

Solar Together – Camden Council Planning Guidance – Non-Domestic

This document outlines the key considerations in relation to planning constraints and what steps will be required before commencing with the installation of solar panels on your property through the Solar Together scheme.

This guidance applies to solar panels mounted on a non-domestic building.

Permitted development

You can perform certain types of work to your property **without** needing to apply for planning permission. These are your "permitted development rights" which are set out in Schedule 2, Part 14 (Renewable energy) of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) (GPDO 2015). These permitted development rights allow the installation of solar panels, subject to conditions outlined in the table below.

If you cannot comply with the conditions, you will need to obtain planning permission for the works.

The rights and conditions that apply will depend on whether your property is in a conservation area, if it is a Listed Building, or if the permitted development rights have been removed by an "Article 4 direction".

What do I need to know about my property?

It is important to understand the planning constraints of your property and the area your premises is within, before you install solar panels.

The keys things to determine are as follows:

- **Is your property in a Conservation Area?**
 - o You can determine this using [Camden's Conservation Area Map](#)
- **Is your property subject to an Article 4 direction?**
 - o You can determine this by visiting [Camden's Article 4 webpage](#).
- **Is your property a listed building?**
 - o This can also be determined using the [Camden's Conservation Area Map](#).

Do I need planning permission?

Based on the planning constraints that you have identified above, this will determine whether or not you will need planning permission and/or listed building consent.

Designation	Planning Permission Required?	Permitted Development Conditions
No Designation	No – permitted development rights apply	Installation not permitted if PV panels equipment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be installed on a wall or a pitched roof, would project more than 200mm from the wall surface or roof slope.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be installed on a flat roof where the highest part of the equipment would be higher than 1m above the highest part of the roof (excluding the chimney). • Mounted on a roof would be within 1m of the external edge of that roof. • Mounted on a wall would be within 1m of a junction of that wall with another wall or with the roof of the building. <p>The following conditions must be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment should be sited, so far as is practicable, to minimise the effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area (discussed below). • When no longer needed the equipment should be removed as soon as reasonably practicable.
Conservation Area	Maybe	<p>All of the above conditions apply and the following. Installation not permitted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment would be installed on a roof slope which fronts the highway; • Equipment would be installed on a wall which fronts the highway.
Conservation Area and Article 4	Maybe	<p>Installation not permitted for buildings in Conservation Areas (CA) covered by Article 4 directions which removes permitted development rights for roof alterations. This applies in the following Article 4 areas: Belsize CA, Hampstead CA, Swiss Cottage CA, Frogna Way (specific properties).</p> <p>If not located in any of the areas above, permitted development rights still apply.</p>
Listed Building	Yes – Listed Building Consent is also required.	<p>More information of how to apply for planning permission and listed building consent is available on Camden Council's website.</p>

How do I minimise the effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area?

The Contractor will complete a survey of your property and identify suitable locations to position the panels. The most adequate location will take into account where the panels will be exposed to the greatest amount of sunlight throughout the day to maximise the electricity produced.

Of the suitable locations identified, the visual impact of the panels will be most significant when positioned on a roof slope and/or wall visible from public views. Where possible, panels should be positioned in an area where they are the least visible, however this may not be reasonably practicable if there is only one suitable roof location.

Further to roof space selection, there are a number of ways the visual impact of panels can be reduced:

- Ensure panels are spaced evenly on the roof slope and/or wall and not in an irregular pattern;
- Ensure the position of the panels would retain even distances to the roof margins (ridge, eaves, party walls) and/or walls margins;
- Place panels behind parapets or roof features where possible (such as chimneys), and where these features do not cause shading issues;
- Run cabling in a position to minimise visibility from the street and adjacent properties;
- Use cabling and cable ducts which are in keeping with the colour of the building exterior (such as black for brick building, white for white rendered building).

These measures and panel placing should be discussed with the Contractor to minimise visual impact of the installation, as required, for works to be considered permitted development.

If you are unsure whether the proposed installation is considered permitted development, or you want to be certain that your installation is lawful, you can apply for a Lawful Development Certificate.

What is a Lawful Development Certificate?

A Lawful Development Certificate (LDC) is a document issued by the Council to confirm that your proposed development complies with permitted development limitations and conditions, and therefore planning permission is not required. You can find more information on [planning portal](#) of what a LDC entitles and what you are required to submit to have a valid application.

You can apply for an LDC using the [Planning Portal's](#) secure online application service. You will have to [pay a fee](#).

Getting a Lawful Development Certificate is worth considering even if you are sure your project is permitted development. 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.

How does this all fit in to the Solar Together process?

Once you accept your offer, a surveyor will visit your property to assess whether your roof is suitable for a solar installation and confirm the number of panels, their location and other details such as cabling locations and colour.

The Contractor will provide a basic panel design for the roof and descriptions of the installation, including a basic drawing of the proposed layout, which can be used to apply for a lawful development certificate, planning permission or listed building consent. An existing plan and section with the roof will also be required, in order to have a valid certificate application (see pro-forma).

Camden's Planning Portal Solar Together Pro Forma provides an outline of the information required for an application to the portal. To expedite the process this should be submitted with any application. It is the resident's responsibility to provide any drawings or information required for a submission via the Planning Portal.

If required, you can search for a registered architect to help with your plans on the [Architects Registration Board website](#).

Do you want to discuss this further?

If you wish to discuss the Solar Together Scheme and funding please call Jackson Bylett – Sustainability Officer on 020 7974 2416 or email Jackson.Bylett@camden.gov.uk.

If you are unsure if your proposal would comply with permitted development requirements, please consider submitting a Certificate of Lawful Development, and a planning officer will contact you to discuss your options.

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