

Heritage Statement

Date: 11 August 2026 To: Staffordshire Moorlands District Council, Planning Department.
Site: Rose Cottage, Foxt Road, Foxt, ST10 2HN
Proposal: Installation of 12 solar photovoltaic PV panels.

1. Introduction

This statement is submitted to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council in support of a planning application by the home owner of Rose Cottage. The proposal seeks permission for the installation of 12 roof-mounted solar PV panels to be fitted on the garage roof with battery and all other ancillary equipment sited inside the garage.

2. The Heritage Asset and its Significance

Rose Cottage is a detached traditional residential stone cottage situated within the designated Foxt Conservation Area. The cottage is not a statutory Listed Building. The cottage and garage are constructed of Hollington stone under a pitched roof finished with Staffordshire blue clay tiles. It features grey-framed windows and doors.

The significance of the Foxt Conservation Area derives from its character as a historic, rural settlement in the Staffordshire Moorlands, defined by its traditional farmsteads and cottages constructed primarily from local Hollington stone. Its setting is characterized by its dramatic position on the eastern ridge of the Churnet Valley, providing an organic and rustic street scene. As defined by the Adopted Core Strategy Policy DC2 The Historic Environment), development must safeguard the heritage and distinctiveness of the area.

3. Proposed Development and Impact on the Heritage Asset

The proposal is for a low-profile solar PV array consisting of 6 panels on the front roof slope and 6 panels on the rear roof slope of the garage. As demonstrated by the submitted elevation drawings.

To assess the impact on the significance of the Foxt Conservation Area, the following points have been considered:

- **Minimised Visual Impact:**

Half the installation (ie 6 panels) is positioned on the garage south facing roof slope. This is the front elevation of the garage and is the primary elevation facing Foxt Road. The further 6 panels are positioned on the rear elevation of the garage roof facing the property's garden.

- **Design and Materials:**

To ensure the installation integrates with the building's aesthetic, high-specification, all-black (monocrystalline) solar panels are proposed. These panels feature black frames and backing sheets, which blend effectively with the Staffordshire blue clay roof tiles. The low-profile mounting system ensures the array sits close to the roof plane, minimizing its mass and silhouette. Standard silver-framed or blue-tinted panels have been rejected to uphold the area's visual distinctiveness.

- **Minimal and Reversible Intervention:**

The installation requires minimal alteration to the building's existing fabric. The panels are fixed to a lightweight rail system that respects the roof structure. The process is entirely reversible; should the panels be removed in the future, the roof tiles and stonework would remain unharmed, ensuring the long-term conservation of the property.

4. Summary of Benefits and Policy Compliance

The proposal represents a sustainable and forward-thinking addition to a residential property. The minimal and localized intervention offers significant benefits in the form of renewable energy generation for the home, aligning directly with national and local environmental sustainability goals. By employing a sensitive, high-quality, all-black design on a garage roof slope, the proposal adheres to both National Planning Policy Framework guidance and Local Plan Policy DC2, successfully balancing modern environmental needs with the requirement to protect the area's heritage assets.

5. Conclusion

The proposed installation will have a negligible, or 'less than substantial,' impact on the character and appearance of the Foxt Conservation Area. As demonstrated by the submitted elevations, it represents a minor, high-quality, and reversible intervention that does not detract from the significance of the cottage or its setting.