



Clifford Consultants

Town Planning

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Your Ref:

Design and Access Statement Heritage Statement

13-14 Langstone High Street
Langstone

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Design, Access and Heritage Statement has been prepared to support the following proposal:
Retention of solar panels on barn within curtilage of listed building
- 1.2. Nos. 13-14 Langstone High Street is within the Langstone Conservation Area.
- 1.3. The site is located on the north side of Langstone High Street.
- 1.4. Nos. 13-14 Langstone High Street is grouped with nos. 8-12 Langstone High Street as a Grade II listed building. There are several other listed buildings in the conservation area.
- 1.5. The current proposal is for the retention of solar panels that were installed on the roof of a barn in the rear garden of the property.

2. Heritage Statement

- 2.1. The Langstone Conservation Area is centred on the historic core of Langstone High Street, and is bounded on the east by the water, to the west by the A3023, which connects to Hayling Island and to the north by open fields. The village has links to the water which date back to Medieval, and possibly Roman times. Originally a commercial port, it has now changed to have more of a recreational purpose.
- 2.2. There are several listed buildings in the Conservation Area including nos. 8-14 Langstone High Street, nos. 16-18 High Street, The Royal Oak PH, The Ship Inn PH, The Old Mill, Green Cottage, and nos. 59-61 Langstone Road. In addition, the Look Out and the Watchtower and the Coastguard Cottages are on the Local List. The rest of the buildings in the Conservation area have been designed to complement the historic nature of the village and reflect historic building styles.
- 2.3. The village of Langstone's historic buildings have a close connection to the water and the use of the village as a commercial port. The port used to export grain, as the Ship Inn, which used to be a malt house, and the Old Mill can show. The terrace of nos. 8-14 Langstone High Street was most likely fishermen's cottages. The Coastguard Cottages were built in the 19th Century with the Watch Tower as a Coastguard station. The village has remained largely unchanged over the years, with the only developments being The Saltings and Tower Gardens, both of which were built to sympathetically reflect the historic and nautical nature of the village.
- 2.4. Nos. 13-14 Langstone High Street was originally two separate dwellings, and they were joined into one dwelling. They are only connected at the entrance foyer and the rear gardens. No. 14 has had several changes in the past, prior to the applicant's ownership, including a garage to the east, removal of the chimney and changes to the windows on the gable end. No. 14 has a completely

thatched roof, whilst no. 13 has tiles to part of the rear roof. There are 3 rear dormers to the 2 properties, much like other properties in the terrace.

- 2.5. Originally, there were two barns to the rear of No. 14 (although historic maps show they were probably part of a farm complex behind what is now No. 15). One of the barns fell down due to disrepair, and the other has been underpinned and protected from insect infestation by the applicant. Its original roof (probably tile) has been replaced by corrugated metal, which is currently rusty, but sound. The barn has two levels to it, and is used as a storage area. It is not insulated or habitable. The barn is visible from the public footpath through the open fields to the north of the village, and in the winter, glimpses of the barn can be seen behind the garage of No. 14. During the summer the barn is hidden by several trees in the garden.
- 2.6. The significance of the house lies in its group interest with the rest of the terrace, as an example of C17-18 fishermen's cottages. They are an 'irregular terrace' as mentioned in its listing, which means that they are not all built exactly the same. Two (Nos. 8-9) have tile roofs and the rest have thatched roofs. Although they were all built at the same time, with large oak beams and timber framing throughout, they are each unique in their own way. No. 14 is the end of the terrace, and its gable is visible for all visitors from the Royal Oak pub, the public footpath and the harbour. The terrace of houses has been photographed and painted multiple times due to their largely unchanged appearance over the past 300 years. They form a great contribution to the appearance and setting of the conservation area.
- 2.7. The significance of the barn is less of a matter than the house itself. It was not originally part of the curtilage of No.14, having more connection with the buildings behind No. 15 and the fields to the north than the terraces. Historic maps show a distinct line separating the two properties. However, it is of timber construction with brick infill and apart from unsympathetic repairs and the addition of the corrugated roof, remains largely the same as when it was first built. There is evidence of past bug infestation, but none currently, and the building is structurally sound. A small structure to the south of the barn contains the remains of the other barn that fell down, and is used as an outside storage area. The barn is visible from the public footpath to the north, and only slightly visible from Langstone High Street, as can be seen on the next page. The solar panels cannot be seen from the public footpath. During the summer the barn is hidden from view by the garage and the trees in the garden.



View from Langstone High Street



View from public footpath- cannot see the panels

3. Policies

3.1. The primary issue is whether the environmental benefit of having solar panels outweighs the visual harm of them being located on a building in the curtilage of a listed building in a Conservation Area and AONB.

Microgeneration Policies

3.2. The NPPF's primary objective is for sustainable development.

17. Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should:

- *support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);*

95. To support the move to a low carbon future, local planning authorities should:

- *actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings*

98. When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should:

- *not require applicants for energy development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy and also recognise that even small-scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions; and*
- *approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should also expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.*

3.3. The Havant Borough Design Guide is a document that is part of the Local Development Framework.

It states:

4.41 Active Solar Gain - building facades and roofs can be used to collect solar energy for conversion into electricity or to heat water for the building's occupants. An aspect within 30 degrees due south is ideal.

4.42 The Council is keen to promote domestic microgeneration technologies where possible. Along with domestic wind turbines, solar panels are becoming a more cost effective and environmentally friendly way of powering a home.

3.4. Chichester Harbour Conservancy protects and manages the Chichester Harbour AONB, within which the barn and the village sits. It has its own set of planning policies, which includes:

LS5- Ensure that renewable energy installations of any scale do not have a long-term detrimental impact on the AONB and its setting.

3.5. The CHC also has an (as-yet) unpublished Renewable Energy Guidelines. It supports Policy B5a and provides additional guidance regarding microgeneration:

The use of Solar PV tiles as part of the roof covering of a building can be a good way to harness the sun's energy.

You can minimise the impact of Solar PV tiles on the AONB by:

Visibility and design

- *Considering the main public vantage points from which your building can be seen. This should include the highway, public rights of way, open spaces and open water. Try and identify a location on your property that has the least impact on these views but will still provide you with a good solar energy resource.*
- *Installing tiles on a rear roof or on the roof of an outbuilding or extension where they can capture the sun's energy but are less prominent and less visible may be the best compromise.*

- *Matching, as closely as possible, the existing roofing materials. Solar PV tiles tend to work best with darker treatments such as slate.*
- *Replacing the entire roof slope with solar tiles to give a uniform colour.*

Wildlife

- *As with panels, checking to see if roof spaces are being used by bat or owl species for roosts and nesting.*

3.6. English Heritage has published several documents and statements regarding renewable energy and its effect on the historic environment, including *Microgeneration in the Historic Environment*, which states:

ENGLISH HERITAGE POLICY

Proposals for microgeneration equipment attached to scheduled monuments that are buildings, listed buildings or historic buildings in conservation areas will generally be acceptable if all of the following criteria are met:

- 1 the change will not result in loss of special interest*
- 2 the visual impact of the equipment is minor or can be accommodated without loss of special interest*
- 3 in fixing the equipment to the building there is no damage to significant historic fabric and installation is reversible without significant long-term impact on historic fabric*
- 4 the cabling, pipework, fuse boxes or other related equipment can be accommodated without loss of, or damage to, significant historic fabric*
- 5 that as part of the justification, the applicant can demonstrate that other energy-saving measures or other locations with less impact on the historic fabric and the special interest have been considered and are not viable*
- 6 the applicant can demonstrate that the proposal has net environmental benefit*
- 7 the local authority imposes a condition requiring removal of the equipment, including cabling and boxes, and making good of the historic fabric as soon as it falls out of use*

3.7. In summary, all of these documents and policies, from local to national, are all based around the same principles: that the microgeneration technology (in this case solar panels) are sited as much out of view as possible, on a south-facing roofslope to gain the best efficiency, they are reversible (or causes no lasting damage to historic fabric), they are taken down when they are no longer needed, and that it can be shown that all other types of microgeneration or energy efficiency were

considered and deemed not viable. The CHC also mentions the impact they might have on the wildlife in the AONB. The next section will delve more deeply into each of these points.

Historic Environment Policies

3.8. The NPPF has several paragraphs regarding the historic environment, including:

17. Within the overarching roles that the planning system ought to play, a set of core land-use planning principles should underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. These 12 principles are that planning should:

- *conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;*

3.9. Section 12 has regard to the historic environment and its conservation. It states:

134. 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, including securing its optimum viable use.

3.10. Havant Borough Core Strategy is the adopted Local Plan for Havant Borough. It states:

*Policy CS11 Protecting and Enhancing the Special Environment and Heritage of Havant Borough
Planning permission will be granted for development that:*

4. Protects and where appropriate enhances the borough's statutory and non-statutory heritage designations by appropriately managing development in or adjacent to conservation areas, listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, archaeological sites, buildings of local historic or architectural interest.

7.03. ...The council will seek ways of ensuring that new development not only protects the borough's environmental assets but also uses them to generate higher quality development, to bring environmental enhancement benefits and put the assets at the centre of the regeneration of the borough. This idea is referred to by English Heritage as a 'win, win, win' and is strongly supported by the council...

Policy CS12 Chichester Harbour Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Development will be permitted where it:

1. Carefully assesses the impact of individual proposals, and their cumulative effect, on the Chichester Harbour AONB, and its setting.

3.11. The CHC itself mentions historic buildings in its Management Plan:

HE1 Ensure that the historic and archaeological resource of the AONB both on land and below the water is recorded, monitored, conserved and where possible enhanced.

4. Development Management

- 4.1. It is a continuing challenge to balance the effects of climate change and environment with the impact it can have on historic assets. The issue has been addressed in the above policies, which have been designed to minimise the impact on the historic environment whilst permitting property owners to contribute what they can to the natural environment.
- 4.2. As 13-14 Langstone High Street is a listed building, there are limits on what can be done to increase the energy efficiency of the building, both practically and in line with its historic importance. The house is naturally well insulated, with a thatched roof, but any further insulation, such as cavity wall, would not be possible. Even loft insulation is not possible as there are rooms in the loft. Likewise, replacing the historic windows with more thermally efficient uPVC would not be appropriate or permitted. The applicant has decided that as changing the house to be more energy efficient is not a viable option, the most obvious choice was to increase the amount of energy the property could provide through microgeneration.
- 4.3. Several types of microgeneration are available, and have been investigated and rejected for one reason or another. The least visible would be ground source heat pumps, which would be installed underground. The property has a well laid out garden and several trees. Langstone Village is in flood zone 3, and it regularly floods with the tides, so burying underground pipes is not a realistic option. Air source heat pumps are discouraged in the AONB due to their noise and visible intrusion. Wind turbines can be used in the AONB, but are discouraged on historic properties due to their appearance. They can also cause damage to birds. Realistically, the only option was for solar panels.
- 4.4 The location of the solar panels was thoroughly considered. The property consists of a thatched house and a barn. Due to the location of the trees in the garden and surrounding properties, free-standing panels would not work due to shading. Putting solar panels on thatched roofs are discouraged for several reasons. Apart from the obvious visual harm on a historic building, thatch is a material that changes over its lifetime. The installation of panels would be constant, and therefore the space between the thatch and the panels would widen over time. In addition, the house faces south and putting solar panels on a front elevation in a Conservation Area or on a listed building (regardless of the material) is completely inappropriate. Therefore, the only reasonable location for

the panels was on the south facing roof of the barn in the rear of the property, where it would be less noticeable but still provide the applicant with the required electricity.

- 4.5. The roof of the barn is currently corrugated metal. Whilst the barn is timber framed and has some historic interest, it has been altered with inappropriate repairs over the years. The roof is discoloured and rusty and is not appropriate for the building or the conservation area. However, it is an existing roof, and has been there for over 10 years, and there is no intention to change the roof materials. The solar panels are installed into the roof rafters through small holes through the metal sheets. There is little damage to the historic fabric, and when the panels are no longer necessary or efficient, they can be taken down and the roof repaired with no lasting damage.
- 4.6. Unlike solar farms and wind turbines, small arrays of solar panels do not have any effect on wildlife within the AONB.
- 4.7. It is considered that the applicant has demonstrated that the solar panels comply with local and national policies, English Heritage advice and Chichester Harbour Conservancy guidance.

5. Design and Access Statement

Layout

- 5.1. The solar panel array consists of 14 panels. 12 are in portrait orientation, and two are in landscape orientation closer to the ridge.

Amount

- 5.2. The roof is 22.89m². There are 14 solar panels. Each panel is 1m x 1.67m.

Scale

- 5.3. The scale of the array is similar to most domestic solar arrays. It sits well within the edges of the roof so that the roof can still be seen around the array.

Appearance

- 5.4. The existing roof is corrugated metal of varying colours. It can be painted black if required by the council.
- 5.5. The solar panels are black with small silver stripes.

Landscaping

5.6. The panels do not affect any landscaping.

Access

5.7. The panels do not affect any access. The electricity panel is on the ground floor of the barn. The roof space of the barn is accessible by steep stairs, but the panels are not accessible from inside the barn.

The panels do not affect any disability access.

6. Conclusion

6.1. It is considered that the benefits of having solar panels on a property outweigh the limited visual harm they have on the appearance of the Conservation Area and listed building. It has been shown that the panels' arrangement and design have been carefully thought out and the best location has been chosen. They are not visible from the wider landscape and do not harm the special qualities or significance of the AONB, Conservation Area or Listed Building. A condition requiring the removal of the panels once they are no longer needed would be appropriate.

6.2. It is respectfully requested that the development is approved.