

Installing Solar Panels

The installation of solar panels and equipment on residential buildings and land may be 'permitted development' with no need to apply for planning permission. To benefit from these permitted development rights, the limits and conditions outlined below must be met. If you cannot comply with the conditions, you will need to obtain planning permission.

Permitted development rights also apply to properties within conservation areas, with the exception of those covered by an [Article 4 Direction](#). This removes permitted development rights for specified works to a building within a conservation area, including solar panel installations. In these cases you must apply for planning permission.

To find out if you can install solar panels within a conservation area please check with the planning department first by using our [Duty Planning Officer Service](#). Solar panels on listed buildings require planning permission and listed building consent.

Solar panels mounted on a house or a block of flats, or on a building within the curtilage of a house or block of flats

Permitted Development Rights

To install solar panels and equipment under permitted development rights on a house, a block of flats, or on a building within the grounds of a house or flats you must comply with the following conditions:

- Panels cannot be installed above the highest part of the roof (excluding the chimney) and should project no more than 200mm from the roof slope or wall surface
- The panels must not be installed on a listed building or a building that is within the garden or grounds of a listed building
- If your property is in a conservation area panels must not be fitted to a wall which fronts a highway. This includes roads, paths and public rights of way
- 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 (see further detail below)
- When no longer needed equipment should be removed as soon as reasonably practicable

Note - If you are a leaseholder you may need to get permission from your landlord, freeholder or management company.

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

In identifying suitable locations to position any proposed panels, a contractor will often consider the most adequate location based on where the panels will be exposed to the greatest amount of sunlight throughout the day to maximise their efficiency.

Of the suitable locations identified, the visual impact of the panels will be most significant when positioned on roof slopes visible from public views. Wherever 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 evenly spaced 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;
- Use cabling and cable ducts which are in keeping with the colour of the building exterior.

The location of panels and measures outlined above should be discussed with your contractor to minimise the visual impact of the installation and to accord with the permitted development requirements.

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.

Stand-alone solar equipment (panels not on a building but within the grounds of a house or block of flats)

Permitted Development Rights

To install stand-alone solar panels and equipment under permitted development rights within the grounds of a house or a block of flats you must comply with the following conditions:

- Stand-alone solar equipment should be sited, so far as is practicable, to minimise its effect on the amenity of the area
- When no longer needed equipment should be removed as soon as reasonably practicable
- No part of the installation should be higher than 4 metres
- The installation should be at least 5 metres from the boundary of the property
- The size of the array should be no more than 9 square metres, or 3 metres wide by 3 metres deep
- Panels should not be installed within the boundary of a listed building
- if your property is in a conservation area no part of the solar installation should be nearer to any highway bounding the property than the part of the property that is nearest to that highway

In addition to the above conditions:

- Only the first stand-alone solar installation will be permitted development. Further installations will require planning permission.

Note - If you are a leaseholder you may need to get permission from your landlord, freeholder or management company.

Building Regulations

If you wish to install a solar panel on your roof building regulations will normally apply.

Where can I find more information?

The solar panels section of the national [Planning Portal website](#) includes detailed guidance and information on installing solar panels.

Can I get confirmation that I do not require planning permission?

Apply for a [Lawful Development Certificate](#) to prove an existing or proposed solar panel is lawful. This is an application whereby an application form and relevant plans are submitted to demonstrate whether the proposed development complies with the permitted development limitations and conditions.

Am I likely to get planning permission?

To find out whether your proposal is likely to be accepted, or if you require advice and support to make a planning application, you can apply for [pre-application advice](#).

How do I apply for planning permission?

You can apply online through the [Planning Portal website](#). You can find out what information you are required to submit with your application on the [Islington Council website](#).

Further advice

If you need further advice about whether you need planning permission you can use our [Duty Planning Officer Service](#).