

12. LISTED BUILDING CONSENT - 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/0126/0105) 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. Secondary glazing and air source heat pumps are acceptable, causing no harm to the listed building and supporting climate-change objectives.
3. The proposed roof-mounted solar array would cause avoidable less-than-substantial harm to the setting of Churchdale Cottage, with a viable ground-mounted alternative available.
4. The solar element conflicts with heritage and renewable-energy policies, and therefore the application cannot be supported in its current form.

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 our 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 avoidable less-than-substantial harm to the setting and significance of Grade II listed Churchdale Cottage. A feasible ground-mounted alternative exists that would reduce this impact, and no justification has been provided for selecting a more harmful option.

The proposal therefore fails to preserve the special architectural or historic interest of the listed building, contrary to the statutory duty under Section 16(2) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, and conflicts with Policies DMC5 and DMC7 of the Peak District National Park Local Plan and paragraphs 212 and 215 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

2. Non-Compliance with Renewable Energy Policy CC2

Policy CC2 supports renewable-energy development only where it is sensitively sited and designed to avoid adverse effects on the National Park's valued characteristics. The siting of the solar panels on the garage roof results in unnecessary harm to the setting of a designated heritage asset, contrary to the requirements of CC2.

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 – ODDD0301100: 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: L3

18. Relevant Development Management policies: 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. For applications affecting a listed building, the principle of development is established through an assessment of whether the proposed works would preserve the building's special architectural or historic interest, as required by Sections 16 and 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. Local Plan Policies DMC5 and DMC7 provide the detailed framework for considering such proposals within the National Park.
23. Churchdale Cottage is a Grade II listed building whose significance derives from its vernacular architectural character, its historic relationship with the adjoining former barn, and the evidential value associated with its earlier origins. The principle of development therefore depends on whether the proposed interventions, solar collectors on the garage roof, air source heat pumps, and secondary glazing, would conserve this significance or result in harm to the building or its setting.
24. In principle, works that are reversible, sensitively designed, and do not erode the building's architectural or historic interest can be supported. However, where proposals introduce visual or physical changes that would detract from the appreciation of the listed building or its setting, the principle of development cannot be accepted. The detailed assessment below considers the extent to which each element of the proposal meets these statutory and policy requirements.

Impact on Heritage Assets

25. 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 PDNPA Built Environment considers that only Churchdale Cottage itself has the potential to be affected by the current proposals.

Solar Collectors

26. 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.

27. 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 Built Environment 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.
28. The Officer identifies that 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 non-traditional and domestic character that would detract from the functional, ancillary appearance of the garage, which currently complements the listed building. The potential for reflectivity further contributes to visual intrusion. As a result, it is concluded that the proposal would cause a low–medium degree of less than substantial harm to the setting of Churchdale Cottage.
29. 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. In this case, the options analysis demonstrates that at least one suitable ground-mounted location is available.
30. Officers also sought to negotiate a reduction in the scale of the roof-mounted array, but no response was received from the applicant.
31. 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

32. 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

33. 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

34. The installation of secondary glazing and air source heat pumps is considered acceptable and would not harm the significance of Churchdale Cottage.
35. 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, and adopted guidance from the Supplementary Planning Document.

Public Benefits

36. 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.
37. 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.
38. 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.
39. The harm arising is therefore concluded to outweigh the public benefits in this instance.

Conclusion

40. The proposed secondary glazing and air source heat pumps are considered acceptable interventions that would preserve the special architectural and historic interest of Churchdale Cottage. However, the installation of solar collectors on the garage roof would result in avoidable less-than-substantial harm to the setting of the listed building, with a viable ground-mounted alternative available that would reduce this impact. As such, the solar element of the scheme does not meet the statutory requirement to preserve the significance of the listed building and conflicts with Local Plan Policies DMC5 and DMC7.

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