

Proposal: Installation of 20 solar PV Panels on roof of two outbuildings

Location: Parris House, 16 - 18 High Street, Cowden Edenbridge Kent TN8 7JG

Ward(s): Cowden & Hever

**Item for decision**

The application has been referred to Development Control Committee by Councillor Dickins in order for the impact of the proposal on the Heritage Impacts to be considered.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That planning permission be REFUSED for the following reasons:

1) The installation of the solar panels onto two curtilage listed structures, would result in harm to their character, integrity and appearance. The works would also have an adverse impact upon the setting of the listed building. As such the proposal would neither conserve nor enhance the heritage assets, but cause harm, which is not outweighed by any public benefit. The proposal would be contrary to policy EN4 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan and National Planning Policy Framework.

**Description of site**

- 1 The site consists of a Grade II listed building with several curtilage listed outbuildings, including the barn and the tool shed and a detached modern garage
- 2 The dwelling is sited directly onto the high street.
- 3 The site lies within the Cowden Conservation Area, Metropolitan Green Belt and High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

**Description of proposal**

- 4 Installation of 20 solar PV Panels on roof of two outbuildings.

## **Relevant planning history**

- 5 93/00543/HIST (LBC) Erection of a detached garage GRANT
- 6 93/00544/HIST Erection of a detached garage GRANT
- 7 05/01541/LBCALT Conversion of existing barn for residential use ancillary to the main dwellinghouse. GRANT
- 8 05/01543/FUL Conversion of existing barn for residential use ancillary to the main dwellinghouse. GRANT
- 9 08/02884/LBCALT Alterations to internal partition and replacement of all windows on front elevation. GRANT
- 10 88/01819/HIST Two storey extension GRANT
- 11 88/01820/HIST Two storey extension GRANT
- 12 12/00073/HOUSE Rebuild/reposition existing wall and brick pier adjacent to entrance gates. GRANT
- 13 12/00074/LBCALT Rebuild/reposition existing wall and brick pier adjacent to entrance gates. GRANT
- 14 12/01414/LBCALT Removal of paint finish to external brickwork to part of front elevation including repointing. GRANT
- 15 12/02755/HOUSE Demolition of existing garage and wood store and erection of new double garage including modification to existing driveway. GRANT
- 16 15/03287/LBCALT Installation of two Air Source Heat Pumps. GRANT
- 17 15/03848/HOUSE Installation of two Air Source Heat Pumps. One located to the rear of the main house, the other located to the rear of the outbuilding. GRANT
- 18 79/00709/HIST Demolition of existing garage, internal and external alterations, conversion and use of shop building for additional living accommodation and construction of dormer window at rear GRANT
- 19 79/00534/HIST Removal of existing and formation of larger window at rear of dwelling GRANT
- 20 79/00531/HIST Alterations, conversion and use of existing shop building for additional living accommodation ancillary to existing dwellinghouse, and construction of dormer window at rear GRANT
- 21 78/01602/HIST Removal of existing external door on west elevation and the fixing of a new timber window GRANT

22 78/01139/HIST Construction of dormer window at rear and formation of window in gable end at side of dwelling GRANT

## Policies

23 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

24 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Area) Act 1990 placed a duty on a local planning authority, in considering development, which affects a listed building or its settings, to having special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features or architectural or historical interest it possess. The NPPF also states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets (para 199).

25 The NPPF states that sufficient and proportionate information should be provided with any application to help in determining applications (para. 200).

26 Core Strategy (CS)

- SP1 Design of New Development and Conservation

27 Allocations and Development Management Plan (ADMP)

- EN4 Heritage Assets

28 Other

- Sevenoaks Residential Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

## Constraints

29 The following constraints apply:

- Cowden Conservation Area
- Listed Building
- Metropolitan Green Belt
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty - High Weald

## Consultations

30 Cowden Parish Council

'Cowden Parish Council recommended approval on the basis that:-

- The size of the proposed solar array is reasonably matched to the KWh requirement of the property and that future increase is restricted
- The proposal complies with relevant local and national policies'

- 31 Conservation Officer  
Parris House is a grade II listed building within the Cowden Conservation Area. It also sits within the setting of several other listed buildings. The outbuilding to the north-west closest to the house (the barn) is shown on 19th century maps and was converted to residential ancillary use in 2005. There is also a building to the west near the road frontage shown on 19th century maps (site of current tool shed/log store). It is these two outbuildings to which it is proposed to attach the solar panels.
- 32 The Heritage, Design and Access Statement states that the house is a 16th century grade II listed house within the Cowden High Street. The Heritage Statement only identifies the main house as the 'heritage asset'. It does not refer to the other heritage assets affected by the proposals- namely the Cowden Conservation Area, the curtilage listed barn, the seemingly curtilage listed tool shed (unless this is a recent rebuild) and the setting of nearby listed buildings. The Heritage Statement therefore fails to identify the heritage assets affected by the proposals.
- 33 Paragraph 194 of the NPPF sets out that in determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. In this case, this requires an assessment of the significance of the host listed building, nearly listed buildings and the Conservation Area that may be impacted by the development through change within their setting, as well as an assessment of the significance of the two outbuildings as curtilage listed buildings.
- 34 From my own assessment, the barn appears to be of heritage significance and has greater prominence in the setting of the heritage assets identified and so the installation of the solar panels on this building is unlikely to be supportable due to the impact this would have on both the barn itself and the setting of the nearly heritage assets. Further information is required to assess the acceptability on the tool shed.
- 35 The garage also appears to be a modern addition and it is not clear why this hasn't been considered as a more sympathetic location. Without the information identified above I am unable to determine the impact of the development on heritage assets and the harm that would arise to their significance through the proposals. Based on the information provided, the solar panels would be installed on curtilage listed buildings and would cause less than substantial harm to their heritage significance, as well as the setting of the other heritage assets identified in my comments above.
- 36 The proposals are therefore not supported when assessed against the relevant NPPF policies or local policy EN4.

## **Representations**

37 Two public comments were received in support of the application.

## **Planning appraisal**

38 The main planning consideration are:

- Impact on Listed Buildings and their Setting

39 Impact on Listed Buildings and their Setting

40 Section 66 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places a duty on a local planning authority, in considering development which affects a listed building or its setting, to have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of architectural or historic interest it possesses.

41 The NPPF states that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets (para.199).

42 The NPPF also states that sufficient and proportionate information should be provided with any application to help in determining applications (para. 200).

43 Policy EN4 of the ADMP states that proposals that affect a Heritage Asset, or its setting, will be permitted where the development conserves or enhances the character, appearance and setting of the asset.

44 The solar panels would be located on the west facing roof slope of the barn and the flat roof and south facing roof slope of the tool shed. Both the barn and tool shed are curtilage listed structures, as they have were constructed prior to 1948 and therefore afforded the same protection as the main listed building. The barn has been identified by Conservation as being of particular heritage significance and has great prominence in the setting of the main listed Parris House.

45 The Heritage, Design and Access Statement also lacks sufficient information and assessment of the impact that the proposal will have upon all heritage assets.

46 The installation of the solar panels will cause harm to the curtilage listed structures, due to their appearance, siting and alien features on these historic outbuildings. The proposal would harm their heritage significance. Under para 202 of the NPPF, the proposal would result in less than substantial harm. Such harm can only be outweighed if there is public benefit, such as securing its future use. However in these cases, the barn and tool shed are already in use. The siting of solar panels on these curtilage listed structures does not secure the buildings future use. Whilst the provision of renewable energy is clearly a benefit, in this case, it is only

benefitting the applicant, not the wider public. Therefore there is no public benefit arising from this scheme.

- 47 Based on the information provided, the solar panels would be installed on curtilage listed buildings and would cause less than substantial harm to their heritage significance and harm the setting of the setting of the main listed building. Therefore, the proposal is contrary to policy EN4 of the ADMP.

## Conclusion

- 48 In conclusion, the proposal would be contrary to policy EN4 due to the harm that would occur to the significance of curtilage listed buildings and the setting of the main listed building.

49 As highlighted in the report above the proposed development does not accord with the NPPF and our adopted development plan.

It is therefore recommended that this application is refused.

## Background papers

## **Site Location and Block Plan**

Contact Officer(s): Stephanie Payne: 01732 227000

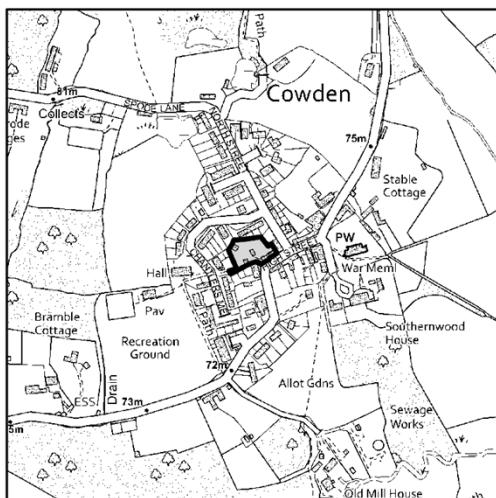
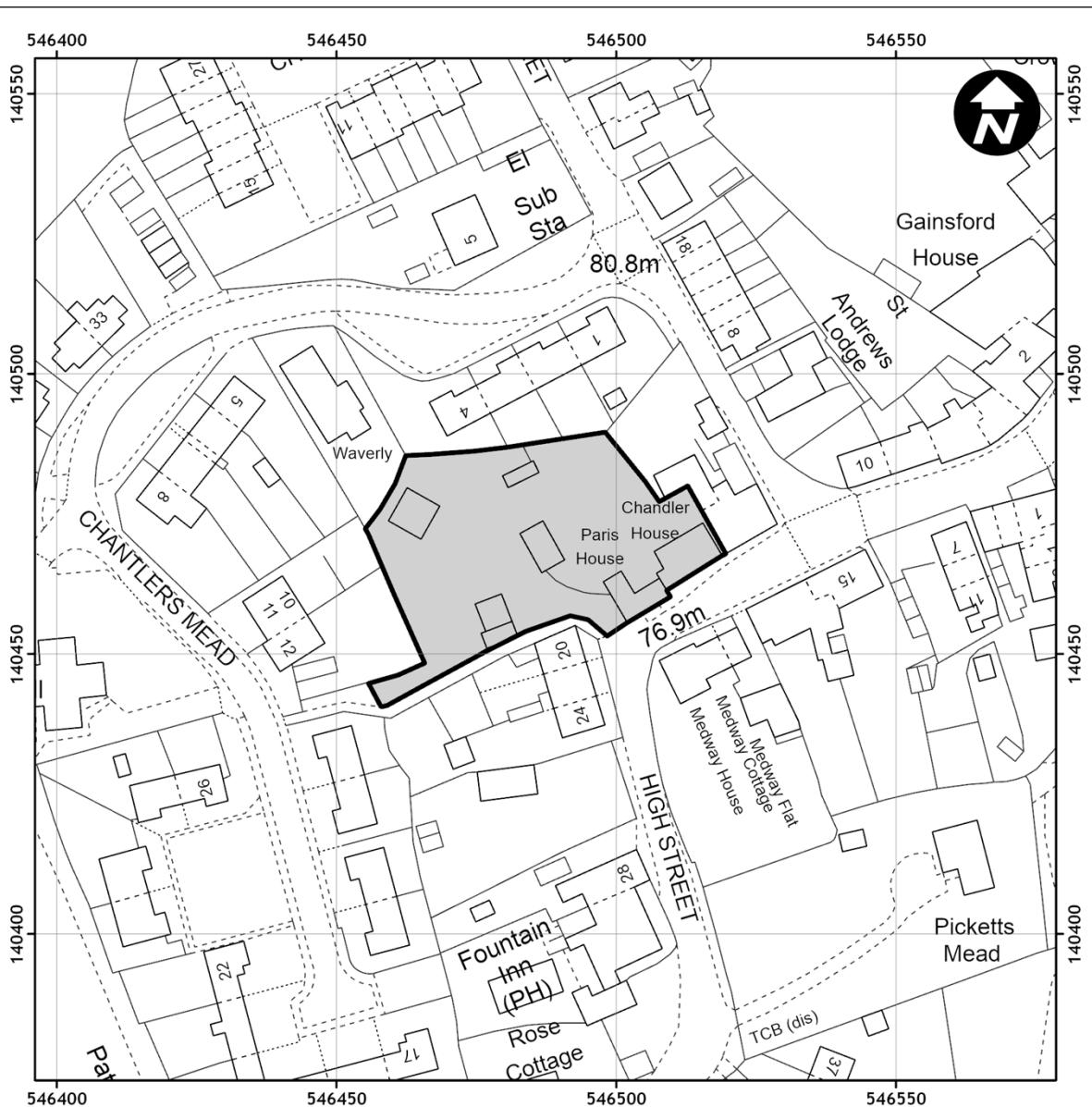
## **Richard Morris Chief Planning Officer**

[Link to application details](#):

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage>

**Link to associated documents:**

<https://pa.sevenoaks.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RMJ50MBKH8L00>



## Site Plan

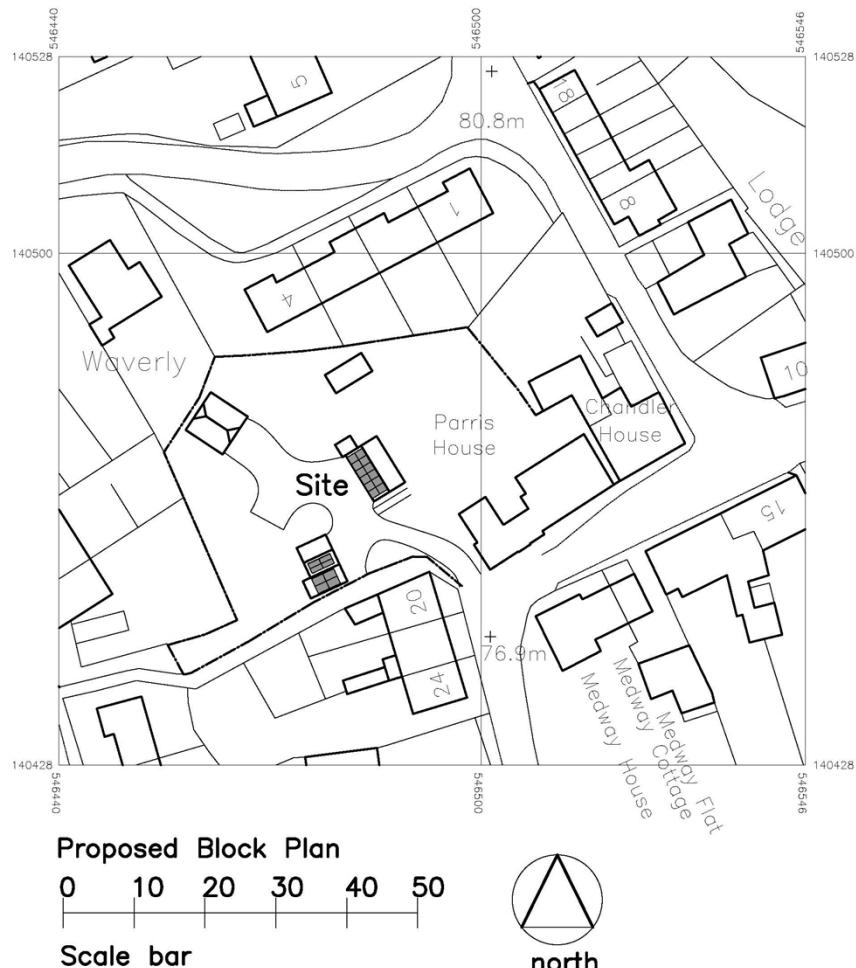
Scale 1:1,250

Date 03/03/2023

  
**Sevenoaks**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## BLOCK PLAN



Note: Do not scale from this drawing EXCEPT FOR PLANNING USE. The site boundaries approximately reflect the fence lines on site and have not been officially checked against the Land Register Plan. No detailed survey has been carried out on the site to produce this drawing.

This drawing is for planning purposes only. No check/survey/section has been carried out on the site to identify existing services, drains/sewers or any other potential legal restriction or hazard.

This scheme is for Planning Use only and therefore all noted floor areas and room dimensions are approximate.

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Cleat Mr M Clark
Project Parris House High Street Cowden Kent
Drawing Title Proposed Block Plan
Date November 2022
Scale 1:500 A3
Drawing No. M22-9876:06