Horsham District Council

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:
DC/25/1140
Red House, Horsham Road, Cowfold, West Sussex, RH13 8BX

DESCRIPTION:
Installation of solar panels on south facing roof, and 9.5kWh battery storage in garage. (Listed Building Consent).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

CF/19/00	Brick up 2 doorways and form new window to kitchen (listed building consent)	Application Permitted on 28.04.2000
CF/18/00	Brick up 2 doorways and form new window to kitchen	Application Permitted on 28.04.2000
CF/32/98	Construction of two dormer windows (listed building consent)	Application Permitted on 23.02.1999
CF/31/98	Construction of two dormer windows	Application Permitted on 23.02.1999

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):
Policy 34- Cultural and Heritage Assets

Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) 2019 – 2031:
Policy 4 – Heritage Assets

REPRESENTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS RESPONSES
Where consultation responses have been summarised, it should be noted that Officers have had consideration of the full comments received, which are available to view on the public file at www.horsham.gov.uk

Consultations:
HDC Conservation: Object. Red House is a good example of an early nineteenth century villa sat within generous grounds. It illustrates a polite, classically inspired architecture that is typical of its period. The panels are a modern technology and will be an incongruous feature fitted to an exposed roof slope with a large degree of visibility from the garden and the road. They are a conspicuous feature that will draw undue attention when viewing the historic house. This will have a harmful visual impact on the special interest of the listed building. This harm is less than substantial and in the middle of that scale.

Parish Comments:
None received

Representations:
None received

HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUALITY:
The application has been considered having regard to Article 1 of the First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998, which sets out a person's rights to the peaceful enjoyment of property and Article 8 of the same Act, which sets out their rights in respect to private and family life and for the home. Officers consider that the proposal would not be contrary to the provisions of the above Articles.

The application has also been considered in accordance with Horsham District Council's public sector equality duty, which seeks to prevent unlawful discrimination, to promote equality of opportunity and to foster good relations between people in a diverse community, in accordance with Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. In this case, the proposal is not anticipated to have any potential impact from an equality perspective.

PLANNING ASSESSMENT
The application seeks listed building consent for the installation of solar panels to the south facing roofslope of the building, together with 9.5kWh battery storage within a garage. The Red House is a Grade II Listed Building, with the list description stating "*L-shaped early C19 house. Two storeys. Three windows. Red brick and grey headers alternately. Eaves cornice. Slate roof. Glazing bars intact. Modern brick porch containing doorway with rectangular fanlight*".

Policy 34 of the HDPF seeks to conserve, sustain and protect the cultural and heritage assets that are within the district. It ensures that development within conservation areas is consistent with the special character of buildings and areas of which they are located within. Areas and buildings that fall under conservation, Listed Building designations or are approximate to them will be protected from inappropriate development which will harm the character and setting of the area / building.

Policy 4 of the CNP seeks to protect Heritage Assets by ensuring that any development is sympathetic and appropriate. Development proposals within or affecting the setting of the Cowfold Conservation Area will be supported where they preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and comply with the requirements in Policy 34 (Cultural and Heritage Assets) of the HDPF.

Historic England have issued guidance on 'Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency' (2024), with this advising that solar panels will be acceptable in some cases as they can often be designed in a way that avoids harm to the special interest of listed buildings. To achieve this the guidance notes that solar panels would generally be acceptable on roof slopes of less prominence or on subordinate parts of a complex building, even if they would be visible. The guidance also notes that mounting panels on land associated with a listed building is generally preferable to installation on the main building.

The Red House is noted (by the Council's Conservation Officer) as being a good example of an early nineteenth century villa sat within generous grounds. While the submitted plans lack detail and no sections showing the projection of the panels (above the roof plane) have been provided, the proposal would entail the installation of solar to an exposed roof slope with a large degree of visibility from the garden and the road.

The panels would cover a large expanse of the southern roof slope and introduce an engineered and artificial material. It is considered that the panels would create a poor and unsightly contrast with the traditional and natural materials of the building and would and detract from the authenticity and integrity of the heritage asset, with this harm noticeable from public vantage points.

It is considered that the level of harm to the significance of the heritage asset would be less than substantial harm, with the Council's Conservation Officer suggesting this would be in the middle of the scale. Paragraph 208 of the NPPF sets out that where a 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.

The Historic England Guidance Note sets out that any such benefits should be "of a nature or scale to be of benefit to the public at large and not just be a private benefit". The provision of a renewable source of energy at the site represents a benefit, this would though primarily be a private benefit for occupants of the related dwelling. Further, there is no evidence within the application to set out whether potentially less harmful locations for the solar panels had been considered, together with the reasons for their dismissal, or whether alternative technologies would be preferable. The proposed development would not preserve, reflect or enhance the special character and distinctiveness of the designated heritage asset, and it has not been demonstrated that any public benefit could not be derived from a more sensitive scheme which addresses the concerns raised elsewhere in this report.

The solar panels represent incongruous and unduly prominent features that fail to respect the important architectural features of the heritage asset. The proposed development would not preserve, reflect or enhance the special character and distinctiveness of the Listed Building. There are no public benefits which would outweigh the identified harm. The proposal is therefore considered to be contrary to local and national planning policies.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1 The submitted plans do not measur accurtaly the scale indicated and no side elevations have been provided to indicate the projection above the roof plane. Notwithstanding, the solar panels, by reason of their design, siting and extent, would represent incongruous and unduly prominent features that would have a harmful impact on the special interest of the listed building and fail to preserve, reflect or enhance its special character and distinctiveness. The are no public benefits which would outweigh the identified harm. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies 32, 33 and 34 of the Horsham District Planning Framework (2015), Policy 4 of the Cowfold Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) 2019 – 2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

POSITIVE AND PROACTIVE STATEMENT
Statement pursuant to Article 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015. The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received, in order to be able to, where possible, grant permission.

Plans list for: DC/25/1140
(The approved plans will form Condition 1 on the Decision Notice of all Permitted applications)

Schedule of plans/documents **not approved**:

Plan Type	Description	Drawing Number	Received Date
Block plan		NONE	06.08.2025
Elevation plan	Existing	NONE	07.08.2025
Elevation plan	Proposed	NONE	07.08.2025
Location plan		NONE	08.07.2025
Supporting Docs	Proposed Layout	NONE	08.07.2025
Supporting Statement	Design, Access and Heritage	NONE	08.07.2025

DELEGATED

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 04.02.2026