

DELEGATED APPLICATION REPORT

Ward: Thames

App Ref: PL/26/0032 Prior approval Part 14 Class J: Installation or alteration etc of solar equipment on non-domestic premises

Address: THAMES VALLEY UNIVERSITY, KINGS ROAD, READING, RG1 4HJ

Proposal: Application to determine if prior approval is required for a proposed: Installation, Alteration or Replacement of other Solar Photovoltaics (PV) equipment on the Roofs of Non-domestic Buildings. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J

Applicant: Mr Philip Waddup

Received date: 13/01/2026

Target Decision date: 12/3/26 (Ext)

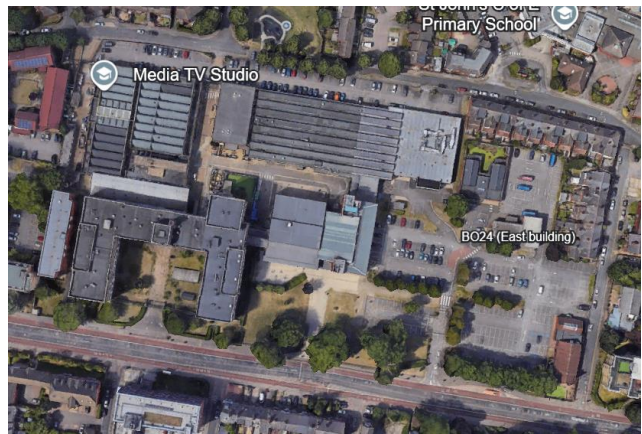
Case Officer: Alison Amoah

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application site is the Thames Valley University Campus buildings on Kings Road. It is within an Air Quality Management Area (Reading Borough Local plan Policy EN15), and within the Reading Central Area (Policies CR1-CR10). It is very close to the Eldon Square Conservation Area, which lies just to the west.



Site Plan



Google Aerial image



Photos provided by the applicant

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The proposal is to determine if prior approval is required for solar photovoltaics on the roofs of the non-domestic buildings under The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J.

The submitted Report states that the “*proposed application seeks prior approval for the installation of a photovoltaic (PV) solar array on the roof spaces of Activate Learning – Reading College Campus as part of its PSDS Decarbonisation Programme. The installation is intended to provide on-site renewable energy generation, helping to reduce the carbon footprint and improve the energy efficiency of the premises*”.

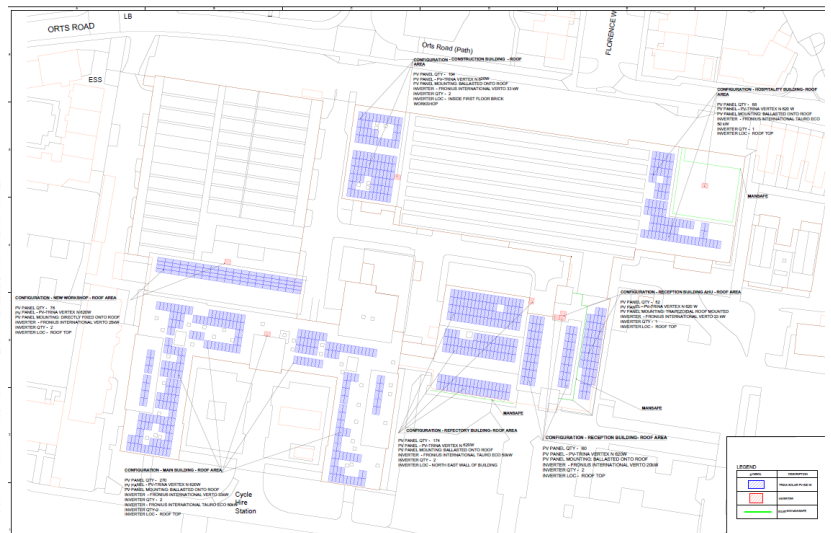
The proposal consists of 824 no. black monocrystalline solar PV panels mounted on a lightweight ballast-framed mounting system for flat roof installations, for the majority of the arrays, with the shallow pitched roof installation mounted on rails and seam clamps.

The submitted information is as follows:

- Completed application form
- Drawing no: 0442 01_of_01 - Site Location and Boundary, dated and received 13th January 2026
- Drawing no: 0486 01 of 01, dated 30/10/25, received 13th January 2026
- Solar PV Prior Notice Summary Report, Document ref: HL00067-0465, Prepared by HI Group, dated and received 13th January 2026
- Drawing no: 0486 01 of 01, Rev 01, dated 30/10/25 – General Arrangement – Solar PV Site, received 13th January 2026



Typical Ballasted PV Installation



3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

Extensive planning history, but not specifically relevant to this proposal.

4. CONSULTATIONS

No internal consultations were undertaken. The following addresses were consulted by letter:

- 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 Orts Road, READING, RG1 3JN
- 1, 2, 15 Florence Walk, READING, RG1 3HH
- 185 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX

- 191 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX
- Swalec Gas, 187-189 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX
- Astec Project Ltd, 187-189 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX
- 1, 2, 2a, 2b, 3, 3a, 3b, 4, 4a, 4b, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 10a, 10b, 11, 12, 14, 14a, 14b, 15, 15a, 15b, 16, 16a, 16b, 17, 17a, 17b, 18, 18a, 18b, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, Mandela Court, Betam Road READING, RG1 3JG
- Second Floor, Kings Court, 185 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX
- Allott & Lomax, Kings Court, 185 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX
- Scottish Amicable Life Assurance Society, Kings Court, 185 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX
- Flats 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 119 Orts Road, READING, RG1 3JN
- The Garden Flat, 191 Kings Road, READING, RG1 4EX

No letters of representation have been received.

Two site notices were displayed on 30th January 2026 – one on Kings Road frontage and one on Orts Road.



5. EQUALITY ACT 2010

In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

6. LEGAL CONTEXT

The application has been submitted to determine whether prior approval is required in accordance with Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended). Part 14 relates to renewable energy and Class J specifically relates to the installation or alteration etc of solar equipment on non-domestic premises and states that 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.

7. APPRAISAL

The appraisal is against the relevant criteria/ conditions of Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) - Schedule 2, Part 14, Class J. Each of the criteria is discussed below, with the regulations stated in full in italics and the officer comments in bold:

Development not permitted

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; **Complies** - Email from agent 11/3/26 to confirm that no more than 0.2m.*

*(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); **Complies***

*(c)the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed within 1 metre of the external edge of that roof; **Complies***

*(e)the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment would be installed on a site designated as a scheduled monument; or **Complies***

*(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. **Complies***

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; **Not applicable.***

*(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 **Not applicable.***

*(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. **Not applicable.***

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; and **Complies***

*(b)the solar PV equipment or solar thermal equipment is removed as soon as reasonably practicable when no longer needed. **Condition recommended to this effect.***

8. CONCLUSION

In accordance with the above, the proposed installations, part on an sloping roof and part on a flat roof comply with the requirements of Class J of the General Permitted Development Order (2015) as amended, and is, therefore, recommended for approval.

9. RECOMMENDATION

Prior Approval Given.