

Application for Planning and Listed Building Consent  
MERL – Archive Building, Museum of English Rural Life,  
University of Reading, off Redlands Road,  
Reading, RG1 5AQ  
Proposed Installation of Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels  
HERITAGE STATEMENT

## **0.0 Introduction**

This Statement is prepared by Reading Community Energy Society which is intending to install Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Panels in collaboration with the University of Reading. The proposed Solar PV Panels will be installed on MERL – Archive Building at the Museum of English Rural Life. The property is owned by the University of Reading. The building is used as a specialist storage facility for records, photographs and accounts.

## **1.0 Proposed Solar Photovoltaic (“PV”) System**

It is proposed to install roof-mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels and the required ancillary equipment. The ancillary equipment will be installed inside the building. The PV panels will generate renewable electricity and the ancillary equipment will convert this into alternating current (ac) electricity suitable for use in the building. The large majority of the generated electricity will be consumed within the building. Any excess electricity will be exported to other buildings on the site and any surplus to the local electricity distribution network.

There will be a total of 84 (eighty-four) PV panels mounted on a frame which will be installed flush to the existing shallow-pitch roof. Layout drawings have been provided with the application.

## **2.0 Conservation Area and Listed Buildings**

The site is within the Kendrick Road Conservation Area and in the curtilage of listed buildings.

The MERL Archive Building is not visible from any public road, footpath or bridle way.

## **3.0 Layout and design**

The nature of the design of the proposed Solar PV installation does not impact on the structure or look of the existing building.

The building is double storey with a shallow pitch, trapezoidal sheet roofs suitable for installing a Solar PV panel system. The proposed array will be installed in such a way that the long-term impact on the roof will be minimal. The installation of solar panels is reversible. In the unlikely case that the solar panels were no longer needed for microgeneration they could be removed with no lasting damage to the roof on which they will be installed.

A structural engineer would be appointed to confirm suitability in terms of roof structure.

The panel layout on the flat roofs of the building ensures that the panels will have no or extremely limited impact on the characteristics of the Conservation Area.

Plan, Section and Elevation drawings have been submitted with the application.

#### **4.0 Climate Change and Renewable Energy**

Both the Applicant (Reading Community Energy Society) and the University of Reading understand the need to balance the benefits to society of responding to climate change with impact on the surrounding area.

The solar PV panels do not present a major visual impact on the site as a whole and their benefit to the University and to Reading will outweigh any minor impacts. It is noted that Reading Borough Council policies strongly encourage the use of renewable energy and in particular solar PV as can be seen in [this document](#)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/3516/item08a-Carbon-PlanJUN15/pdf/item08a\\_Carbon\\_Plan\\_JUN15.pdf](http://www.reading.gov.uk/media/3516/item08a-Carbon-PlanJUN15/pdf/item08a_Carbon_Plan_JUN15.pdf)