

HERITAGE STATEMENT

Proposed installation of solar panels to the rear of the Grade II Listed Cottage to minimise heritage and visual impact, and the removal of an ash tree.

41, Lockeridge, Lockeridge, Wiltshire, SN8 4EQ.

1. Introduction

This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared by Swordsman Historic Architectural Design on behalf of the applicant Ms Neild in support of an application for the installation of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels within the rear garden of the Grade II listed cottage at 41 Lockeridge, Lockeridge, Wiltshire, SN8 4EQ, together with the removal of a self-planted ash tree.

The purpose of this assessment is to evaluate the potential impact of the proposed works on the significance of the designated heritage asset and its setting. It has been prepared in accordance with the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), relevant Historic England guidance, and the planning policies of Wiltshire Council.

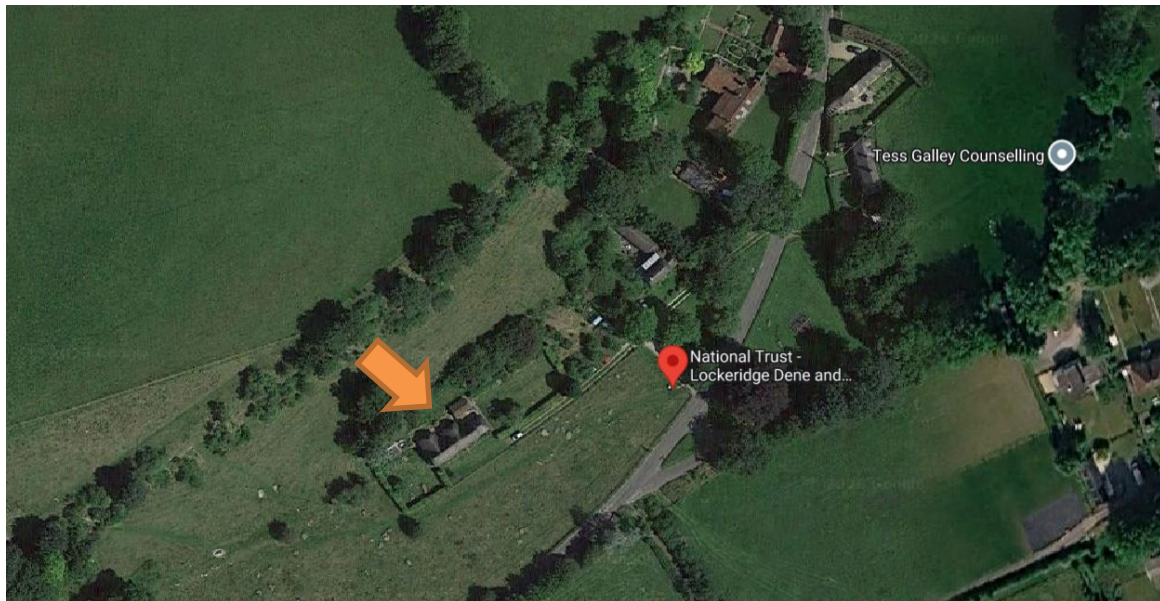
The proposed solar panels have been carefully located to the rear of the cottage in order to minimise their visibility from the public realm and to preserve the architectural and historic significance of the listed building. Their siting ensures that the principal elevation and the building's contribution to the character and appearance of the Lockeridge Conservation Area remain unaffected. The proposal also includes the removal of an ash tree which is self-planted and was never intended to be there and blocks light and moisture to the adjacent trees.

This assessment describes the significance of the listed building and its setting, assesses the potential effects of the proposed development on that significance, and demonstrates that the proposals have been designed to achieve an appropriate balance between the conservation of the historic environment and the enhancement of the property's environmental sustainability through the introduction of renewable energy.

2. Site location

The application site comprises 41 Lockeridge, Lockeridge, Wiltshire, SN8 4EQ, a Grade II listed detached cottage located within the historic hamlet of Lockeridge, approximately 3 km east of Marlborough in Wiltshire. The property lies within the Lockeridge Conservation Area and the North Wessex Downs National Landscape, an area designated for its exceptional natural beauty and distinctive historic landscape character.

The site area amounts to 2,027 sqm.



Aerial view showing the site area and the surrounding environment.

The cottage occupies a generous residential plot set back from the road and is surrounded by mature trees, hedgerows and domestic garden areas which contribute to its rural setting. The surrounding area is characterised by a mixture of traditional cottages, historic farm buildings and agricultural land, reflecting the long-established vernacular character of the settlement. Buildings are generally constructed from locally distinctive materials, including sarsen stone, brick and thatch or clay tile roofs, creating a cohesive historic streetscape.

The principal elevation of the cottage faces the highway, while the rear garden extends away from the public realm and is enclosed by mature vegetation. The proposed location for the solar photovoltaic panels is situated within the rear garden, where they will be largely screened from public viewpoints by the existing building and surrounding landscape. This location has been selected to minimise visual intrusion and to preserve the architectural character and setting of the listed building, as well as the wider significance of the Conservation Area.

An ash tree located within the rear garden is also included within the application. The tree is self-planted and was never intended to be there and blocks light and moisture to the adjacent trees. Its removal will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the listed building or its setting.

3. Relevant planning history

There are six known previous planning application associated with this property.

1/ Ref, K/57918/F, New woodshed, full planning permission, 11 February 2008, Approved with conditions.

2/ 18/00617/TCA, Remove 2 Walnut Trees Remove 1 Chestnut Tree, Work to Trees in a Cons Area, 16 February 2018, No object.

3/ 18/00782/TCA, (1) - Ash tree & (2) - Maple tree - remove 2 lower branches from both trees, Work to Trees in a Cons Area, 26 February 2018, No object.

4/ 18/02776/FUL, Change of use of garden room studio into studio holiday let, full planning permission, 04 June 2018, Approved with Conditions.

5/ 18/04370/FUL, To erect a 5 bar wooden unpainted gate at the entrance, full planning permission, 10 July 2018, Approved with Conditions.

6/ 20/04108/LBC, Proposed raising of chimney to prevent fire risk, listed building consent, 17 July 2020, Approved with Conditions.

4. Existing site plans and elevations of this property

The existing property at 41 Lockeridge, Lockeridge, features a historically evolved footprint within a predominantly landscaped residential plot. The cottage is positioned towards the southern part of the site, with a driveway along its eastern side and side and rear garden areas surrounding the building. The boundaries are principally defined by established hedges, with existing low walls also shown adjacent to the rear garden. An ash tree and a small tool shed are located within the rear garden area.

The existing elevations comprise a Southwest Section-Elevation and Southeast Elevation. These drawings illustrate the cottage in its landscaped setting, including the relationship between the building, the existing low walls, garden boundaries, mature trees and the tool shed. The elevations indicate the generally low-scale character of the cottage, with a pitched roof and chimney visible above the principal building form.

The drawings also record the changes in ground levels across the site, with levels shown ranging from approximately **147.1m to 150.7m** on the southeast elevation. The southwest section-elevation further illustrates the change in level between the garden and the cottage, as well as the position of the existing low wall and tool shed.

5. Proposal

The proposal seeks Listed Building Consent and Planning Permission for the installation of a ground-mounted photovoltaic (PV) solar array comprising twelve solar panels within the rear garden of the Grade II listed cottage at 41 Lockeridge, together with the associated battery storage and the removal of an existing ash tree which is obtrusive.

Solar Panels specifications are:

Panel Specification

Manufacturer - Aiko

Model - 515W Neostar 2S N-Type Mono-Glass ABC 60 Cell All Black MC4-EVO2 Gen 2

Quantity - 12

Watts - 515.00W

Efficiency - 23.2%

Dimensions - 1764 × 1134 × 30mm

Weight - 24.00kg

Voc - 45.32V

Isc - 14.23A

6.2 kWp solar PV system

12 high-performance solar panels

Tesla Powerwall 3 inverter

5,681 kWh of clean electricity annually

13.5 kWh battery storage systems

Colour - black

Inverter & Battery Storage

Manufacturer - Tesla

Model - Tesla Powerwall 3 Inverter - 11.04kW (Uncapped) Config

Quantity - 1

Product Warranty - 10 Years

Efficiency - 97.5%

Rated Power - 11.0kW

Type - Hybrid

Phase - Three Phase

MPPT Count - 3

Max DC Inputs - 6

Weight - 130kg

The proposed site plan locates the solar array within the rear garden, immediately beyond the cottage and adjacent to the existing tool shed. The panels are arranged as a single ground-mounted array and are positioned behind the existing low wall and within the established garden setting. The proposed location makes use of an area already contained by the existing garden boundaries and vegetation, thereby avoiding any attachment to, or physical intervention in, the fabric of the listed building.

The proposed elevations demonstrate that the PV array is a low-level intervention within the garden. The **Southeast Elevation** shows the panels positioned behind the existing low wall and screened to a significant degree by the established vegetation and hedging within and around the site. The **Southwest Section-Elevation** further illustrates the relationship between the proposed panels, the existing low wall, the garden and the cottage. The drawings indicate that the installation remains visually separate from the historic building and does not alter the roofscape or principal elevations of the listed cottage.

The proposal also includes a Tesla Powerwall 3 inverter and battery storage system, located within the side garden as indicated on the proposed site plan. The battery and inverter are associated with the proposed PV system and will enable electricity generated on site to be stored for later use. The proposal also includes the removal of the existing **ash tree**, which is identified on the drawings as a tree to be removed. The tree is located towards the rear/side garden and is shown on both the proposed site plan and proposed elevations. Its removal is proposed because the tree is overpowering the adjacent trees and is considered to require removal for arboricultural safety reasons. The removal also facilitates the proposed location of the solar array.

Importantly, **no photovoltaic panels are proposed on the listed cottage itself**. There is no proposal to alter the roof coverings, roof form, chimneys, windows, doors, external walls or other historic fabric of the listed building. The proposed installation is therefore physically separate from the listed building and is intended to minimise any impact on its architectural and historic interest.

The existing site arrangement, including the cottage, driveway, garden boundaries, hedges and existing low wall, is otherwise retained. The proposed drawings indicate that the existing low wall remains in place and that the established hedging and vegetation continue to provide enclosure and screening to the rear garden. The proposal has therefore been designed as a discreet, low-level and reversible intervention within the garden, rather than an alteration to the historic fabric of the listed building. The positioning of the PV array away from the cottage, combined with the existing boundary vegetation and low wall, reduces its visibility from the surrounding area and helps to maintain the established character of the site.

The installation will provide the property with a renewable source of electricity and battery storage, supporting its continued and sustainable residential use and reducing reliance on electricity generated from fossil fuels. The proposal therefore seeks to improve the environmental performance of the property while avoiding unnecessary intervention in the historic fabric of the Grade II listed building.

6. Photographs



Main southeast elevation, viewed from the adjacent pasture, showing the long straw thatched roof, eyebrow dormers and traditional stone, brick and rendered walls.



The south-west elevation illustrates the traditional gable end constructed in sarsen stone with the thatched roof extending over the historic single-storey form and later side extension.



The rear elevation shows the historic extensions and lean-to additions, together with the varied use of render, brick and sarsen stone characteristic of the building's evolution.



View of the rear garden showing the open lawn, mature hedgerows and trees that provide screening and define the domestic curtilage.



Aerial view of the property and its curtilage, illustrating the relationship between the listed cottage, outbuildings, rear garden and the proposed location of the ground-mounted solar array.



Rear garden showing the proposed location of the photovoltaic (PV) solar panels.



Ash Trees Photographs



Ash tree 1



Ash tree 2



Ash tree 3



Ash tree 4



Location Tesla Powerwall against the outbuilding.

7. Heritage context and planning policy

Heritage context/ Assessment of Significance

The application site is located at 41 Lockeridge, Lockeridge, Wiltshire, within the historic settlement of Lockeridge. The property is a Grade II listed building, listed on 2 September 1986 under List Entry No. 1033805. The statutory list describes the building as two cottages, now one house, dating from the early nineteenth century. It is constructed principally of Sarsen stone with brick dressings, with a thatched roof, and comprises a single-storey building with accommodation within the roof space. The listing also identifies the building's traditional entrances, panelled doors, windows within cambered brick openings, thatched attic windows, brick stacks and the later single-storey extension/outbuilding to the west.

The special architectural and historic interest of the listed building therefore derives principally from its traditional vernacular character, materials, construction, form and detailing, together with its historic plan form and contribution to the historic character of Lockeridge. The use of Sarsen stone, brick and thatch, the low-scale form and roofscape, traditional openings and chimneys are important elements of its architectural character.

The setting of the listed building also contributes to its significance. The cottage sits within an established garden plot characterised by mature hedges, garden vegetation, an existing low wall, driveway and ancillary garden structures. The existing site plan demonstrates that the

cottage is surrounded by garden areas, with the rear garden extending behind the building and containing the existing tool shed and mature vegetation.

The wider setting is also important. The property lies within the Lockeridge Conservation Area, designated in 1985. The Conservation Area designation recognises the special architectural and historic interest of the settlement and its surroundings. The character of the wider area is strongly influenced by traditional vernacular buildings, historic garden plots, boundary treatments, mature vegetation and the relationship between the settlement and the surrounding rural landscape.

The site is also situated within the North Wessex Downs National Landscape. The National Landscape is characterised by a historic landscape that has evolved through successive periods of human occupation and land management, with historic settlement patterns, lanes, fields, woods and traditional villages and hamlets contributing to its distinctive character. Therefore, the significance of the affected heritage assets can be considered in terms of their architectural, historic and aesthetic interest, together with the contribution made by their setting.

The proposed development has therefore been designed to retain these characteristics. The solar array is located within the rear garden rather than on the roof of the listed cottage. The proposed site plan places the twelve panels behind the cottage and adjacent to the existing tool shed, with the existing hedges, garden vegetation and low wall retained.

The proposed elevations demonstrate that the panels remain a low-level element within the garden setting, rather than becoming a dominant feature of the listed building or its principal roofscape. The proposed arrangement also avoids introducing equipment onto the historic fabric of the cottage.

Planning policy

Legislative and Planning Policy Context

The proposal is considered within the legislative and planning policy framework for the protection of designated heritage assets.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 provides the principal statutory framework. Section 16 requires special regard to be given to the desirability of preserving a listed building and its setting, while Section 72 requires special attention to be paid to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Chapter 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, requires applicants to identify and assess the significance of heritage assets and their settings and to take account of this significance when considering proposals. Great weight should be given to the conservation of designated heritage assets, and any harm should be clearly justified. National Planning Policy Framework – Historic Environment.

At the local level, Wiltshire Core Policy 58: Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment seeks to protect and enhance Wiltshire's important heritage assets and requires development to be sensitive to the character and significance of listed buildings, Conservation Areas and their settings.

The assessment has also had regard to Historic England's Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance, which promotes a proportionate assessment of the significance of heritage assets and the potential effects of proposed change.

In applying this policy framework, consideration has been given to both elements of the proposal. The PV array is located within the rear garden, away from the historic fabric and principal elevation of the listed cottage, while the Tesla Powerwall 3 inverter and battery are located within the side garden. The existing hedges and low wall are retained, helping to maintain the established enclosure and setting of the listed building.

The proposal also includes the removal of the existing ash tree, which is identified on the proposed drawings as an ash tree to be removed. The tree forms part of the established garden setting, and its removal represents a limited change to that setting. The tree is self-set and its removal is proposed for arboricultural safety reasons, while also facilitating the proposed PV array. The retention of the existing hedges, low wall and wider garden structure helps to mitigate the landscape and visual effect of the tree's removal.

Overall, the proposal has been designed to minimise intervention and visual change to the heritage asset and its setting, while enabling the sustainable use of the listed cottage and the introduction of renewable energy generation.

8. Conclusion

The proposed installation of solar panels to the rear of the Grade II Listed Cottage to minimise heritage and visual impact, and removal of an unwanted ash tree represent a limited and carefully located intervention within the existing garden setting. The works do not involve alterations to the principal building fabric or roofscape and, subject to appropriate installation and maintenance, can be removed in the future without permanent alteration to the listed building. The proposal is therefore considered to preserve the special architectural and historic interest of the listed cottage while seeking to maintain the character and appearance of its historic garden setting, the Lockeridge Conservation Area and the wider landscape context.

In conclusion, we would submit that the proposal is acceptable in all respects and request that Listed Building Consent is granted.