

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Whitley

App Ref: 240097/SOL

Address: Unit C Island Road, Reading, RG2 0RP

Proposals: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed installation of a total of 1221 PV panels on the main roof and adjoining roof with a maximum capacity of 518kWp. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J

Case Officer: Marcie Rejwerska

Applicant: Everything is Somewhere Ltd

Date received (valid from): 25 January 2024 **Target Decision date:** 21 March 2024

1. INTRODUCTION

Under Class J, Part 14, of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 ("the 2015 Order"), as amended, the following is permitted development:

J. The installation, alteration or replacement of—

- a) microgeneration solar thermal equipment on a building;*
- b) microgeneration solar PV equipment on a building; or*
- c) other solar PV equipment on the roof of a building, other than a dwellinghouse or a block of flats.*

provided the development is not excluded by virtue of the criteria in Paragraph J.1-J.3 and subject to conditions outlined in J.4 of the 2015 Order. The criteria and conditions outlined in J.1-J.4 will be examined below.

2. BACKGROUND, PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The proposal includes the installation of 1221 PV panels on the roof of a commercial property on the north side of Island Road, accessed from the A33 in south Reading. The proposed panels together have a maximum capacity of 518kWp. The surrounding area is predominately industrial and there are no residential properties in the immediate vicinity. The nearest residential properties are located on the other side of the A33. The submitted manufacturer specifications for the PV panels state that anti-reflection technology is incorporated.

The proposed installation will not alter or restrict the use of the building in any way.

The applicant has submitted the following documents:

Q.Tron Blk M-G2+ Series Manufacturer Specifications from qcells, received by the LPA on 20/02/2024

2023-SP-ConceRoof Mount-001 Sheet 2 of 2 - Solar Roof Mount, dated 24/01/2024, received by the LPA on 25/01/2024

2023-SP-ConceRoof Mount-001 Sheet 1 of 2 - Solar Roof Mount, dated 24/01/2024, received by the LPA on 25/01/2024

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

The following addresses were consulted via letter:

Unit A, Island Road, Reading, RG2 0RP

Unit B, Island Road, Reading, RG2 0RP

No letters of representation were received.

A site notice was also displayed by the applicant.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Class J allows for Development consisting of:

- J. The installation, alteration or replacement of—
 - a) microgeneration solar thermal equipment on a building;
 - b) microgeneration solar PV equipment on a building; or
 - c) other solar PV equipment on the roof of a building,
 - d) other than a dwellinghouse or a block of flats.

In assessing these issues, officers must have regard to the NPPF as if the application were a planning application, and also have regard to the Local Development Framework (the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Development Framework according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

6. APPRAISAL

Development is not permitted by Class J in the following instances (officer comments follow in bold):

J.1. Development is not permitted by Class J if—

- (a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a pitched roof and would 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;
No.
- (b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a flat roof, where the highest part of the solar PV equipment would be higher than 1 metre above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney);
No.
- (c) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a roof and within 1 metre of the external edge of that roof;
No.
- (d) in the case of a building on article 2(3) land, the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a roof slope which fronts a highway;
No.

- (e) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a site designated as a scheduled monument; or
No.
- (f) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a listed building or on a building within the curtilage of a listed building.
No.

J.2. Development is not permitted by Class J(a) or (b) if—

- (a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a wall and would protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the wall when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the wall;
No.
- (b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a wall and within 1 metre of a junction of that wall with another wall or with the roof of the building; or
No.
- (c) in the case of a building on article 2(3) land, the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a wall which fronts a highway.
No.

J.3. Development is not permitted by Class J(c) if the capacity of the solar PV equipment installed (together with any solar PV equipment installed under Class J(b)) to generate electricity exceeds 1 megawatt.

No - proposed units to generate 0.518 megawatts.

Conditions

J.4—(1) Class J development is permitted subject to the following conditions—

- (a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment must, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area; **See below** and
- (b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment is removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed. **To be determined by the applicant.**

(2) Class J(c) development is permitted subject to the condition that before beginning the development the developer must apply to the local planning authority for a determination as to whether the prior approval of the authority will be required as to the design or external appearance of the development, in particular the impact of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land, and the following sub-paragraphs apply in relation to that application.

External Appearance:

Due to the height of the building/roof, the inconspicuous nature of the location to the wider public, and the already utilitarian appearance of the roof, the solar panels will not be readily visible from the street scene and are considered to be acceptable.

Glare on occupiers of neighbouring land:

Based on the specifics of modern solar panels, detrimental glare for occupiers of neighbouring land is considered unlikely to result. No residential or business amenity should be impacted due to the height and proposed location of the solar panels.

7. DECISION

The described works are considered compliant with Class J, Part 14, of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015.

Recommendation: **GRANT** Prior Approval

Conditions

1. The development shall be carried out in accordance with the details provided on the following submitted plans:

Q.Tron Blk M-G2+ Series Manufacturer Specifications from qcells, received by the LPA on 20/02/2024

2023-SP-ConceRoof Mount-001 Sheet 2 of 2 - Solar Roof Mount, dated 24/01/2024, received by the LPA on 25/01/2024

2023-SP-ConceRoof Mount-001 Sheet 1 of 2 - Solar Roof Mount, dated 24/01/2024, received by the LPA on 25/01/2024

unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

2. Class J development is permitted subject to the following conditions—
 - a) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment must, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building and the amenity of the area; and
 - b) the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment is removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed.
3. In order to comply with the provisions of paragraph J4.(11) of Class J of Part 14 of Schedule 2 of the Town and County Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 2015 (as amended) development under Class J must be completed within a period of three years starting from the prior approval date.