



Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 22 February 2011

by **Richard McCoy BSc, MSc, DipTP, MRTPI, IHBC**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

Decision date: 16 March 2011

Appeal Ref: APP/Q9495/E/10/2141903

Shatton Hall, Lorton, Cockermouth, Cumbria CA13 9TL

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
 - The appeal is made by Dr Edmund Herd against the decision of Lake District National Park Authority.
 - The application Ref 7/2010/2150, dated 28 May 2010, was refused by notice dated 21 September 2010.
 - The works proposed are the fitting of solar photovoltaic panels to the rear roof of the house.
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Decision

1. I dismiss the appeal.

Main Issue

2. I consider the main issue to be the effect of the works on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.

Reasons

3. Lorton Hall is a Grade II listed building located in open countryside within the Lake District National Park. The proposed works would install 2 rows of solar panels, covering an area of around 24m² of the rear roof slope of the dwelling. These would generate around 3,000KWH of electricity annually for domestic consumption with any surplus sold to the energy supply company.
4. The appellant contends that the panels would be discreetly positioned so that they would not be readily visible from any public thoroughfare. Nevertheless, regardless of whether or not they would be seen in public views, they would detract from the appearance of the building which is listed for its intrinsic qualities. They would obscure the natural slate roof covering and their glossy finish would introduce an alien feature at odds with the appearance of the traditional roofing materials on the rest of the listed building.
5. I consider that this former farmhouse with its traditional, vernacular appearance of roughcast rubble walls under a greenslate roof, incorporating later additions that have added to its character, displays a strong architectural integrity. This would be substantially harmed by the introduction of a large expanse of metal framed, reflective panelling with its modern manufactured, industrial character, to its rear roof slope.

6. Accordingly, the proposal would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building, contrary to Policy HE9 of Planning Policy Statement 5; *Planning for the Historic Environment* which states that consent for works that would cause substantial harm should be refused unless substantial public benefits that outweigh the harm would be delivered. This is echoed in the policies of the development plan.
7. While I am sympathetic to the appellant's desire to reduce energy costs, promote sustainability and bring about environmental advantages by reducing carbon emissions, I consider that the positive benefits of the proposal, including its conformity with Policy CS16 of the Lake District National Park Core Strategy (CS), Development Plan Document, adopted October 2010, do not outweigh its adverse effects on the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.
8. Similarly, the appellant's commitment to have the panels removed in 2036 would not result in the building's special interest being preserved because the glossy material used in their fabrication would still be visually jarring during the time they were in-situ.
9. I have taken full and careful account of the views of the interested parties in reaching this decision, including the email in support from the Parish Council, and the appellant's arguments that the works would be reversible, the listed building has sustained changes in the past and his family have spent considerable time, effort and expense looking after Shatton Hall. Nevertheless, these considerations do not persuade me to allow a proposal that I consider would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed building.
10. For the reasons given above, I conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

Richard McCoy

INSPECTOR