

Andrew Boff AM
Chair, London Assembly
City Hall
Kamal Chunchie Way
London, E16 1ZE

By email to: Assemblychair@london.gov.uk

01 July 2024

Dear Andrew,

RE: Solar Panels on listed buildings

Thank you for writing to us about the London Assembly motion regarding solar panels on listed buildings.

We want to drive renewable energy production as quickly as possible in Haringey. It is essential of course to cut pollution and emissions, cut household bills and cut our dependency on volatile fossil fuels. Solar is one of the most affordable clean energy sources we have at the moment – and we want to encourage the installation of solar panels on public and private buildings wherever we can.

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea's (RBKC) Local Listed Building Consent Order (LLBCO) for the installation of solar panels on listed buildings is an interesting test case. It means that residents no longer need to apply for individual consent to install solar panels on Grade II and most Grade II* listed buildings.

RBKC has 4,000 listed buildings and their LLBCO could potentially therefore have a high impact in terms of generating clean energy to help London reach net zero. Haringey supports authorities who prepare LLBCOs which are supported by local evidence and supported via stakeholders, as was the case in RBKC. Haringey has 471 listed buildings, but we recognise the important opportunity for these buildings to contribute to our climate objectives.

Haringey Council was one of the first London boroughs to declare a climate emergency (in March 2019) and subsequent to this (in March 2021) we published our ambitious Climate Change Action Plan which sets out a road map to be a net zero carbon borough by 2041. The Council has undertaken many initiatives to support householders in installing solar power such as working with the Solar Together London project.

The Council's existing Local Plan, adopted in 2017, sets out comprehensive policies on heritage and renewable energy which generally support measures to sustainably retrofit existing homes and non-residential buildings.

As such solar panels on listed buildings are not precluded within Haringey but can be delivered subject to planning permission. Each case is assessed on its individual merits against the context of the aforementioned policies and the London Plan 2021 which requires Boroughs to ensure that all developments maximise opportunities for on-site electricity and heat production from solar technologies (photovoltaic and thermal) and use innovative building materials and smart technologies.

In 2020 the Council began the process of preparing a New Local Plan which will replace the existing Local Plan. Through our First Steps Engagement on the New Local Plan we heard loud and clear from our communities of the need to go further and faster to tackle climate change. Our New Local Plan will contain an ambitious suite of climate change policies, including an even more supportive policy on renewable energy. Haringey led an evidence study on behalf of 18 other London boroughs last year to assess the best routes to deliver genuinely net zero development.

Following the adoption of the New Local Plan we will embark on a programme of work on its implementation, including considering the use of LLBCOs. Where we can minimise costs and administration for residents and encourage private uptake of solar energy we would of course like to – and an LLBCO is one option to achieve this.

However, introducing an LLBCO requires significant staff time and funding to take forward – as they need to be supported by evidence and are also subject to engagement. Given the relatively small number of listed buildings in Haringey, it seems unlikely that we would be able to recoup the time and costs invested into passing an LLBCO over the long term.

The government's most recent consultation on planning fees acknowledged a 33% funding gap for local planning authorities. The costs of undertaking non-fee generating work such as LLBCOs are not fully covered by the development industry. Additional government or GLA funding to support climate initiatives like this would of course be welcomed.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mike Hakata', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cllr Mike Hakata

**Cabinet Member for Climate Action, Environment & Transport
Haringey Council**