solar for schools

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Application for determination of prior approval

17th November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Notification of prior approval for the installation of Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the roofs of Westminster C of E Primary School Westminster Rd, Bradford BD3 0HW, United Kingdom.

Please find attached our Notification for Prior Approval for the installation of solar panels on the roofs of **Westminster C of E Primary School Westminster Rd, Bradford BD3 0HW**.

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 Supporting statements
- 02 Proposed design
- 03 Site and building location plan
- 04 Scaled Map
- 05 Supporting images
- 06 Roof Cross Section
- 07 Example of a standard panel data sheet

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Permitted development assessment:

Given that the solar panels would be installed on a number of pitched roofs on 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

Westminster CofE Primary School is located in Bradford and can only be accessed from Westminster Road. The school buildings are surrounded by fields to the south, west and north. It has allotments to the right of the school building. The solar panels will face towards east, west and south as per the orientation of the building and its roofs.

Local residential areas around the site are few. The homes to the end of Northallerton Road have a view of the school through hedges and at the end of Westminster Road there are a couple of homes that can glimpse the school which is set back on the site. But the site has trees and fields that shield the school from passers by.

The proposed installation will be on the roofs of the buildings and given the school's position it will be extremely difficult if not impossible to see the proposed development.

In the event that the installation is seen by visitors, the presence of anti-glare coating on the proposed solar panels prevents any chance of glint and glare, making it impossible for the proposed installations to adversely affect the amenity of the area. In our opinion if the proposed development can be seen it would also only enhance the school building and appeal of being a modern learning centre looking towards the future and creating a vision of sustainability for students.

The school is not part of a conservation area, nor are there any listed buildings, nor does it fall within the curtilage of a listed building or Scheduled Ancient Monument.

Description of the proposed development

This proposal will help the school in its ambition to maximise the potential of the site to generate zero-carbon solar electricity as part of its wider decarbonisation strategy. It is proposed to install around 500 solar photovoltaic panels on the pitched, with a total generation capacity of 205kWp.

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 be adhering to permitted development and prior notice requirements.

One metre roof margin

To comply with permitted development and prior notice criteria, the layout of the panels on the pitched roof areas are spatially arranged in such a way that the solar panels would be off-set by at least 1 metre from the external edge of the roofs (Scaled Map 04). They must also not protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof slope; therefore Part 14 J(1) (a) and (c) is complied with.

Below the 1MW size

With 500 panels and a total capacity to generate around 205kWp of renewable electricity, the design also 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 500 panels and capacity of around 205kWp, is greater than the permitted development capacity of 50kWp. As such please find more details as to

A. the 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

For the schools' pitched roofs, panels will be mounted on roof hooks to fasten a series of rails to the roof, with panels then being mounted on to these rails. As shown on the Roof Cross Section Drawing (06), the panels of the proposed installation will not protrude more than 0.2 meters beyond the plane of the existing pitched roof slope, so they will follow the existing roof profile.

The solar panels would therefore be of a standard design and appearance and complementary to the modern character of the buildings. 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, creating responsible citizens for tomorrow's world with an appreciation for their surroundings and a duty of care for 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

There are very few properties on the perimeter of the school site. The site is surrounded by fields and has a tree lined approach with hedges that prevents nearby homes from seeing the school. There is a bank of trees to the south that shield the school from the houses around Westmister Place.

The likelihood of glint and glare from the proposed installation towards any of these occupants is unlikely (See supporting images 05). The panels will not be in residents' line of sight and, most importantly, are coated with anti-glare. If any glint were to occur, it would be at such a small scale to

be no different from what is experienced from the Sun daily and therefore the panels will not adversely affect local residents or land users.

Summary
In summary, the proposed scheme to install 205kWp of solar on the roofs of **Westminster C of E Primary School** meets with 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 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 of the proposed installation.

Yours faithfully

Charles Ahenda-Bengo
Project Manager
Solar Options for Schools Limited