

Solar Together – Camden Council Planning Guidance – Domestic

This document explains the planning requirements and steps you need to take before installing solar panels on your property through Solar Together.

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

Permitted development

- A. The installation, alteration or replacement of microgeneration solar PV or solar thermal equipment on –
 - a. *A dwelling house or a block of flats**; or
 - b. *A building situated within the curtilage of a dwelling house, a block of flats or outbuildings.*

**This does not apply to individual flats.*

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 where you live, before you install solar panels.

- **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 to install solar panels on your property.

Designation	Planning Permission Required?	Permitted Development Conditions
No Designation	No – permitted development rights apply	<p>Installation not permitted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PV Panels would project more than 200mm from the roof slope or wall surface, when measured perpendicular with the external surface of the roof slope or wall. • PV Panels would project beyond the highest part of the roof (excluding the chimney). • PV panels would be installed on a building that is within the grounds of a listed building or on a site designated as a scheduled monument. <p>The following conditions must be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment on a building 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 (Explained below). • When no longer needed, equipment should be removed as soon as reasonably practicable.
Conservation Area	No – permitted development rights apply	<p>All of the above conditions apply, with one additional requirement. Installation not permitted if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The panels would be fitted to a wall which fronts a 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's Solar Panel webpage.</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 roof slopes 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 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 condition.

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 Planning Department 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 of what a LDC entails and what you are required to submit on the [Planning Portal](#).

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 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 speed up 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 Abigail Roberts – Sustainability Officer on 020 7974 1921 or email Abigail.roberts@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.

END OF DOCUMENT