Rock House Cottage
The Hollow
Washington
Pulborough
West Sussex
RH20 3DA

Dear Sir

TOWN & COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990
APPEAL UNDER SECTION 75

Planning Inspector Ref: APP/Z3825/Y/25/3362126
Horsham District Council Ref: DC/24/1460
Description of Application: Retention of Solar panels to the south facing roof (Listed Building Consent)

Grounds for Refusal of the retrospective planning application DC/24/1653.
The Coach House, The Hollow, Washington, West Sussex

1. INTRODUCTION

This is a formal response to the above appeal from the neighbouring property to the east of the appeal site on the basis of an interested party. I wish to endorse the concerns of Horsham District Council in their notice of refusal of the applications DC/224/1653 & DC/24/1460.

2. Location

The Coach House forms part of a group of building adjacent to and overlooking the courtyard entrance and lounge of Rock House Cottage. The property benefits from the Grade II listing of Rock House which is considered the most important building. The curtilage is the area of land surrounding a listed building that is historically associated with it and contributes to its significance. This can include gardens, grounds, and sometimes even outbuildings and therefore the Coach House is considered to have significant architectural merit and heritage value within the group.

3. Grounds for Refusal of the retrospective planning application DC/24/1653.

3.1 The solar panels almost completely cover the roof of the Coach House therefore by reason of their design, siting and extent; represent an unduly prominent feature that draws attention when viewed from our living room.

3.2 We consider the solar panels have a harmful effect on the special interest of the listed building and fail to preserve, reflect or enhance its special character and distinctiveness within the group.

4. Proposal

Under Para 4.0 Proposal, of the Appellant's Statement of Case the proposal is described as "Retention of solar panels to the south facing roof", and this is repeated at Para 4.2. The panels are on the east facing roof (long side) facing Rock House Cottage. The south face of the Coach House is a gable end and not capable of fixing solar panels. The proposal is therefore misrepresented.



Fig. 1. The east elevation of the Coach House overlooking the courtyard of Rock House Cottage.

5. Impact on Heritage Significance

Consent is required for installing any type of photovoltaic (Solar PV) installation on a building. For PV installations fixed directly to or within the setting of heritage assets such as historic buildings, the recommendation is that the significance of the asset will need to be properly assessed and the impact of the installation evaluated before applying for permission. Historic England provides guidance on installing solar panels on listed buildings and can advise on whether or not a particular installation would require planning permission or listed building consent.

5.1 There is no supporting evidence that prior to installation the LPA or Historic England were consulted informally or otherwise or an application made for either listed building consent or planning approval. It is therefore axiomatic that no assessment or evaluation of the impact on the neighbouring properties was assessed. By taking this stance and failing to follow recommended guidelines the installation has had an undesirable impact on Rock House Cottage and the group of building.

5.2 By failing to follow due process and submit the relevant listed building and planning applications the appellant demeans and exploits the system which is deeply problematic for perceptions of impartiality when they now seek to regularise the oversight. Adjoining owners and the Parish Council were prevented from commenting on the suitability and appearance of the installation in such a prominent location.

5.3 Crucially the physical impact the installation may have on the listed building is a prime consideration since the expected lifespan of the PV arrays and its associated equipment is typically much shorter than the roof covering, so it could have several PV coverings of upgraded PV arrays over its life time. It is important therefore to consider that if the appeal is allowed; future installation, maintenance and removal so as not to damage the roof, which is currently virtually obscured, may remain uncontrolled.

6. Conclusion

For the reasons outlined in this response the solar panels should be removed from the roof of the listed building and sited in another location, so that the roof can be returned to its original form. We therefore respectfully request that the application for retrospective planning and listed building approval be dismissed.



14 April 2025