

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council,
Hinckley Hub,
Rugby Road,
Hinckley
Leics,
LE10 0FR

Application for the determination of prior approval

22 April 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Notification of prior approval for the installation of Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the roofs of Heath Lane Academy, Heath Lane, Earl Shilton, LE9 7PD.

We are aware that whilst the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 under Part 14 Class J allows for permitted development of solar PV panels with a generating capacity of up to 1 megawatt on the roofs of non-domestic buildings, there are several restrictions, limitations and conditions.

These have been considered and are addressed below:

- To show that the proposed installation does constitute permitted development and
- To assist in the prior approval process.

This notification is therefore accompanied by:

- 00 Prior Notification Approval
- 01 Design and Access Supporting Statements
- 02 Proposed design
- 03 Site & Building location plan
- 04 Arrangement of panels
- 05 Supporting images
- 06 Roof Cross Section
- 07 Example of a standard panel data sheet
- 08 Anti-glare declaration

Solar options for Schools Ltd. Company registration no: 09812345 trading as SolarforSchools.co.uk is supported by:

Permitted development assessment:

Given that the solar panels would be installed on the flat roofs of the school buildings (see Proposed design 02), the proposed development can be considered under Part 14, Class J (c,) as “*the installation, alteration or replacement of other solar PV equipment on the roof of a building*”.

Site

Heath Lane Academy is one of many schools’ part of the United Learning Trust. It is located in the town of Earl Shilton and can be accessed from Heath Lane in the south. The school site extends to nearly 9 hectares of land with the majority of area being used as playing fields. The permitter of the school property has large trees and bushes that are of similar height as neighbouring properties, if not taller, and so visibility into the school premises is beyond difficult. The proposed installation is an extension to the existing system on one of the school roofs with the current proposal making use of every other roof with panels positioned towards the south, east and west. The proposed installation will be unseen by surrounding and neighbouring properties because of the tall trees and bushes. Therefore, the panels will silently generate renewable energy for the benefit of the school and will not under any circumstances impact the amenity of the area (see 05 Supporting images).

Neither the school building, nor its curtilage, are in a Conservation Area, National Park, AONB or a World Heritage site.

Description of the proposed development

It is proposed to install around 600 solar photovoltaic panels on the flat roofs, with a total generation capacity of about 280kWp. The proposed installation will help the school in its ambition to maximise on the potential of on-site for zero-carbon electricity generation as part of its wider decarbonisation strategy.

Design of the proposed development

The layout of the panels of the proposed installation are spatially arranged in such a way that the appearance will adhere to permitted development and prior notice requirements.

- A. One metre margin for non-residential properties
- B. Below 1MW

(A) One metre roof margin

To comply with permitted development and prior notice criteria, the layout of the panels on the flat roof areas is spatially arranged in such a way that the solar panels would be offset by at least 1 metre from the external edge of the roofs (Arrangement of panels 04).

The panels will be mounted on ballasted frames that rest on padding to protect the underlying roof membrane at an angle of 10 degrees. To comply with permitted development J.1 Part (C) and Part (B): “the solar panels would need to be off-set by at least 1 metre from the external edges (Arrangement of panels 04) and not be higher than 1 metre above the highest point of the roof (excluding chimneys)”. In fact, according to the proposed tilt of the panels they will be less than 0.3 metres high (Roof cross section 06) and so J1. Part (C) and Part (B) will be complied with.

(B) Below the 1MW size

With around 600 panels and a total capacity to generate around 280kWp of renewable solar electricity, the proposed design falls well within the 1 megawatt permitted under the legislation for a solar PV installation to be recognised as permitted development on a school. Please note that the exact number and total capacity will depend on the panels and their wattage at the time of installation, but the installation will only be on the roof areas indicated and any change will be 'de minimus' i.e. of such a small scale to not be materially different to this prior notification.

Notification of Prior Approval

Although the installation is classed as permitted development, under Class J (c.) the development requires Prior Approval from the Local Planning Authority as the 600 panels and capacity of around 280kWp, is greater than the permitted development capacity of 50kWp. As such please find more details as to

- A. Design and external appearance of the development and in particular,
- B. Impact on neighbouring land users and the likely impact of glare and glint

(A) Design and Appearance

The panels will be mounted on a ballasted frame that sits on pads to protect the underlying roof membrane. As shown on the Roof Cross Section Drawing (06), they will not be higher than one metre from the highest part of the building, excluding chimney.

The solar panels would therefore be of a standard design and appearance, complementary to the character of the school buildings (see 07). The visual appearance of the solar panels is considered appropriate and positive for the school buildings:

- enhancing the visionary appearance of the site as an up-to-date centre for learning while creating responsible citizens for tomorrow's world with an appreciation for their surroundings and a duty of care towards the environment.
- The panels could therefore have a very positive impact on the character of the building, while having no identifiable detrimental impact on the surrounding area.

(B) Impact on Neighbouring Land Occupants

The school site is completely hidden by the tall trees and bushes growing along the site boundary. Therefore there is no possibility for impact from the proposed solar arrays toward neighbouring and adjacent land occupiers (see 05 Supporting images).

Summary

In summary, the proposed scheme to install around 280kWp of solar on the roofs of Heath Lane Academy meets the criteria for permitted development under Part 14 Class J (c) of the Town and County (General Permitted Development) Order 2015. Class J (c) is subject to prior approval by the



Local Planning Authority, and therefore, the necessary information required for prior approval also accompanies this notification. This includes evidence to show:

- the suitability of the design and appearance of the proposed installation
- that it will have a positive impact on the character of the building
- that no overall detrimental impact on neighbouring land users is expected

We would be grateful for your written prior approval towards the proposal of this installation.

Yours faithfully,

Ardesb Sarangam
Planning Project Manager
Solar Options for Schools Limited