

Our Ref: 17C60045/29042026

Your Ref.: PP-14891376

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29th April 2026

Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council
Town Planning Division
Unit 5
Pentrebach
Merthyr
CF48 4TQ

Dear Sir / Madam,

Welsh Government, Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr Tydfil, CF48 1UZ
Planning application for proposed installation of additional solar photovoltaics (PV) panels on the roof of the main office building and energy centre building.

We hereby submit a full planning application on behalf of our client, Welsh Government, for the proposed installation of additional solar photovoltaics (PV) panels on the roof of the Welsh Government's main office building and energy centre building at Rhydycar Business Park, Merthyr, CF48 1UZ.

The application has been submitted electronically via the Planning Portal and has been given Planning Portal reference PP-14891376.

In line with national and local validation requirements, we are pleased to enclose the following documents as part of this application submission:

- Completed, signed and dated full planning application form;
- Site Location Plan (Drawing Reference: AL01), at a scale of 1:1250 @ A3, indicating the site's location in red;
- Main Office Building Existing Site Plan, Roof Plan, Elevations & Photos – Area of Works 1 (Drawing Reference: AL02), at a scale of 1:1250 & 1:200 @ A0;
- Main Office Building Proposed Site Plan, Roof Plan, Elevations & Photos – Area of Works 1 (Drawing Reference: AL03), at a scale of 1:1250 & 1:200 @ A0;
- Energy Centre Building Proposed Site Plan, Roof Plan, Elevations & Photos – Area of Works 2 (Drawing Reference: AL04), at a scale of 1:1250 & 1:50 @ A0;
- Energy Centre Building Proposed Site Plan, Roof Plan, Elevations & Photos – Area of Works 2 (Drawing Reference: AL05), at a scale of 1:1250 & 1:200 @ A0;
- Ecological Survey Report, prepared by Just Mammals, and
- PV Brochure, prepared by GB Sol Projects Ltd.

The fee applicable to this application (£296) has been paid by BACS via the Planning Portal.

The Site & Background

The Welsh Government's main office building at Rydycar Business Park was constructed in 2009 and comprises of large open plan office space, a canteen, reception, meeting rooms and a large external car park. Staff generally occupy the building from 07:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday.

There are three storeys with a total floor area of 7,612 sqm. The general construction of the site is brick and concrete walls, double glazed windows and a pitched felt roof.

The energy centre is a single storey building with a pitched roof, located to the south-east of the main office building.

Planning permission (LPA Reference: P/23/0043) was granted on 15th August 2023 for the installation of solar panels on the roof of the southern and western wings of the existing office building.

The site location plan clearly identifies the location of the site, the main office building and energy centre building. The existing and proposed site plan, roof plans, and elevations, provide details of the location and specification for the solar photovoltaics (PV) panels and associated infrastructure on the roof of these two respective buildings.

The buildings are located within a business park, next to the A470 dual carriageway, which is bordered by a number of trees and hedgerows. As such, the buildings are well screened from any nearby residential properties and will not therefore have any detrimental impact in terms of glare.

The Proposal

The proposal is to install additional 270 no. solar photovoltaic panels on the roof of the main office building. The system consists of an aluminium frame fitted onto the roof battens and then Welsh made solar panels are set into this and riveted into place with anodised aluminium cap strips. The solar panels will be mounted on rails with the rails fixed into the rafters via hooks that go under the roof tiles. There will be 120 no. frameless solar photovoltaic panels, in the form of an edge-to-edge infinity solar roof, installed on the roof of the energy centre building.

As already mentioned, solar panels have already been installed on the roof areas of the southern and western wings of the existing office building, in accordance with the full planning permission (LPA Reference: P/23/0043) granted on 15th August 2023. This aforementioned application was accompanied by an Ecological Survey Report, prepared by Just Mammals, which has been submitted in support of this application for information. A Preliminary Roost Assessment was undertaken in March 2023 which concluded that the building offered a low level of suitability for roosting bats. Furthermore, a single dusk emergence/activity observation was subsequently carried out in May 2023; no bats were seen to emerge from the building.

Solar photovoltaic panels convert energy captured from sunlight into electricity that can be used in buildings. Solar PV cells are made from layers of semi-conducting material, usually silicon. When light shines on the material, electrons are knocked loose creating a flow of electricity. The cells don't need direct sunlight to work, they can work on a cloudy day. However, the stronger the

sunshine, the more electricity generated. Solar PV cells are grouped into modules, and modules usually grouped into solar arrays. Modules and arrays come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Most PV systems are made up of panels that are installed to a building's roof, on the ground or a purpose-built canopy. The electricity generated is direct current (DC), whereas the electricity mostly used in building is alternating current (AC). An inverter or inverters are installed along with the system to convert DC electricity to AC.

Solar PV systems require minimal maintenance. This usually entails cleaning the panels of debris and built-up dust or dirt. In the UK, PV panels that are tilted at 15° or more have the benefit of being cleaned by rainfall to ensure optimal performance. Debris is more likely to accumulate if the panels are ground mounted, or if the location near high levels of dirt or dust.

Legislative Procedure

Permitted development rights for small scale renewable energy developments at non-domestic properties are set out in Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order as amended under Part 43 Installation of Non-Domestic Microgeneration Equipment. Class A permits the installation, alteration or replacement of solar PV or solar thermal equipment on a building other than a dwellinghouse or a block of flats. Solar panels on the roofs of this office building would be permitted development if all of the following limits are met:

- solar panels installed on a wall or a pitched roof should project no more than 20cm from the wall surface or roof slope
- where panels are installed on a flat roof the highest part of the equipment should not be more than one metre above the highest part of the roof (excluding the chimney)
- equipment mounted on a roof must not be within one metre of the external edge of the roof
- equipment mounted on a wall must not be within one metre of a junction of that wall with another wall or with the roof of the building
- the panels must not be installed on a listed building or on a building that is within the grounds of a listed building
- the panels must not be installed on a site designated as a scheduled monument
- if the building is on designated land* the equipment must not be installed on a wall or a roof slope which fronts a highway

As the proposed solar PV installation does not meet all the above conditions, a planning application is hereby submitted to the local planning authority seeking permission for its installation.

Green Infrastructure

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, February 2024) requires that all planning applications are accompanied by a Green Infrastructure Statement that is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed and will describe how green infrastructure has been incorporated into the proposal. Paragraph 6.2.12 of PPW clarifies that, in the case of minor development (such as this), a short description will suffice. PPW also requires the consideration of biodiversity enhancement as part of the planning application process.

The proposed works comprise of the installation of additional solar photovoltaic (PV) panels together with associated infrastructure and equipment on the roof of the existing office building and the energy centre building. The PV panels are invented and made in Wales. Each solar PV panel measures 1663 x 1000 mm. There will be no loss of green space or biodiversity features and in light of this, and given the nature of the development, compensation is not considered necessary. 12 no. bat boxes were installed on the site as part of the previous proposals for solar panels on the roof of the office building: four on the western gable end of the main curved building; four affixed on poles positioned along the northern boundary of the site close to the boundary vegetation, and four installed on mature trees around the site boundary.

Conclusions

In summary, the proposals are considered to be entirely in accordance with national and local planning policy and will be acceptable development in this location with no impact of glare on occupiers of neighbouring land.

We trust that the information within this letter, and the enclosures, allows you to register and determine this application swiftly and we look forward to receiving confirmation of this in due course. If, in the meantime, you require any further information and/or clarification with respect to the enclosed information please contact me on 07769886842 or by email at Owain.Griffiths@avisonyoung.com. We look forward to receiving confirmation of the registered application shortly.

Kind regards

Yours faithfully,



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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

Enclosure