

## Background

Solar PV is recognised as a low risk measure. Presuming the electrical safety element of the installation is compliant, then there is relatively little which go wrong to cause unintended consequences for the property or resident. There are however still some items which should be given due consideration before proceeding with an install:

### Key Point 1 - Export Capable Electricity Meter / Smart Export Guarantee

An export capable meter is a type of meter which can measure both the electricity consumed from the grid and the electricity exported back to the grid. The RdSAP 10 methodology requires the presence of this type of meter to be recorded, as well as the presence of a generation meter.

If there is no export capable meter present at the property, then the SAP score will be significantly lower and it is likely that properties will not reach the project targets. The Retrofit Assessment should identify whether this type of meter is present however the Solar PIBI should confirm this and a new meter will need to be installed should one not be present.

Most new smart meters will be export capable but below is an example of a meter which would need to be upgraded:



It is possible to avoid the need to replace a manual electricity meter by installing a separate meter which transmits the data independently, this type of meter will look similar to the below product from Osiris:




The Smart Export Guarantee is a way to sell excess electricity generated by the solar panels back to the grid. Payments received would usually be received by the person that pays the utility bill however, where PV is installed in Local Authority housing, it may be possible for the LA to receive the payments should they wish. This needs to be discussed and arranged with the installers and utility companies before any installations take place.

## Key Point 2 – Conservation Areas

While it is possible to install Solar PV in a conservation area, there are sometimes additional restrictions and the main contractor or installer should seek permitted development consent from the Local Authority, in some cases, full planning permission may be required. Green Match offer the following handy infographic:

**What does the process look like for installing conservation area solar panels?**

- 1** Contact your **local planning authority** to understand the **specific rules and requirements for solar panel installations** in the conservation area where your property is located.
- 2** Consult with **MCS (Microgeneration Certification Scheme)** certified solar panel installation companies familiar with conservation area regulations.
- 3** Provide detailed information about your **property, location, and proposed installation** to the authorities and installers for accurate advice.
- 4** Understand additional regulations for conservation areas, such as **visibility restrictions, listed building consent requirements, and potential heritage impact assessments**
- 5** Obtain necessary planning permissions, listed building consent (if required), and ensure your installer is **MCS certified** if you want to benefit from government incentives like the **Smart Export Guarantee (SEG)**.

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### Key Point 3 - Asbestos Roof Coverings and Boarding

Asbestos roof tiles are relatively rare however this does mean that the Retrofit Assessment is very unlikely to highlight this potential risk. The installer should ensure that their pre-installation inspection makes note of the roof covering material to ensure installers are not exposed to asbestos when installing the rails.



Sometimes internal roof boarding can be made from asbestos, while this is unlikely to be disturbed during installation, it should be looked out for just in case:



#### Key Point 4 – Location of Inverter and Isolation Switch

Ensuring that the inverter and isolation switch are easily accessible to the resident and for maintenance is really important so installers have moved away from installing the equipment in the loft space and are using externally mounted cabinets similar to meter boxes. These boxes should be located somewhere discreet if possible to maintain the aesthetic of the property, in the example below it would have been advisable to locate the cabinet on the side elevation or rear rather than at the front of the house:

