



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

13th February 2024

Dear Constituent,

RE: ROOFTOP SOLAR

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about rooftop solar. I have read your comments with interest.

I agree that, where appropriate, solar panels can put unused roof space to good use and are an important technology in helping to reduce carbon emissions. I would like to assure you that the Government is committed to widespread deployment of rooftop solar.

I understand that the Government's ambition for 70 gigawatts of solar capacity by 2035 will require a significant increase in both ground-mount and rooftop solar. Ministers have been clear that the extensive deployment of rooftop solar on domestic, industrial and commercial property to make effective use of available surfaces is a priority.

The Government has recently announced that it will expand permitted development rights to ensure more homeowners and businesses can install solar panels on their roofs without going through the planning system. The changes will mean homes with flat roofs will be able to install panels without planning permission, bringing rules in line with those for businesses. Reforms will also make it easier for solar panels to be installed in canopies above car parks, if they are over ten meters away from people's homes. In addition, the Government will scrap current rules that require businesses to apply for planning permission if solar panels will generate more than one megawatt of electricity.

While I share your view that rooftop solar has an important role to play in helping us decarbonise the power sector, it is worth noting that the suitability of solar panels on rooftops is limited by the type of building and its location around the country. Some roofs are not suitable for solar panels due to structural strength or the direction of the building. To help households who would like to install solar panels, VAT has been cut on energy saving materials.


In addition, the Government has set out plans to significantly reduce energy use in new homes and new non-domestic buildings from 2025. As a first step towards this standard, an interim uplift to energy efficiency requirements is in force and the Government anticipates most developers will comply with the requirements by installing solar panels on new buildings.

I have been assured that the Solar Taskforce will focus on further measures to unlock the potential of rooftop solar.



Regarding solar farms, Government guidance encourages local planning authorities to focus on using previously developed land and non-agricultural land for large-scale solar farm development, so long as the land is not of high environmental value. Given that many solar farms are temporary structures, local planning authorities are also advised to ensure that land is restored to its previous use.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

With best wishes,


**TOM PURSGLOVE MP
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT
CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**