

Adur and Worthing Councils,
Portland House,
44 Richmond Road,
Worthing,
West Sussex,
BN11 1HS

Application for determination of prior approval

21 August 2026

Dear Sir/Madam

Re: Notification of prior approval for the installation of Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the roofs of Glebe Primary School, Church Lane, Southwick, West Sussex, BN42 4GB.

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*

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Permitted development assessment:

Given that the solar panels would be installed on the flat and pitched 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

The school is one of many schools’ part of the United Learning Trust. It is located in the town of Southwick in West Sussex. The school grounds are not very vast and occupy approximately 1.8 hectares of land in the midst of neighbouring and residential properties. Entry into the site can be achieved from Church Lane in the south and Kingston Lane in west. The school buildings are many and consist of both modern flat and pitched roofs that occupy the majority of space on site. The proposed installation considers almost all the school roofs with panels positioned towards the south, east and west as per the orientation of each roof slope and facing nearest south. The school already has solar on one of its roofs, the proposed installation would be an extension to the existing system making use of other available roof spaces and to maximise the impact of solar at the school site.

Although the school site is settled in the midst of residential properties it is also adequately displaced from the residences such that it would be very difficult to see the proposed solar arrays on the school roofs. The distance from the nearest roof considered for installation to a neighbouring property is 40 meters, the positioning of the panels majorly being south and the presence of tree coverage all contribute towards the difficulty of seeing the proposed install.

Lastly, if the proposed panels are seen where the proposed anti-glare coated panels are positioned towards the east and west, the no of panels that may be seen would be similar to that of household solar installation that can be very commonly found nowadays, even near the school site. Thus, such an installation cannot be considered as detrimental towards those residing by the school.

The proposed installation would 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.

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 324 solar photovoltaic panels on the flat and pitched roofs, with a total generation capacity of about 150kWp. 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 be adhering to permitted development and prior notice requirements.

- A. One metre margin and protrusion no greater than 0.2 metres on a pitched roof and below 1m on a flat roof
- B. Below 1MW

(A) One metre roof margin a protrusion no greater than 0.2 metres and less than one meter high on a flat roof

To comply with permitted development and prior notice criteria, the layout of the panels on the flat and pitched roof areas are 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) and will not protrude on the pitched roofs or be higher on the flat roofs than the criteria specified for permitted development.

For the flat roofs, the panels will be mounted on ballasted frames that rest on padding to protect the underlying roof membrane set 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.

For the pitched roofs, the 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. To comply with permitted development J.1 Part (A): “the panels of the proposed installation will not protrude more than 0.2 meters beyond the plane of the existing pitched roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the roof” and Part (C): “the solar panels would need to be off-set by at least 1 metre from the external edges of the roof” (Arrangement of panels 04); so Part 14 J.1 (A) & (C) will be complied with.

(B) Below the 1MW size

With around 324 panels and a total capacity to generate around 150kWp of renewable solar 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 324 panels and capacity of around 146kWp, 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

Flat Roof Mounting assembly

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.

Pitched roof Mounting assembly

The 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), will not protrude more than 0.2 meters beyond the plane of the existing pitched roof slope.

The solar panels will be of a standard design and appearance (07), complementary to the 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 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 possible impact from the introduction of the proposed solar arrays would hardly make any difference towards the standard of living to those beside the school. This is because:

- the nearest roof considered for installation from a residence is at least 40 meters away.*
- the majority of roofs considered are at the centre of the site and the panels are oriented to the south so if any visibility is possible it would be of the side view of the panels.*
- Where panels are oriented to the east and west, if they are seen, the capacity and no of panels possible to see is so little that it is similar to household residential solar installation or installation under permitted development considered to be microgeneration.*
- Such an installation therefore cannot be considered as harmful and impact the amenity of neighbouring and residential land occupiers.*

Summary

In summary, the proposed scheme to install around 150kWp of solar on the roofs of Glebe 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 towards the proposal of this installation.

Yours faithfully,

Ardesh Sarangam

Planning Project Manager

Solar Options for Schools Limited