

## **Design and Access Statement**

Roof-Mounted Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Installation  
The Copt Oak Public House  
Whitwick Road, Markfield, Leicestershire, LE67 9QB  
Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

### **1. Introduction**

This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for the installation of roof-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels to The Copt Oak Public House, located on Whitwick Road, Markfield, Leicestershire, LE67 9QB, within the administrative area of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council.

The proposed development comprises the installation of solar PV panels and associated equipment to generate renewable electricity for use within the public house. The development supports national and local planning objectives relating to climate change mitigation, energy efficiency, and sustainable development, while maintaining the existing lawful use and character of the premises.

### **2. Site Description and Context**

#### **2.1 The Application Site**

The application site is an established public house operated by Marston's, functioning as a licensed premises providing food and beverage services to the public. The site is a freehold property owned and operated as part of Marston's public house estate and serves as a long-standing community facility.

The building includes pitched roof areas finished in Rosemary tiles, which are suitable for the installation of roof-mounted solar PV panels. A limited number of flat roof areas finished in bitumen are present; however, these areas are used for plant or internal accommodation and will not be altered or affected by the proposed development.

#### **2.2 Wider Context**

The Copt Oak is a rural public house located on Whitwick Road, set within a predominantly countryside setting. The site is surrounded by open land and agricultural uses, with limited nearby development. The building functions as a standalone roadside public house and is already a visible and established feature within the local landscape.

The surrounding area is characterised by open views, low building density, and a rural character. The proposed development does not introduce any new built form or alter the existing scale or footprint of the building. The solar PV installation is confined to the existing roof and has been designed to minimise visual impact through its low-profile arrangement, parallel alignment with the roof plane, and use of dark, non-reflective materials.

As the proposal utilises the existing building and does not extend into undeveloped land, it avoids any encroachment into the surrounding countryside and preserves the rural character of the area.

### **3. Design Principles and Concepts**

#### **3.1 Design Objectives**

The design of the proposal is guided by the following principles:

- Minimising visual impact on the host building and surrounding area
- Retaining the existing roof form, materials, and architectural character
- Delivering a high-quality, low-profile renewable energy installation
- Ensuring compliance with Microgeneration Certification Scheme (MCS) requirements and industry best practice
- Maintaining the ongoing operation and accessibility of the public house

#### **3.2 Layout, Scale and Appearance**

The proposal comprises the installation of 44 roof-mounted solar photovoltaic panels with a total system capacity of 20.02 kWp. The panels will be Trina Solar TSM-455-NEG9R.28 Vertex S+ (2024) monocrystalline panels.

The panels will be installed using MCS-approved mounting systems comprising roof hooks and aluminium rail fixings attached to the existing roof structure. The panels will be:

- Installed parallel to the roof plane
- Set slightly above the roof covering to allow ventilation
- Set back a minimum of 400 mm from all roof edges, in accordance with MCS guidance
- Arranged in a regular, orderly layout that follows the existing roof geometry

The panels, mounting clamps, and visible fixings will be finished in black, and the panels will incorporate low-reflective glass. This ensures a discreet appearance and reduces visual prominence when viewed from Whitwick Road and surrounding viewpoints.

There will be no increase in building height beyond the minor projection of the panels above the roof surface, and no changes are proposed to the building footprint or architectural detailing.

#### **3.3 Materials**

The existing Rosemary tiled roof will remain unchanged. The proposed materials comprise:

- Black-framed monocrystalline solar PV panels with low-reflective glass
- MCS-approved aluminium mounting systems
- Discreetly routed cabling and associated electrical equipment

All materials have been selected to blend with the existing roofscape and to ensure a high-quality, durable installation. The panels will be cleaned annually in accordance with Marston's operational requirements.

#### **4. Response to Site Context**

The design has been informed by a detailed appraisal of the site and its surroundings. The use of the existing roof for renewable energy generation represents an efficient and sustainable use of the building, avoiding the need for ground-mounted infrastructure or changes to the site layout.

Due to the rooftop location, flush alignment with the roof plane, and use of dark, non-reflective finishes, the visual impact of the installation will be limited. The proposal will not detract from the appearance of The Copt Oak or the character of the surrounding area.

#### **5. Access Statement**

##### **5.1 Existing Access**

The Copt Oak benefits from established pedestrian and vehicular access arrangements from Whitwick Road, including customer access, staff access, servicing, and emergency access. These arrangements will remain unchanged.

##### **5.2 Impact on Access**

The proposed development does not:

- Alter existing access points
- Affect car parking or servicing arrangements
- Change pedestrian routes or inclusive access
- Affect emergency access

The installation is confined to the roof of the building and will not interfere with the day-to-day operation of the public house.

##### **5.3 Installation and Maintenance Access**

Temporary scaffolding will be erected for a short, defined period to facilitate safe access during the installation works. The scaffolding will be removed immediately following completion of the works and will not result in any permanent impact on access or appearance.

Future maintenance will be undertaken by qualified personnel in accordance with health and safety requirements and will not affect public access.

#### **6. Consultation and Access Considerations**

No specific consultation has been undertaken in relation to access, as the proposal does not affect the public highway, pedestrian access, or internal circulation within the site.

Access considerations have been addressed through careful design and site management, ensuring that installation and maintenance activities can be carried out using existing access arrangements without disruption to neighbouring uses.

## **7. Planning Policy Context**

The proposal has been developed with regard to:

- National planning policy promoting renewable energy generation and climate change mitigation
- Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Plan policies supporting sustainable development and low-carbon technologies
- The principle of making efficient use of existing buildings to deliver environmental benefits

The proposal aligns with the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework by supporting the transition to a low-carbon future while safeguarding local character and amenity.

## **8. Conclusion**

The proposed roof-mounted solar PV installation at The Copt Oak Public House has been designed to respond positively to the site and its context. The development delivers clear sustainability benefits, with minimal visual impact and no adverse effect on access, amenity, or the character of the surrounding area.

The proposal accords with national and local planning policy and is considered acceptable in design and access terms.