



Appeal Decisions

Site visit made on 1 May 2025

by **F Cullen BA(Hons) MSc DipTP MRTPI IHBC**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 28 July 2025

Appeal A Ref: APP/P2935/W/24/3357376

Stable House, U8192 Aydon Main Road Through Village, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5PL

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant planning permission.
- The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Carr Seaman against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
- The application Ref is 24/02563/FUL.
- The development proposed is described as 'Part retrospective application for the retention of flat roof to north west elevation and proposed installation of solar photo voltaic panels on south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof.'

Appeal B Ref: APP/P2935/Y/24/3357374

Stable House, U8192 Aydon Main Road Through Village, Corbridge, Northumberland, NE45 5PL

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
- The appeal is made by Mr and Mrs Carr Seaman against the decision of Northumberland County Council.
- The application Ref is 24/02564/LBC.
- The works proposed are described as 'Part retrospective application for the retention of flat roof to north west elevation and proposed installation of solar photo voltaic panels on south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof.'

Decisions

1. **Appeal A:** The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the flat roof to the north west elevation. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the installation of solar photo voltaic panels on the south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof, and planning permission is granted for the installation of solar photo voltaic panels on the south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof, at Stable House, U8192 Aydon Main Road Through Village, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5PL, in accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 24/02563/FUL, and the plans submitted with it so far as relevant to that part of the development hereby permitted, and subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.
2. **Appeal B:** The appeal is dismissed insofar as it relates to the flat roof to the north west elevation. The appeal is allowed insofar as it relates to the installation of solar photo voltaic panels on the south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof, and listed building consent is granted for the installation of solar photo voltaic panels on the south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof, at Stable House, U8192 Aydon Main Road Through Village, Corbridge, Northumberland NE45 5PL, in

accordance with the terms of the application, Ref: 24/02564/LBC, and the plans submitted with it so far as relevant to that part of the works hereby consented and subject to the conditions in the attached schedule.

Preliminary Matters

3. The two appeals concern the same scheme under different, complementary legislation. I have dealt with both appeals together in my reasoning.
4. The name of the appellant as stated in the appeal forms does not match the names of the applicants as stated in the application forms. The agent confirmed that the appeals are proceeding in the names of the applicants¹.
5. Stable House is sited at the rear of a Grade II listed building known as 'Stable Cottage'². There is no dispute between the parties that by virtue of section 1(5)(b) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) (the Act), Stable House should be 'treated as part of the [listed] building'. I have no reason to disagree, and have determined the appeals on this basis. Consequently, in line with the statutory duties set out in sections 66(1) and 16(2) of the Act, I have had special regard to the desirability of preserving the listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.
6. I saw on my site visit that the north west elevation of Stable House incorporates a single storey structure with a flat roof. However, the submitted drawing ref: A200 – Proposed Plans & Elevations, does not match the single storey structure and flat roof as built on site. Similarly, Fig 6 'Retrospective Roof as Built' (no drawing ref) in the appellants' Appeal Statement, does not match the single storey structure and flat roof as built on site³. The discrepancies include the width of the single storey structure; the extent of the flat roof overhanging eaves and wraparound; the glazing patterns in some of the windows; the quoin detailing; and the vertical flue.
7. The appeal decisions should flow from the submitted plans rather than what has been carried out⁴. Therefore and for the avoidance of doubt, I have determined the appeals on the basis of the submitted drawing ref: A200, and that the development and works have, in part, already occurred.
8. The Council's reason for refusal cited in both Decision Notices focuses on the perceived harmful effects of the 'flat roof' to the north west elevation. It does not include reference to the proposed 'installation of solar photo voltaic panels' on the south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof. Additionally, in its Statement of Case, the Council confirms that the installation of the solar panels is acceptable, subject to the submission of further details by condition.
9. From the evidence before me, I have no reason to take a different view on this matter, and find that the proposed installation of solar photo voltaic panels on the south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof would preserve the special interest of the listed building and would not harm its significance. Therefore, my considerations below are focused on the development and works to the north west elevation.

¹ Email dated 13 December 2024.

² National Heritage List for England, List Entry Number: 1044805.

³ Also shown as Fig 7 in Heritage Statement.

⁴ Under Article 7(1)(c) of the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 no plans are necessary to determine retrospective applications/appeals. But if plans have been submitted that show the development they should be taken into account.

10. As decision maker on behalf of the Secretary of State, I have the power to split the decisions relating to planning permission and listed building consent⁵. Given the above, and that the installation of solar photo voltaic panels on the south westerly roof elevation and adjacent flat roof is clearly severable, both physically and functionally, from the flat roof element to the north west elevation, I am able to issue split decisions.

Main Issue

11. Having regard to the reason for refusal cited in the Council's Decision Notices, the main issue is whether the 'flat roof element' would preserve the Grade II listed building, known as Stable Cottage, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Reasons

Special interest and significance

12. Dating from the late-18th/early-19th century, with alterations in the mid-19th century, the Grade II listed building of Stable Cottage occupies a prominent roadside position within Aydon. The Cottage is constructed of rubble with roughly shaped quoins and some cut dressings, and has a Welsh slate roof. Stable House, sited at the rear of Stable Cottage, is a former stable building stated to date from the late 19th century and, similar to Stable Cottage, is largely constructed of rubble and stone dressings, with a slate roof. It was converted to residential use following the grant of planning permission and listed building consent under application refs: 16/00016/FUL and 16/01469/LBC.
13. From the evidence before me, the special interest and significance of Stable Cottage, mainly stem from its architectural and historic interests, in illustrating a polite late-18th/early-19th century rural domestic property with associated outbuildings. Pertinent to the appeals, Stable Cottage and Stable House have clear historic, physical and functional associations, which support their heritage value as part of a group. Moreover, whilst Stable House has been altered as part of its conversion, its modest agrarian form and design are still legible. For these reasons, Stable House contributes in a positive way to the special interest and significance of Stable Cottage as a designated heritage asset.

Proposal and effects

14. Stable House's granted conversion to residential use incorporated a single storey addition with a monopitch roof on the north west elevation⁶. The evidence states that, historically, a timber with slate roof log store stood in this location, the form and design of which, informed the granted scheme. This element of the conversion was not built in accordance with the approved plans and the applications/appeals seek to regularise the development and works⁷.
15. Paragraph 212 of the National Planning Policy Framework, 2024 (the Framework) sets out, when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the

⁵ Planning Permission - section 79(1)(b) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) in relation to appeals made under section 78 of that Act. Listed building consent - section 22(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended) in relation to appeals made under section 20 of that Act.

⁶ As shown on drawing ref: A100 – Plans & Elevations, as Approved.

⁷ As shown on drawing ref: A200 – Proposed Plans & Elevations.

asset's conservation. Paragraph 213 goes on to state that, significance can be harmed or lost through the asset's alteration or destruction or from development within its setting and that this should have clear and convincing justification.

16. Having regard to drawing ref: A200, whilst the single storey structure would reveal more of the north west elevation's historic fabric, its full width extent would weaken the primacy of the historic stable block and conceal, in part, the historic quoin detailing. Additionally, the expansive flat roof with a sizeable eaves overhang, would markedly jar with the traditional form and character of the historic stable block, resulting in an awkward relationship between these adjoining structures.
17. The incongruity of the flat roof would be intensified by the use of the overtly modern roof covering of grey sarnafil, which would be at odds with the use of traditional materials in the rest of this element, such as rubble walling, stone dressings and timber fenestration.
18. Overall, the single storey structure and flat roof would not respect, nor successfully integrate with, the agrarian form and character of the historic stable block. As such, it would not conserve the 'listed building' in a manner appropriate to its significance.
19. The discordance of the structure, combined with its location on an external face of the historic stable block and the gentle slope of the site down to the north west, would result in it having an undue prominence both within the site and in the wider landscape, particularly from the public right of way to the north west of the site.
20. Even if, as asserted by the appellants, this structure would not be visible and/or prominent from public routes, this would not weigh in the proposal's favour, as listed buildings are safeguarded for their inherent architectural and historic interest, irrespective of whether or not public views of the building (including curtilage structures), can be gained.
21. I am aware that a flat roof extension was granted as part of the conversion scheme. Unlike the proposal before me, this extension is located within the more hidden interior courtyard space of the historic stable block. Additionally, even though it has a similar roof configuration and covering, it is faced with timber and includes extensive glazing, causing it to be read as a contemporary, lightweight and honest addition. In these respects, the granted flat roof is not comparable to the appeals proposal. It does not set a precedent, nor justify the acceptance of the scheme before me.
22. The identified harmful effects set out above concern fundamental aspects of the proposal and not matters of detail. Consequently, they cannot be made acceptable through the imposition of conditions.
23. Drawing all of the above together, I find that the 'flat roof element' would not preserve the Grade II listed building, known as Stable Cottage, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses. As such, there would be harm to the significance of this designated heritage asset.

Public benefits and balance

24. In finding harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the Framework and the Planning Practice Guidance (the PPG) require the category of harm to be explicitly identified, and the extent of harm within that category to be clearly articulated.

25. Given the nature and extent of the development and works, I find that the harm to the significance of Stable Cottage would be at the lower end of 'less than substantial'. Nonetheless, this harm carries considerable importance and weight.
26. Paragraph 215 of the Framework advises that this harm should be weighed against the public benefits⁸ of the proposal, which includes, where appropriate, securing the asset's optimum viable use.
27. The public benefits that would 'flow from' the development and works associated with the flat roof element would comprise economic benefits in the construction phase and social benefits through an improvement to the local housing stock. The scale of those benefits to the public at large is moderated by the limited amount of development and works proposed, but nonetheless, weigh in favour of the appeals.
28. The appellants submit that the benefits of the proposed solar photo voltaic panels should also be incorporated into the balance. I acknowledge that the solar panels would generate modest economic and environmental public benefits and, on this matter, I am mindful of Paragraph 167 of the Framework.
29. However, the PPG is clear that benefits 'should flow from the proposed development', and as set out by the appellants, the appeals relate to 'two separate proposals to the property made under a single planning and listed building application'⁹. The installation of the solar panels does not require or rely on the presence of the flat roof to the north west elevation. Moreover, in finding that the proposed solar panels would preserve the special interest of the listed building and would not harm its significance, I have granted permission/consent for this element, thus permitting the accrual of these public benefits.
30. I note the technical issues referred to by the appellants which they assert prevented the implementation of the scheme as approved. Nonetheless, no corroborative information has been presented to substantiate these claims. Nor has it been demonstrated that any alternative options were investigated to conclude that the appeals proposal would be the least harmful to the significance of the designated heritage asset.
31. I am not persuaded that the only way of realising the identified public benefits in respect of the flat roof element is via the scheme as shown on drawing ref: A200. Furthermore, no evidence has been provided which verifies that this element is necessary to secure the residential use of the listed building.
32. I find clear and convincing justification has not been provided for the identified harm to the significance of the designated heritage asset. Overall, the weight I ascribe to the public benefits which would flow from the development and works, even if I also included those from the solar panels, is not sufficient to outweigh the considerable importance and weight I attach to the harm I have found.
33. Accordingly, I conclude that the 'flat roof element' would not preserve the Grade II listed building, known as Stable Cottage, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses, and would harm the significance of this designated heritage asset. This would not be outweighed by the public benefits of the proposal.

⁸ Planning Practice Guidance: Paragraph: 020 Reference ID: 18a-020-20190723.

⁹ Appeal Statement – Section 4.

34. Consequently, it would conflict with the statutory presumptions set out in sections 66(1) and 16(2) of the Act and the provisions within the Framework which seek to conserve and enhance the historic environment. It would also not accord with Policies ENV1, ENV7, QOP1, QOP2 and HOU9 of the Northumberland Local Plan 2016-2036, adopted March 2022 (the NLP), in so far as they seek development to conserve, protect and enhance the character and/or significance, quality and integrity of Northumberland's historic environment and heritage assets; respect the existing dwelling and make a positive contribution to local character; and be of a high quality and good design.

Other Matters

35. The appellants cite other buildings in the locality that incorporate a variety of materials, designs and/or flat roofs¹⁰. However, no substantive information has been submitted on this matter to allow any comparison with the scheme before me. Consequently, this carries little weight.
36. The site lies in proximity to a number of listed buildings. From the limited information presented and my observations on site, the special interest and significance of these assets primarily stem from their historic and/or architectural interest. However, they are also derived, in part, from their respective domestic and wider open rural settings.
37. Given the location and extent of the development and works in relation to these listed buildings, I find that the settings of these assets would be preserved and their significance would not be harmed. This would meet the statutory presumption set out in section 66(1) of the Act; the provisions in the Framework regarding the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment; and the relevant policies of the NLP.

Conditions

38. The Council has submitted suggested conditions were the appeals to be allowed. I have considered these having regard to the advice set out in both the Framework¹¹ and the PPG¹² and made some amendments to the wording.
39. For Appeal A and Appeal B, planning permission and listed building consent are granted subject to the standard three year time limit conditions. For Appeal A, I have imposed a condition specifying the relevant plans and documents as this provides certainty. For Appeal B, a condition specifying the relevant plans and documents is not necessary, as adherence to the plans which accompany the application is part of the formal decision. For Appeal A and Appeal B, in the interests of the special interest and significance of the listed building, a condition regarding the submission of a detailed specification and methodology for the installation of the solar panels is necessary.

Conclusions

40. **Appeal A:** For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed in part and allowed in part.

¹⁰ Including Aydon Cottage and Aydon South Farm.

¹¹ Framework Paragraph 57.

¹² PPG Paragraphs: 007 Reference ID: 21a-007-20180615; and 017 Reference ID: 21a-017-20190723.

41. **Appeal B:** For the reasons given above the appeal should be dismissed in part and allowed in part.

F Cullen

INSPECTOR

Appeal A Ref: APP/P2935/W/24/3357376

Schedule of 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:
 - Drawing ref: LP01 – Location Plan.
 - Drawing ref: A200 – Proposed Plans & Elevations (in so far as relevant).
 - Trinasolar Datasheet 505W.
 - The Ecological Impact Assessment and Bat Survey by Ruth Hadden dated Summer 2024, with particular reference to the Bat Method Statement for Contractors found at Appendix 3 of that document.
- 3) No solar panel shall be installed, nor shall any roof be prepared for the installation of any panel or associated equipment until a detailed specification of these panels and a methodology for their installation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

End of Schedule of Conditions

Appeal B Ref: APP/P2935/Y/24/3357374

Schedule of Conditions

- 1) The works authorised by this consent shall begin not later than three years from the date of this consent.
- 2) No solar panel shall be installed, nor shall any roof be prepared for the installation of any panel or associated equipment until a detailed specification of these panels and a methodology for their installation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

End of Schedule of Conditions