

Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 6 June 2016

by Louise Crosby MA MRTPI

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

Decision date: 28 June 2016

Appeal Ref: APP/G2815/W/16/3142530

12 Main Street, Woodnewton, Northamptonshire, PE8 5EB

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by Mrs S Butcher against the decision of East Northants District Council.
 - The application Ref: 15/01746/FUL, dated 15 September 2015, was refused by notice dated 17 November 2015.
 - The development proposed is installation of 3 solar panels to existing roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for the installation of 3 solar panels to the existing roof at 12 Main Street, Woodnewton, Northamptonshire, PE8 5EB in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 15/01746/FUL, dated 15 September 2015, subject to the following conditions:
 - 1) The development hereby permitted shall begin not later than three years from the date of this decision.
 - 2) The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plan: D003-003b.
 - 3) The solar panels hereby permitted shall have an external finish and colour to match the existing solar panels on the garage building.

Procedural matter

2. For clarity, the solar panels would be attached to the roof of the modern garage belonging to the dwelling, as opposed to the dwelling itself.

Main Issues

3. The main issues are the effect of the proposal on the setting of 12 Main Street, which is listed Grade II and whether it would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of Woodnewton Conservation Area.

Reasons

4. 12 Main Street is a square coursed limestone property with a thatch roof that is now used as a dwelling. It was formerly a public house known as The Horse and Jockey. It is believed to date from the early to mid 18th century and extended in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The dwelling abuts Main Street.
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5. To the right hand side of the dwelling is a driveway leading to a modern double garage, sited close to the rear elevation of No 12. The garage is much wider than the driveway and No 12 has a small porch on the side that screens it further, so only part of it is visible from the street. The view is mainly of the wide up and over style door and the slate roof. The upper half of the front roof slope is already covered with square solar panels. They do not appear unduly prominent because they are all dark grey/black in colour and are seen against the grey/black roofing materials of the garage.
6. The 3 additional panels proposed would be rectangular in shape and sit below the existing ones. They would not extend the full width of the roof; an uncovered area would be visible down the driveway. Moreover, a portion of the proposed panels would be hidden from public view.
7. A modern dwelling towards the rear of the appeal site has a significant amount of panels on its rear roof slope. They appear far more prominent from the street outside the appeal site because of their number, they are at first floor level and the outer casings are made from silver coloured metal. While this dwelling is outside of the conservation area and planning permission was not required for the installations, they do appear visually prominent from this part of Main Street.
8. I appreciate that the appeal site is within the conservation area and No 12 is a listed building. However, given the size and location of the proposed panels, in comparison to the substantial, prominently located listed building and indeed to the sizable modern garage I consider that the proposal would result in minimal harm to the setting of the listed building and would preserve the character and appearance of the conservation area.
9. The small amount of harm to the setting of the listed building I have identified would be far outweighed by the benefits the proposal would bring in terms of their contribution, albeit small, to supporting the transition to a low carbon future – one of the core planning principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.
10. I find that the proposal would accord with North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy policy 13 and policy 2 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy in so far as they seek to protect heritage assets and their surroundings.
11. For the reasons given above and having regard to all other matters raised, I conclude that the appeal should be allowed.

Louise Crosby

INSPECTOR