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PLANNING

ROMNEY, MARFORD
HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Heritage Impact Assessment has been prepared to consider the impact of the installation of solar panels on a modern garage within the curtilage of a listed building. The application site relates to the Grade II listed Romney Cottage and is located within the Marford Conservation Area.
- 1.2 The relevant guidance states that Heritage Impact Assessments should be proportionate to the proposal and significance of the heritage asset. The application site is adjacent and close to a number of Grade II listed buildings, in addition to Romney Cottage, and is in a prominent position in the streetscene and the Marford Conservation Area. The proposal however is relatively minor and does not impact on the fabric of any historic building, with any impact relating to setting only.
- 1.3 This document considers the potential impact of the proposal on the relevant historic assets and should be read in conjunction with the accompanying Design, Access and Planning Statement.

2. Legislation, planning policy and guidance

2.1 The key relevant legislation which relates to the historic environment in Wales is set out in the following:

- Historic Environment (Wales) Act 2016;
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; and
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

National planning policy

Planning Policy Wales Edition 11, 2021

2.2 This sets out the national planning framework for Wales and paragraphs 6.1 to 6.1.32 relate to the historic environment, setting out the Welsh Government's objectives in relation to this. Paragraph 6.1.5 states:

"The planning system must take into account the Welsh Government's objectives to protect, conserve, promote and enhance the historic environment as a resource for the general well-being of present and future generations. The historic environment is a finite, non-renewable and shared resource and a vital and integral part of the historical and cultural identity of Wales. It contributes to economic vitality and culture, civic pride, local distinctiveness and the quality of Welsh life. The historic environment can only be maintained as a resource for future generations if the individual historic assets are protected and conserved".

National planning guidance

2.3 Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by guidance contained in Technical Advice Note 24: The Historic Environment and best practice guidance on the historic environment published by Cadw.

Technical Advice Note 24 The Historic Environment, May 2017

2.4 The purpose of this Technical Advice Note is to provide guidance on how the planning system considers the historic environment during development plan preparation and decision making on planning applications that impact on the historic environment. It provides specific guidance on how the various aspects of the historic environment should be considered during this process.

Local planning policy

2.5 The adopted development plan for the area is the Wrexham Unitary Local Development Plan (UDP) 1996-2011 (adopted February 2005). The main relevant policies in respect of the historic environment are:

- Strategic policy PS2
'Development must not materially detrimentally affect countryside, landscape/townscape character, open space, or the quality of the natural environment.'
- EC7 Conservation Areas
'Within, and in close proximity to, conservation areas, the priority will be to preserve and/ or enhance those buildings, structures, streets, trees, open spaces, archaeological remains, views, and other elements which contribute to the unique character of the area. New buildings and alterations or additions to existing buildings in conservation areas, whether listed as of special architectural or historic interest or not, must reflect the design and character of the area as a whole and the form, scale, detailing and materials of existing buildings.'
- EC9 Listed Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest
'Alterations or additions to, and development or redevelopment within the curtilage of, buildings or structures listed as of special architectural or historic interest must respect the setting and character of the listed buildings or structures.'
- EC11 Archaeology
'Development which would adversely affect the site or setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument or archaeological site of national significance will not be permitted. Development that directly affects non-scheduled sites of archaeological importance will only be permitted if an archaeological investigation has been carried out to determine the nature, extent and significance of the remains, and this investigation indicates that in-situ preservation is not justified, and a programme of excavation and recording has been agreed. Development will also be carefully controlled to ensure that the setting of non-scheduled sites of archaeological importance is not harmed where appropriate'.

2.6 Wrexham County Borough Council's local planning guidance notes on Conservation Areas is of relevance, and there is a Marford Conservation Area Assessment and Management Plan (adopted 2012).

Cadw Guidance

- 2.7 Cadw have also produced guidance in relation to managing change in the historic environment which includes the following:
- Conservation Principles for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales, 2001;
 - Heritage Impact Assessments, May 2017;
 - Setting of Historic Assets in Wales, May 2017;
 - Managing Change to Listed Buildings in Wales, May 2017;
 - Managing Historic Character in Wales, May 2017; and
 - Historic Environment Records in Wales: Compilation and Use (Statutory Guidance), May 2017.
- 2.8 Cadw have also produced a document entitled 'Renewable Energy and Your Historic Building'. This states that *'when choosing a micro-generation system it is important to understand your energy needs; it is equally important to have a clear understanding of the architectural, historic or archaeological significance of the location of the installation'*. It goes on to say that in terms of siting, *'Wherever possible, micro-generation equipment should be installed away from the main historic buildings or key feature of the site... It is preferable to install solar panels and PV arrays on outbuildings – such as garages – or as free-standing units'*.

3. The site and context

- 3.1 Romney Cottage is a Grade II building of two storeys that forms part of a row of five cottages in a crescent shape, all of which are Grade II listed. The list description can be found in Appendix A. The front elevation faces the road that runs through Marford and up Marford Hill, and to the rear is an area that is partially enclosed by the cottages and comprises outdoor amenity areas and parking for the cottages, together with a modern timber clad garage with a sedum roof. The garage is within the ownership of Romney Cottage and it is proposed to locate the solar panels on this garage. Figure 3.1 shows the location of the application site and the garage, and Figure 3.2 shows the location of the associated listed buildings that comprise Romney Terrace, including Romney Cottage.

Figure 3.1 Aerial image showing location of application site

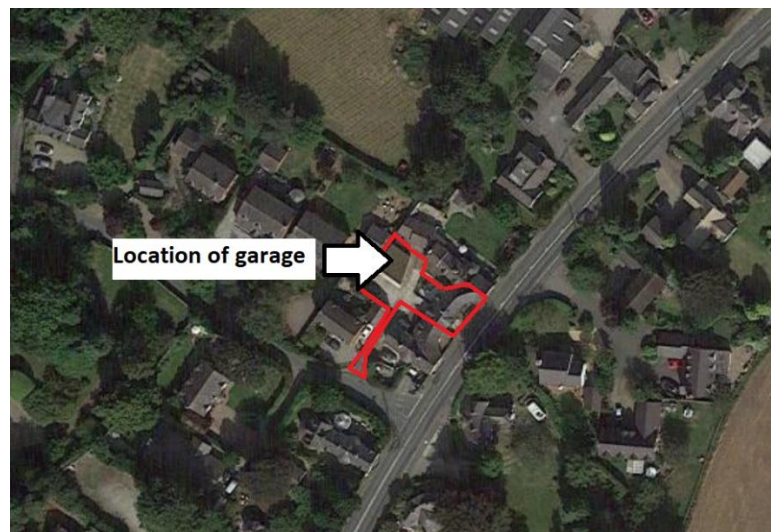


Figure 3.2 Map extract showing listed buildings in Romney Terrace



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- 3.2 The area to the rear of the cottages is accessed via a driveway from Springfield Lane, between Myrtle Cottage and a modern red brick dwelling, with an outbuilding to the rear. The driveway is flanked by stone walls at the entrance. To the northwest of the application site is a further red brick modern dwelling and associated garage which is separated from the application site by a close boarded fence. The area on the western side of the application site has therefore been considerably altered and the context of the setting changed as a result. In addition to this, permission was granted in 2019 for the erection of a contemporary garage and it is this garage where the solar panels are proposed to be located. Figures 2.3 to 2.7 show the application site and its context.

Figure 2.3 Front elevation of Romney Terrace



Figure 2.4 Rear elevation of Romney Cottage



Figure 2.5 Jasmine Cottage (with Romney Cottage on right)



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Figure 2.6 Garage viewed from south



Figure 2.7 Front elevation of garage



- 3.3 As stated above, the application site is located within the Marford Conservation Area which was designated in 1971, with the boundary subsequently reviewed and amended in 1999 and 2012.
- 3.4 The Marford Conservation Area Appraisal refers to Romney Terrace stating '*Also of significance is Romney Terrace, the interesting and unusual crescent shaped frontage, symmetrical design and close proximity to the roadside making it an eye-catching building and a feature of interest in the streetscape*'. The terrace has group value with other nearby listed buildings including Roftlee and Beech and Holly Cottages.

Planning history

- 3.5 There is some relevant planning history that relates to the application site and is shown in Table 3.1. Listed building application P/2019/0051 involved the demolition of small brick outbuildings, and the erection of a garage of a contemporary design with timber cladding and a sedum green roof, as can be seen in Figures 2.6 and 2.7.

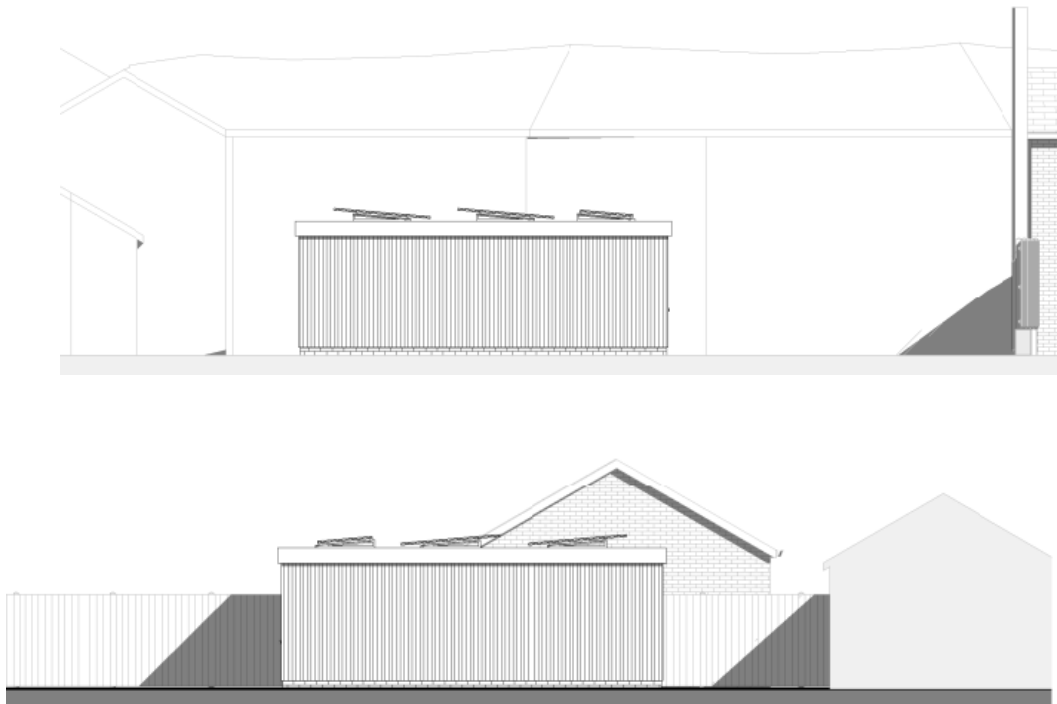
Table 3.1 Relevant planning history

Reference	Development	Decision
P/2014/0365	Listed building consent for internal alterations and general repairs and improvements (included removal of sheds)	Approved with conditions 7 th October 2014
P/2018/1068	Erection of garage	Approved with conditions 4 th December 2019
P/2019/0051	Demolition of outbuilding and erection of garage (listed building consent)	Approved with conditions 18 th June 2019
P/2019/0812	Approval of condition 3 of P/2018/1068 (external materials)	Approved 2 nd December 2019
P/2019/0861	Non Material Amendment - design amendments to reduce the pitch of the sloping section of the green roof	Approved with conditions 4 th December 2019

4. The proposed development

- 4.1 The proposed development is the installation of a number of photovoltaic solar panels on the modern garage shown in Figures 2.6 and 2.7 above. Due to the location of the garage and its close proximity to a number of listed buildings, the proposal does have the potential to impact on the setting of these.
- 4.2 It is proposed to install three photovoltaic (PV) arrays as can be seen in Figure 4.1 which shows the roof plan, and it is intended to use MAXEON 6 AC solar panels. Appendix B contains a brochure relating to these. The panels will be angled as can be seen in Figure 4.1, which shows the proposed side elevations, in order to make best use of the sunlight.

Figure 4.1 Proposed side elevations of garage with solar panels installed



- 4.3 The highest point of the solar panels above the roof will be 255mm, and they are to be laid at a 5 degree slope. This will in effect slightly increase the height of the garage, but this will be seen in context with the surrounding buildings from all sides.
- 4.4 The installation of renewable energy technologies is often possible in historic environments, but the type and location of these needs to be carefully considered. As stated in the Cadw guidance on renewable energy, *‘Wherever possible, micro-generation equipment should be installed away from the main historic buildings or key*

feature of the site... It is preferable to install solar panels and PV arrays on outbuildings – such as garages – or as free-standing units’. This is proposed in this case, and in addition to this, it is proposed to locate the solar panels on a modern garage of a contemporary design that is already in situ and provides a clear contrast between the old and the new. It is important that the appropriate installation of renewable energy technologies is encouraged in historic locations, where appropriate, to assist in meeting the sustainability agenda and reducing reliance on fossil fuels, and to reduce running costs for historic buildings.

- 4.5 It would be appropriate for the details of the services (e.g. cables) that will connect the solar panels to the building being served by them to be provided in order to ensure that they won’t result in an impact on the character of any listed building, or on potential below ground archaeology that could be present.

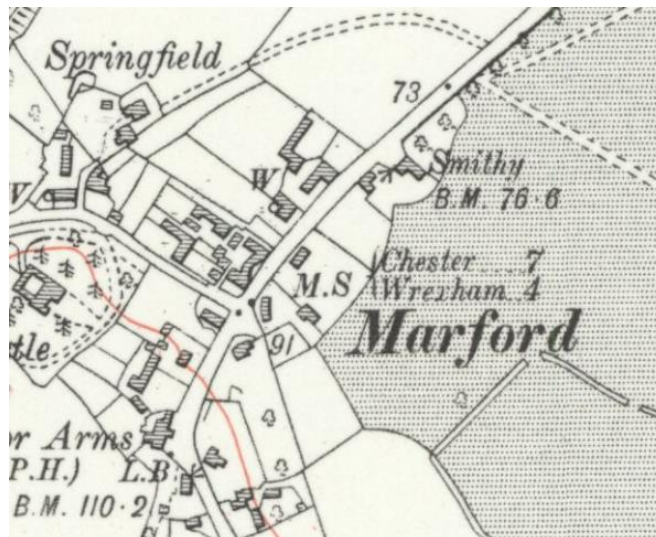
5. History and development

- 5.1 The cottages that form Romney Terrace were constructed during the early 19th Century in the Cottage Orn  style, which is a style of architecture relating to rustic stylised cottages of the late 18th and early 19th Century. They were constructed by John Boydell who was a steward for the Trevalyn Estate, and who had the opportunity to purchase land within the village. Although there are five separate dwellings within the terrace, it is believed that it originally comprised 14 separate dwellings.
- 5.2 Figure 5.1 shows a map extract from 1878 that clearly shows the curved form of the building, and also long gardens stretching to the northwest broadly in line with the five cottages that are present today. Several outbuildings are also present. By 1914, development had occurred within the garden areas as can be seen in Figure 5.2.

Figure 5.1 OS map extract (1878)



Figure 5.2 OS map extract (1914)



6. Significance and contribution of setting

- 6.1 The proposal does not relate to an historic building itself, with the solar panels to be located on a modern building. However, they are within the setting of several Grade II listed buildings, and could have the potential to affect their setting.
- 6.2 There are four established heritage values that are used to determine the significance of a heritage asset, and these are defined as follows:

Evidential value	The potential of a place to yield evidence about past human activity
Historical value	The ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. This can be illustrative or associative
Aesthetic value	The ways in which people draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place
Communal value	The meaning of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective experience or memory

- 6.3 Understanding the significance of a heritage asset, or part of one, is essential in being able to assess the potential impact of a development. Technical Advice Note 24 The Historic Environment 2017 defines significance as ‘The sum of the cultural and natural heritage values of a place’.
- 6.4 Using the four heritage values above, although the garage is not an historic asset, the wider site can be considered to be of medium significance with the buildings, layout and features telling the story of their domestic and social heritage and the changes that have occurred throughout their history.

Setting

- 6.5 The setting of an historic asset includes the surroundings in which is understood, experienced and appreciated embracing present and past relationships to the surrounding landscape.
- 6.6 The original context and setting of the rear of the five listed buildings that comprise Romney Terrace has already been significantly altered over time. Initially with the

development of the garden areas at the turn of the 20th Century, and later with the more modern housing and then the erection of the contemporary garage, although part of the yard area does remain. The addition of solar PV panels onto the garage, given their orientation, size and angle, together with their relationship with the listed buildings means that there will be minimal impact on the setting of the listed buildings. In addition to this there will be no change in the context of the setting as this will remain as that of a modern contemporary structure that provides a contrast between the historic and the new.

- 6.7 For the same reasons, it is not considered that there will be any detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the Marford Conservation Area.

Summary

- 6.8 The potential impact on the development on the four heritage values outlined above is summarised below:

Evidential value	Neutral impact – the proposals will not impact on the fabric of any historic asset
Historical value	Neutral impact – the proposals will not impact on the historical value of any historic asset
Aesthetic value	Neutral impact – the proposals will slightly alter the setting of several listed buildings, but this will not result in an impact on their aesthetic value
Communal value	Neutral impact – the proposals will not impact on the communal value of any historic asset

7. Summary and conclusion

- 7.1 As outlined above, the proposed solar PV panels will be located on an existing modern contemporary structure and therefore no impact on historic fabric will arise from the proposal. In terms of setting, the context of the historic assets has already been altered and no further change will result from the proposals, with no impact on their setting occurring.
- 7.2 For the reasons set out above, it is considered that the proposals are in line with the national and local planning policies and guidance, and will contribute to sustainability principles by incorporating renewable energy technologies in an appropriate manner and location.
- 7.3 It is therefore considered that the proposals are acceptable and appropriate from an historic environment perspective.

APPENDIX A

List description

APPENDIX B

Details of solar panels

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