

Conservation Team Advice

Date: 3rd December 2025
Application Ref: SMD/2025/0418
Site Address: 10 Cranford, Fynney Street, Leek
Proposal: Listed Building Consent to install solar panels to the rear elevation of the building

Heritage assets affected:		
Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☒	Ferne-lea and Cranford and attached wall – Grade II (listing ref: 1268594)
Non-Designated Heritage Asset(s):	☐	

Conservation Advice

Summary of Significance

10 Cranford (Grade II) forms part of a pair of houses dating c.1912 designed by Reginald Longden in an Arts & Crafts style. The building is constructed in brick with a plain tile roof. The houses have an asymmetrical design with two projecting gables, mullioned windows and leaded lights and large chimney stacks which are all characteristic of the architectural style. The significance of the building relates to its retention of historic fabric and plan form, illustrative Arts & Crafts style, association with local architect and association with the development of suburban housing the early-20th century of Leek.

Assessment and Impact

The proposal would involve the installation of 14 solar panels to the rear elevation of the building.

Solar panels have an overtly engineered appearance and their installation on this building would contrast with the traditional palette of materials of the Listed Building. However as set out in the Design & Access Statement and the product specification, the panels to be installed would be black framed, matt finish with low-rise brackets and sited to the rear elevation, all of which would help minimise the visual impact on the building's architectural interest.

As set out in Historic England's 'Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency – Advice Note 18', the installation of panels on less prominent elevations of the heritage asset would generally be acceptable as this would be less visually prominent.

Overall, the proposed works would result in a degree of harm to the building's architectural interest due to the engineered appearance of the panels that would contrast with the traditional palette of materials. However, this harm has been minimised by sensitive siting and design of the panels. In addition, it is recognised that the installation of the panels could be reversible and that there would likely be public benefits in terms of carbon efficiency that would arise from the proposal.

Legislation and Policy

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

The local planning authority should have a desirability of preserving the setting and special interest of the Listed Building (s.16).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024

In determining applications, local authorities should take account of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation, the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality, the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness (par.210).

Any harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within the setting), should require clear and convincing justification (par.213).

Where a proposed development would lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use (par.215).

Local Development Framework

Consideration should also be given to the following documents and local development framework policies:

- Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020) – DC2 The Historic Environment

Conclusions and Recommendations

In summary, the proposal would result in minor-moderate degree of harm to the Listed Building as it would introduce overtly engineered and modern feature to the building. This would fail to satisfy the provisions of s.16 of the Act. With reference to the planning policies, this would be 'less than substantial harm' to the designated heritage asset (par.215 of NPPF and policy DC2 of the local development framework). As set out above, the panels have been positioned to the rear roofslope which has reduced the visual impact, the panels would not result in the loss of historic fabric and have the potential to be reversible (par.208 of NPPF). There is clear and convincing justification for the harm (par.213 of NPPF) and there would likely be public benefits in terms of

climate change which would balance or outweigh the level of heritage harm arising from the proposal (par.215 of NPPF). Therefore, there are no objections to the proposal from a conservation perspective.

Conservation Officer: Megan Atkinson