

**SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

---

**REPORT TO:** Planning Committee

8 May 2013

**AUTHOR/S:** Planning and New Communities Director

---

**S/0138/13/FL & S/0139/13/LB – Bartlow  
Retrospective applications for the installation of solar photovoltaic panels  
1 Stable Cottages, Bartlow Barns, Bartlow, Cambridgeshire, CB21 4PY  
for Mr Nigel May**

**Recommendation: Refusal**

**Date for Determination: 10 April 2013**

**This Application has been reported to the Planning Committee for  
determination at the request of the Cllr Hickford**

**To be presented to Committee by Kate Wood**

**Site and Proposal**

1. The site is located within the Village Framework, within a Conservation Area, and is designated as Curtilage Listed by virtue of its association with the Grade II Listed Hall located nearby. The application dwelling is an L-shaped converted former stable, comprising part of a pair of similar single storey dwellings. There are a number of residential conversions in the vicinity, and there is a two storey dwelling located to the rear of the site which also features a number of photovoltaic panels upon the roof.
2. The application seeks retrospective permission for the installation of solar photovoltaic panels upon the roof plane which faces towards the Listed Building.

**Site History**

3. **S/1054/94/LB** – Part demolition, alterations, and conversion of 3 barns into 4 dwellings - Approved  
**S/1436/94/F** – Use of barns for 2 dwellings – Approved  
**S/1437/94/F** – Part demolition, alterations, extensions and conversion of agricultural barns into 2 dwellings – Approved  
**S/1759/94/F** – Conversion of barn into 2 dwellings and erection of 3 houses - Approved  
**S/1838/94/LB** – Part demolition, alteration, conversion and extension to barn to form 2 dwellings – Approved  
**S/2046/06/F** - Installation of 2 Solar Heating Collectors – Approved  
**S/2047/06/LB** - Installation of 2 Solar Heating Collectors 2650 x 1700 on South Facing Roof – Approved

**Planning Policy**

4. **Local Development Framework Development Control Policies (LDF DCP) 2007:**

**DP/1** Sustainable Development  
**DP/2** Design of New Development  
**DP/3** Development Criteria  
**CH/3** Listed Buildings  
**CH/5** Conservation Areas

5. **District Design Guide SPD** – adopted March 2010  
**Listed Buildings SPD** – Adopted July 2009
6. The **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** states there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. It provides a list of policies for use in the determination of planning applications. However, it does state that these policies should apply unless where the adverse impact of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The NPPF also advises that planning conditions should only be imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other aspects.

**Consultation by South Cambridgeshire District Council as Local Planning Authority**

7. **Bartlow Parish Council** Recommends Approval
8. **Conservation:** Recommends Refusal: “Refuse due to prominence and visual harm to curtilage listed building and setting and character of main house”

**Representations by members of the public**

9. **Councillor Hickford** recommends approval.

**Planning Comments**

*Impact Upon Streetscene/Conservation Area*

10. There is no visibility of the solar panels from outwith the immediate site area, and therefore no impact upon the streetscene. The panels constitute a notably modern addition within the former farmyard area, and provide a significant contrasting feature within this part of the wider Conservation Area. It is not considered that the installation can be considered to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

*Impact upon Curtilage Listed Building and the Setting of the Listed Hall*

11. Whilst noting the limited visibility of the installation from much of the site, the array of panels are visible from the front areas of the Listed Hall, and will be of high visibility when viewed from within the site. It is therefore considered that the panels will impact upon the setting and character of the listed Hall, and will fail to preserve the special interest of this building and its wider setting.
12. It is also considered that the works have resulted in harm to the character of the curtilage Listed property, and the contribution it makes within the wider collection of curtilage listed properties. The modern materials result in a detrimental contrast with the more restrained arrangement of traditional materials found upon both the application dwelling and the surrounding

properties, and it is considered that the installation works, whilst conducted to a high standard, have resulted in harm to the fabric of the building. It is noted that whilst many of the neighbouring properties have been subject to modern conversions the enclave is considered to be well preserved, and considered that unsympathetic additions would compromise this preservation. It is considered that the reflective frames, and regimented grid pattern, will detract unacceptably from the character of the converted stable.

#### *Residential Amenity*

13. It is considered that the main impact upon residential amenity is the potential for glare as a result of the large amount of panels located in close proximity to the front windows of the Listed Building. It is not considered that this potential is sufficient to warrant a refusal of Planning Permission.

#### **Recommendation**

14. REFUSE, for the following reasons:

##### **S/0138/13/FL and S/0139/13/LB**

1. The installation of the photovoltaic panels, by virtue of their use of materials, high visual prominence, and visual impacts upon both the application dwelling and the setting of the nearby Listed Building, would result in undue harm to the character of the buildings, and the wider Conservation Area. The prominent frames and regimented arrangement would provide an undue and detrimental contrast to the restrained character of the converted stable, which would fail to preserve or enhance the contribution the dwelling makes within the local environment. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to the requirements of Local Development Framework 2007 policies CH/3 and CH/5, and to advice detailed within the Listed Buildings Supplementary Planning Document.

**Background Papers:** the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

- South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework Core Strategy 2007.
- Local Development Framework Development Control Policies 2007.
- District Design Guide SPD and Listed Buildings SPD.
- National Planning Policy Framework.
- Planning File refs: **S/0138/13/FL, S/0139/13/LB**

**Contact Officer:** James D'Arcy – Planning Officer  
01954 713159