



# THE COUNCILLOR'S GUIDE TO SOLAR CAR PARKS

A Roadmap To Net Zero 2030

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Solar car parks are rapidly becoming one of the most effective tools available to councils working toward Net Zero. By converting existing parking spaces into clean energy hubs, local authorities can generate renewable power, reduce emissions, and visibly demonstrate climate leadership — all without sacrificing valuable land.

This guide outlines how councils can deliver successful solar car park projects while maximising social value and public support.

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## Why Solar Car Parks Matter

Unlike ground-mounted solar farms, car park installations use existing infrastructure. They create immediate benefits by:

- Generating local renewable energy
- Protecting vehicles from weather
- Supporting EV charging rollouts
- Improving public realm infrastructure
- Demonstrating visible climate leadership

For councils under pressure to meet 2030 targets, this is a low-risk, high-impact solution.

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# Planning Permission Checklist

Strong preparation prevents delays and cost overruns. Councils should consider:

## Site and Technical Assessment

- Confirm land ownership and site suitability
- Assess shading, orientation, flood risk, and ground conditions
- Commission canopy structural surveys
- Check grid connection options with the local DNO

## Planning and Compliance

- Establish whether permitted development applies
- Engage planning officers early
- Prepare visual impact assessments
- Address any heritage or environmental constraints

## Delivery and Funding

- Explore capital funding, PPAs, or community investment models
- Include maintenance and monitoring requirements
- Ensure accessibility and safety standards are met

## Social Value and Community Benefits

Solar car parks offer measurable community impact beyond carbon reduction:

- Lower council energy bills and operational costs
- Improved lighting and safer parking areas
- EV charging access for residents and fleets
- Local employment and skills development
- Education partnerships with schools and colleges
- Increased energy resilience for public facilities

Positioning projects as community energy assets helps build long-term support.

## How to Win Public Support

Public engagement is not optional — it's a project enabler. Successful councils:

- Communicate early and often
- Share visual designs and clear timelines
- Link projects to local climate commitments
- Partner with schools, businesses, and community groups
- Showcase pilot sites and real performance data

When residents understand the benefits, resistance drops and momentum builds.

## Final Thought

Net Zero targets demand visible leadership and practical delivery. Solar car parks allow councils to act quickly, scale effectively, and demonstrate real progress — all while strengthening community infrastructure.

This is not just about solar panels. It's about future-proofing public spaces.

## Ready to Get Started?

Every council site is different — but the opportunity is real.

Speak With a Project Specialist – Call: **0113 328 1535**

No obligation. No pressure. Just clear answers and realistic project pathways.

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