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# Appeal Decision

Site visit made on 23 May 2011

**by Jacqueline Wilkinson Reg. Architect IHBC**

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

**Decision date: 8 June 2011**

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**Appeal Ref: APP/R3325/E/11/2147877**

**The Coach House, Lattiford, Holton, Wincanton Somerset BA9 8AH**

- The appeal is made under section 20 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 against a refusal to grant listed building consent.
  - The appeal is made by Mr William Barribal against the decision of South Somerset District Council.
  - The application Ref 10/05180/LBC, dated 10 December 2010, was refused by notice dated 7 February 2011.
  - The works proposed are installation of photovoltaic solar panels on roof of Old Granary adjacent to the Coach House.
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## Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.
2. I have taken account of the views of local residents and other interested parties in reaching this decision.

## Main Issue

3. The main issue is the effect of the proposed photovoltaic (PV) panels on the special architectural and historic interest and setting of the Grade II listed building.

## Reasons

4. The appeal building is a curtilage listed building within the historic curtilage of Lattiford House, which is listed Grade II. The significance of the granary lies in its former function as a grain store for which purpose it was raised on staddle stones, with brick construction and a simple pitched slate roof with a vent. The granary is now an outbuilding of the adjacent converted Coach House, which also has a plain pitched slate roof.
5. The roof of the granary is seen from the private road, set between the garage and the Coach House. Despite its set back position I saw that this small and attractive building had significant group value with the adjacent historic buildings and the simple plain juxtaposed roof slopes gives the group an attractive appearance in the wider rural setting.
6. It is proposed to fix an array of six PV panels on the front roof slope. The control boxes would be within the adjacent garage and cabling could be run internally without harm to the building. The proposed panels would be grey in colour, but they would be raised above the slates and would have a shiny and machine made appearance. They would not blend in with the natural grey

slates, which have a softer more natural and variable appearance, with small scale texture. The appearance of the proposed panels has been compared in effect to the roof lights on the nearby Stables, also converted to residential use. I saw that these roof lights are relatively small in relation to that roof and to my mind they reflect traditional roof lights, being set in the roof surface with simple black metal frames. By contrast the proposed PV panels would be much larger in comparison to the roof slope and they would be proud of the roof surface. Their effect would be unacceptably dominant on this small vernacular building and they would harm its very simple utilitarian and functional character.

7. Policy ST5 and Policy ST6 of the South Somerset Local Plan 2006 broadly require that development should respect the character and setting of areas. Policy EH5 requires that development should not have an adverse effect on the setting of a listed building. There is no requirement under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to have regard to the Local Plan policies, but nevertheless these policies reflect the Government's broad guidance given in Planning Policy Statement 5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5).
8. Policy HE1 of PPS5: *Heritage Assets and Climate Change*, requires that where proposals that are promoted for their contribution to mitigating climate change have a potentially negative effect on heritage assets, local planning authorities should help applicants identify feasible solutions that deliver climate mitigation but with less or no harm to the significance of the heritage asset or its setting.
9. The panels will provide the electricity to run a heat pump system and there would be a "pay back" to the grid, which would be an added environmental benefit and in this respect the proposal is inline with government policy to encourage individuals to contribute to climate change mitigation.
10. Support from the neighbours has been expressed and it is important that there is support for climate mitigation measures. The appellant states that there is no other option as wind power would not be reliable enough and would be more visually harmful. However, PPS5 requires me to have regard to all other options, including any other energy saving measures. Without an assessment of the overall energy saving and generating options open to the appellant, I am not persuaded that all options have been exhausted.
11. I saw that the appeal site included a garden and paddocks and it seems to me that there is considerable scope for climate mitigation measures in the location, which if carefully considered, would be less harmful to the setting of the group. In this situation, I conclude that there would be no justification for the harm caused to the significance of this small but valuable vernacular heritage asset.
12. The appellant states that the proposal would comply with English Heritage Guidance "*Microgeneration in the Historic Environment. Small Scale solar electric energy and traditional buildings*", and in some respects it does. The panels could be removed, although this would be unlikely, given their long term purpose and the historic fabric of the building would not be harmed, but this would not alone justify the proposal. However, the guidance clearly states that it is generally not considered sympathetic to a building's appearance to have solar panels fixed to any of its main elevations.
13. I therefore conclude that the proposal would fail to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the building and its setting, which would be

contrary to the requirements of Section 16 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. For the reasons given above I conclude that the appeal should not succeed.

*Jacqueline Wilkinson*

INSPECTOR

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