represents an appropriate method of improving thermal performance.

Summary

37. The installation of secondary glazing and air source heat pumps is considered acceptable and would not harm the significance of Churchdale Cottage.
38. However, the proposed solar collectors on the garage roof would result in a low–medium degree of less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. A feasible and less harmful ground-mounted alternative has been identified, and the applicant has not engaged with the Authority's request to explore a reduced roof-mounted scheme. As submitted, the solar element of the proposal conflicts with national policy and with Local Plan Policies DMC5 and DMC7.

Planning balance

39. The NPPF requires that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed

against the public benefits of the proposal. It has been identified that in this case by the Authority's conservation officer that the scheme would give rise to less than substantial harm. The public benefits in this instance are the reduction in reliance on non-renewable energy sources. Whilst the heat pumps and secondary glazing are concluded to provide this benefit without a significant degree of harm to the listed building or its setting, the solar collectors are not.

40. It is recognised that the proposal would deliver clear carbon-reduction benefits, and moderate weight is afforded to these public benefits despite the scheme's small scale. However, these benefits are not considered sufficient to outweigh the great weight that both national policy and listed building legislation require to be given to the less than substantial harm identified above.
41. Further, the applicant's options analysis explores ground-mounted alternatives, although these are discounted by the applicant due to identified constraints. The Authority nevertheless considers that such options may offer the potential for a materially reduced heritage impact.
42. The harm arising is therefore concluded to outweigh the public benefits in this instance.

Conclusion

43. The proposals for secondary glazing and air source heat pumps represent low-impact, reversible measures that would enhance the energy efficiency of Churchdale Cottage without harming its architectural or historic significance. These elements are therefore considered acceptable and consistent with both heritage and climate-change policies.
44. However, the proposed installation of 20 solar collectors on the garage roof would result in less than substantial harm to the setting of the listed building. As submitted, the solar element of the scheme does not achieve a positive balance between renewable-energy benefits and the conservation of designated heritage assets, and therefore conflicts with Policies DMC5, DMC7, and the requirements of CC2, as well as paragraphs 212 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework.
45. Accordingly, while parts of the proposal are acceptable, the solar installation cannot be supported in its current form.

Human Rights

Any human rights issues have been considered and addressed in the preparation of this report.

List of Background Papers (not previously published)

Nil