

GUIDANCE NOTE: SOLAR PANELS ON ROOFS

Placing solar panels on the roof of your house or flat, or a building within the grounds of your house or flat, is considered in most cases 'permitted development' whether your home is in a conservation area or otherwise

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/596/contents/made>.

This means that in general there is no need to seek planning permission from St Albans City and District Council to proceed, subject to certain conditions. Solar panels are permitted development if they:

- a) Will not stick out in front of the building, when measured horizontally from the wall or roof slope, by more than 20cm.
- b) Will not be positioned so that they are higher than the main ridge line of the roof, or higher than the highest flat roof where roofs on the building are flat. NB Chimneys, firewalls, parapet walls and other protrusions above the main roof ridge line or flat roof cannot be counted when considering the height of the highest part of the roof of the existing house or flat.
- c) Will, so far as practicable, be sited to minimise their effect on the external appearance of the building.
- d) Will, so far as practicable, be sited to minimise their effect on the amenity (attractiveness) of the area.
- e) Are removed as soon as reasonably practicable when they are no longer needed.

In addition, solar panels cannot be installed:

- f) Within a conservation area on a wall which faces the road.
- g) On a site designated as a scheduled monument, or on a listed building (including any building within the listed building's grounds).

If there is any doubt regarding compliance with a) to g) above, we recommend that you apply to the council for paid pre-application planning advice

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/pre-application-advice> or a lawful development certificate (LDC) before starting works. <https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/application-forms-and-validation-checklists>

Please note points c & d above, which are very important when thinking about maintaining the quality of our conservation areas. We would always encourage people to site panels on the rear roof slope or on a rear flat roof, recognising that this is not always possible. Some panels are more visually intrusive than others, so we would also encourage you to try to source panels that are less conspicuous (colour and metal stripping are particularly noticeable).

Additionally, if your house is located within an Article 4 direction area which restricts permitted development rights, you may need planning permission to make any alterations to the roof regardless of the above. You can find out if your home is covered by an Article 4 direction by going to the council's website:

<https://www.stalbans.gov.uk/article-4-direction-areas>.