

Fwd: Solar Panels in Wroxham Conservation Area

Malcolm Allsop <malcolm.allsop@wroxhamparishcouncil.org>

Tue 17/05/2022 11:31

To: Clare Male <clerk@wroxhamparishcouncil.org>; Philip Everett <philip.everett@wroxhamparishcouncil.org>; Elaine Allsop <elaine.allsop@wroxhamparishcouncil.org>

Begin forwarded message:

From: Chris Bennett <Chris.Bennett@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk>

Subject: Solar Panels in Wroxham Conservation Area

Date: 17 May 2022 at 11:24:00 BST

To: "malcolm.allsop@wroxhamparishcouncil.org" <malcolm.allsop@wroxhamparishcouncil.org>

Cc: Phil Courtier <Phil.Courtier@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk>, Helen Mellors <Helen.Mellors@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk>, Cllr Susan Lawn <cllr.Susan.Lawn@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk>

Dear Mr Allsop

I am writing with regard to your recent enquiries to my colleague Phil Courtier and Cllr Lawn concerning installing solar panels on front roof slopes in the Wroxham conservation area.

As you aware, normally, there is no requirement to apply for planning permission to erect solar panels in conservation areas as long as they meets certain conditions – but generally speaking solar panels can be fitted on front and rear roof slopes.

In Wroxham an article 4 was implemented for the Charles Road area which means planning permission is required for alterations to front roof slopes i.e. fronting the highway, waterway or open space. This was brought in to preserve the appearance of the Charles Close area which is characterised by quite open frontages to the street and large, prominent roof slopes – the majority of houses being bungalows and chalet style houses with expansive roofs and dormer windows. The style and appearance of the buildings is an important element which contributes to the area being designated a conservation area.

An Article 4 direction should only be served in exceptional circumstances and does not apply to all conservation areas, so there was an intent when the direction was issued in 2011 to control what could be considered harmful alterations and to preserve the character and appearance of the area which has quite unique characteristics which are different to other areas. At the time the direction would have been subject to public consultation.

Although every case is considered on its own merits and particular situation, installing solar panels on street fronting slopes in the Charles Close area would in most cases be considered harmful to the appearance of the buildings and the positive contribution that they make to the character and appearance of the area. Therefore in most cases homeowners are advised to seek other forms of providing sustainable energy or to install panels in less intrusive areas.

We are aware of the need to make buildings as sustainable as possible, bearing in mind not only climate change but also now rising energy costs. We do seek to find the best solution for installing solar panels (or advising where we can on the acceptability of other forms of sustainable upgrades). Technologies also change quite frequently, and certainly I can envisage in future more sympathetic and smaller or more efficient arrays of solar panels which might well be able to be installed and not change the roof character as much. Solar slates are a good example of a more sympathetic solar panel and certainly consideration would be given to those if a property has existing slates as the roof material.

You have also referred in your emails to the articles on the local listed building consent order that has been put in place by Kensington and Chelsea. This actually only grants consent for the erection of solar panels on rear roof slopes and flat roofs subject to a number of conditions one of which is that they are not erected on front roof slopes facing the highway. It also only applies to listed buildings.

I am happy to answer any more direct questions regarding any buildings if there are any specific cases. If any homeowners do wish to approach us to query where solar panels can be placed (or other energy efficient if planning permission is required for their installation) we would be very happy to advise further.

Regards
Chris Bennett

Chris Bennett
Senior Heritage & Design Officer
t 01508533828e chris.bennett@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk



This email and any attachments are intended for the addressee only and may be confidential. If they come to you in error you must take no action based on them, nor must you copy or show them to anyone. Please advise the sender by replying to this email immediately and then delete the original from your computer. Unless this email relates to Broadland District Council or South Norfolk Council business it will be regarded by the council as personal and will not be authorised by or sent on behalf of the councils. The sender will have sole responsibility for any legal actions or disputes that may arise. We have taken steps to ensure that this email and any attachments are free from known viruses but in keeping with good computing practice, you should ensure they are virus free. Emails sent from and received by members and employees of Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council may be monitored.