



**Horsham
District
Council**

DELEGATED APPLICATIONS - ASSESSMENT SHEET

APPLICATION NO./ADDRESS:

DC/26/0098

Falcon Lodge, Sedgwick Lane, Horsham, West Sussex, RH13 6QD

DESCRIPTION:

Installation of photovoltaic solar panels, 2no. to South elevation and 6no. to East elevation (Listed Building Consent).

RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY:

None.

RELEVANT PLANNING POLICIES

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

Horsham District Planning Framework (2015):

Policy 34- Cultural and Heritage Assets

Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Forum

Policy HB3: Character of Development

Policy HB4: Design of Development

Historic England - Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency (2024)

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 Officer: Falcon Lodge is a significant early nineteenth-century villa and that the proposed solar panels, by virtue of their prominent siting on visible roof slopes, would appear incongruous and visually intrusive. Whilst the renewable energy benefits are acknowledged, these are considered limited and insufficient to outweigh the identified harm.

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

Paragraph 193 of the NPPF (2018) states that "when considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)." Paragraph 194 continues to state that "any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alterations or destruction, or for of development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification."

Paragraph 212 of the NPPF states that "when considering the impact of proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be)." Paragraph 213 continues to state that "any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alterations or destruction, or for of development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification."

Policy HB3 of the Horsham Blueprint Business Neighbourhood Plan states that development is expected to preserve and enhance the Character Area in which it is located. The design of new development should take account of local context and reflect the character and vernacular of the area, using architectural variety in form and materials, in order to avoid building design that is inappropriate to the Plan area.

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 application seeks retrospective listed building consent for the installation of photovoltaic solar panels on the roof slopes of Falcon Lodge, a Grade II listed early nineteenth-century villa of recognised architectural and historic significance. The panels were installed under a renewable energy grant scheme, and the design and access statement seeks to justify the retention on the basis of limited visual impact, reversibility, and environmental benefit.

The solar panels represent a visually prominent and incongruous addition, positioned on exposed roof slopes where they are clearly visible from Sedgwick Lane. As such, they draw undue attention and detract from the appreciation of the building's architectural form and historic character. The installation introduces a modern feature that fails to harmonise with the building's significance as an early nineteenth-century villa.

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.

While the submission also notes that retention may be less harmful than removal this claim has not been substantiated, particularly as the application also states that '*installations of this type are designed to be removable*'. On the basis of the available information, it has not been demonstrated that retention of the solar panels would be preferable and result in a lower degree of harm than their removal.

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.

Recommendation: Application Refused

Reason(s) for Refusal:

1. The solar panels, by virtue of their siting on prominent roof slopes, 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. There 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) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

Plans list for: DC/26/0098

(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		FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-1002 REV P01	18.03.2026
Site plan	Existing and proposed	FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-1003 REV P01	18.03.2026
Floor plan	Ground floor	FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-2001 REV P01	18.03.2026
Floor plan	First floor	FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-2002 REV P01	18.03.2026
Roof plan	Existing and proposed	FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-2003 REV P01	18.03.2026
Elevation plan	Existing	FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-3001 REV P01	18.03.2026
Elevation plan	Proposed	FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-3002 REV P01	18.03.2026
Design & Access Statement	incl. Heritage	NONE	21.01.2026
Location plan		FAL-HCS-01-XX-D-A-1001 REV P01	18.03.2026
Photos		NONE	21.01.2026

DELEGATED

Case Officer sign/initial Meg Bayliss Date: 26/05/2026

Authorising Officer sign/initial Guy Everest Date: 29.05.2026