



Solar Energy Collectors: Planning Guidance

The term *solar energy collectors*, here, covers solar hot water systems and solar electric (photovoltaic) systems.

Oxford City Council is keen to encourage the use of sustainable forms of energy such as solar energy. This leaflet is for householders who need to know whether they require planning permission to install solar energy collectors at their home. It does not apply to buildings other than dwelling houses, flats or maisonettes. For advice regarding non-residential buildings please contact Oxford City Councils Planning Control and Conservation section on the number printed at the end of the leaflet.

Dwelling Houses

Most houses enjoy permitted development rights, which means that certain works can be carried out without the need for planning permission from the City Council.

Under permitted development rights, alterations to a roof are permitted, provided that they do not enlarge the roof space or alter the shape of the roof. Oxford City Council has taken the view that, provided they do not **significantly** project above the existing roof plane and are not of an **unusual design**, solar energy collectors would normally fall within permitted development rights and therefore planning permission will not be required.

Each proposal for solar energy collectors is likely to be different, but as a general guide, Oxford City Council considers that energy collectors which project less than 20cm from the existing roof are not significant and therefore would not require planning permission. Where a projection of more than 20cm is proposed, you are advised to contact the Planning Control and Conservation section who will advise you if planning permission is needed.

If you require written confirmation that planning permission is not required, please write to the Planning Control and Conservation section at the address below, with full details, including a map identifying your house, details of the solar energy collector and an indication of where on the roof you intend to place the solar energy collector. Having written confirmation that planning permission was not required can be useful if you ever decide to sell the property.

In some cases however, permitted development rights are removed when planning permission is granted for the houses. This normally applies only to more modern properties. If you are concerned that these may have been removed, please contact the Planning Control and Conservation section who will confirm this.

Where planning permission is required, you will need to fill out an application form and submit full details of the proposal. There is a fee attached to making a planning application.

Flats and Maisonettes do not enjoy the benefit of permitted development rights. You are therefore recommended to contact the Planning Control and Conservation section for advice on whether planning permission would be required.

Conservation Areas

If your property is within a conservation area, your permitted development rights are not affected. However the City Council may also have designated the area as an **Article 4** area, removing certain rights. If you think this may be the case, please contact the Planning Control and Conservation section for advice.

Listed Buildings

If your house is listed, any works which affect the character of the property may need listed building consent. You are therefore recommended to contact the Planning Control and Conservation section before installing solar energy collectors on a listed building.

Grants

Through the Oxford Solar Initiative, Oxford City Council may be able to give guidance about technical issues, help get quotations and guide you through applications for grants that may be available. Please contact the Oxford Solar Initiative at the address below for detail on this.

Contacts

Planning Control and Conservation
Oxford City Council
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St. Ebbes Street
Oxford OX1 1PT

01865 252513

planning@oxford.gov.uk

Oxford Solar Initiative

01865 252197

www.oxfordsolar.org.uk