
Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 12 September 2013

by P Eggleton BSC(Hons) MRTPI

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

Decision date: 18 September 2013

Appeal Ref: APP/T2350/D/13/2202460

3 Horton Lodge, Horton in Craven, Skipton, North Yorkshire, BD23 3JX

- 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 B Ellis against the decision of Ribbles Valley Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 3/2013/0126 was refused by notice dated 20 June 2013.
 - The development proposed is solar panels to the south facing roof.
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Decision

1. The appeal is allowed and planning permission is granted for solar panels to the south facing roof at 3 Horton Lodge, Horton in Craven, Skipton, North Yorkshire in accordance with the terms of the application Ref 3/2013/0126.

Main Issue

2. The main issue is the effect on the character and appearance of the area.

Reasons

3. The solar panels are already in place. The roof of 3 Horton Lodge is set at a lower level than its attached neighbours. This ensures that its wider visibility is limited. The rearward projection of its neighbour also ensures that there are no clear views of it from the nearby footpath. In any event, the mature landscaping ensures that views of this roof from a short distance are only available from the bridge over the river. The roof has even less prominence in longer views towards these properties.
4. The dark colour of the panels ensures that they are not prominent even in the limited views that are available. The aluminium frames already appear to have receded in prominence since the submitted photographs were taken. This element of roof accommodates the panels extremely well within the physical confines of the surrounding development and represents a good opportunity to improve sustainability with only a very limited wider impact.
5. Although these are buildings of considerable character and traditional local materials, they have been altered and include more modern additions. Although these panels would obviously depart from the traditional materials of these buildings, the limited wider impact would ensure that they would not detract from the character of these properties.
6. As the panels would not cause unacceptable harm to the local environment, the use of renewable energy sources gains support from Policy ENV24 and ENV25 of the Ribbles Valley Districtwide Local Plan 1998 (LP) and Policy DME5 of the

Ribble Valley Core Strategy Regulation 22 Submission Draft (CS). These are consistent with the *National Planning Policy Framework* which also supports sustainable energy.

7. This roof slope makes only a very limited contribution to the significance of this group of buildings due to its low height and position between higher structures. As the panels would not significantly alter its form and would be of such limited prominence, they would not detract significantly from this group of buildings. Any harm would be outweighed by the public benefits of moving towards more sustainable energy production. In these circumstances, I do not find conflict with CS Policy DME4 in relation to the protection of heritage assets or the similar requirements of the *Framework*. The panels do not conflict with the general townscape and design requirements of LP Policies G1, ENV3 and H17 or CS Policies DMG1, DME2 and DMH4.
8. Overall, I find that the proposal would utilise an area of roof that would have very little impact on the character or wider appearance of these buildings. I do not agree that it would reduce the Council's ability to resist other more harmful development. The benefits of the proposal outweigh the very limited concerns relating to the introduction of non-traditional materials to this extremely unobtrusive area of roof. I therefore allow the appeal. As the panels are already in place, no conditions are necessary.

Peter Eggleton
INSPECTOR