

Solar panels - frequently asked questions

A number of queries were raised regarding planning permission and permitted development rights at the Solar Together London information session. These have been incorporated into the FAQs below:

Do you need planning permission to install solar panels?

In many circumstances, solar panels are classed as 'permitted development' and do not require planning permission. Installation of solar panels on a house or block of flats is 'permitted development' provided that:

- the equipment does not protrude more than more than 200mm beyond the wall or roof slope;
- the equipment is not higher than the highest part of the roof (not including the chimney);
- If the building is in a conservation area, the equipment is not installed on a wall that fronts a highway;
- The house or block of flats is not a Listed

Building. subject to the following conditions:

- Equipment is, so far as practicable, sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building;
- Equipment is, so far as practicable, sited so as to minimise its effect on the amenity of the area; and
- Equipment is removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.

If the installation does not meet all of the criteria above, you will need to apply for planning permission.

What if my property is in a conservation area?

If you live in a conservation area, there are additional restrictions to be aware of. Installation of solar equipment on a wall that fronts a highway is not permitted development.

You will also need to pay particular attention to the siting of the equipment, so as to minimise any adverse effect on the appearance of the building. This usually means installing equipment at the back of the house, where it can't be seen from the street. Sometimes the least harmful option is to site the equipment on an extension, outbuilding or rear 'outrigger'. However, this will vary depending on the design, orientation and context of the building.

You will also need to minimise the number of panels and consider the most appropriate type of equipment and arrangement to reduce visual impact.

If you live in a conservation area, you are strongly advised to seek advice from the planning department before carrying out works.

Is there a conservation area map so I can see if my property is in a conservation area?

You can [find out if a property is in a conservation area here](#). You can then add your postcode or address and it will locate your property.

Can I install Solar Panels to a Listed Building?

Installing solar panels on a Listed Building (or a structure within the grounds of a Listed Building) is not permitted development, and will require planning permission. In addition, you will need to obtain Listed Building Consent before you can carry out any works. This is very important, as it is a criminal offence to carry out unauthorised works to a Listed Building.

How can I apply for planning permission?

If planning permission is required to install solar panels on a domestic property, you will need to submit a [householder application for planning permission](#).

You will need to include:

- a location plan
- site plan
- existing and proposed elevations
- roof plan
- details of the proposed installation (for example the manufacturers' brochure/photographs)

Other things to consider

You will also need to check that there are no restrictions on development at the property as a result of:

- any conditions imposed on the original planning permission
- it being covered by what is known as an Article (4) direction
- the deeds of the property listing restrictions that apply

Any of these could have removed 'permitted development' rights for certain types of development. If you are unsure of any possible restrictions applied to your home, [Contact the Planning Team](#) and we will check this for you and let you know whether it is within your 'permitted development' rights or if planning permission is required.

How can I be sure that I what I want to install is 'permitted development'?

Before carrying out any permitted development works, you can apply for a lawful development certificate (LDC). This is not the same as planning permission, but provides formal confirmation that the work is lawful, which gives peace of mind. The Council will check that the works meet the definition for permitted development, and meet all of the relevant conditions. If you should later want to sell your property, an LDC may be helpful to answer queries raised by potential buyers or their legal representatives.

You can apply using the Planning Portal's secure online application service. The application requires a site location plan, accurate scale plans of the existing and proposed property and an application fee of £100. For more information on this, please see [Certificate of Lawfulness](#)

You do not have to apply for a Lawful Development Certificate. However, if you do not, it is your responsibility to ensure that the works meet the definition for permitted development, and that all the conditions are met.

Is there guidance on certification of lawfulness?

You can apply using the Planning Portal's secure online application service [Planning Portal](#). The application requires a site location plan, accurate scale plans of the existing and proposed property and an application fee. You can also download the application form from our Forms and Fees page.

What happens if the installation is not lawful?

If you are in any doubt, we would advise you to apply for a certificate of lawfulness before the installation takes place. If the proposed installation is not considered lawful you will be provided with a comprehensive answer on the reasons for this. At this stage your certificate of lawfulness application can be transferred over to a planning application, and the cost of the Certificate will be deducted from the Planning Application fee.

If you carry out works that do not meet the criteria for permitted development, you could be subject to enforcement action.

If the panels are behind a parapet and cannot be seen from the highway in a conservation area - are these allowed?

It is impossible to give a definitive answer without knowing the exact circumstances. In general, such an arrangement would probably be permitted development (as long as the equipment did not protrude more than 200mm beyond the plane of the roof).

What about PV on a dormer roof?

The installer may not be willing to install on a dormer roof. In terms of planning permission, it is impossible to give a definitive answer without knowing the exact circumstances. However, equipment installed on a dormer would probably appear quite prominent, and would be unlikely to meet the conditions discussed above.

Is there a phone number for conservation area advice and solar PV?

Further queries should be sent via email to: s-planningDTO@haringey.gov.uk. Please include "Solar Together London" in the title on the email. To provide a comprehensive answer please provide the following details:-

- Address of the property
- Description of the installation including number of panels, size of installation

- Photographs to show the roof/location of the property etc.
- Photograph/manufacturers details of the product being installed

Further advice

Planning Portal Guidance on Solar Panels –

www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/solarpanels

The Energy Saving Trust – www.est.org.uk/

The National Energy Foundation – www.nef.org.uk/