

Hotels could reduce energy bills through their car parks, says experts

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Hotels looking to reduce energy costs could find the answer in their existing car parks by installing solar carports, according to new research.

Renewable energy specialist, [RenEnergy](#), has identified 34,477 car park spaces across 852 facilities that could be transformed through the installation of canopies with solar PV panels. This could have the potential to generate 79.7GWh of energy per year – the equivalent of the annual consumption of more than 22,000 homes.

With the UK having 9,847 hotels,[\[1\]](#) the ongoing research has only 'scratched the surface' with it possibly being able to identify over a million spaces in commercial car parks across sectors that could be used to generate clean energy.

Hotels are energy-intensive establishments, with substantial electricity consumption driven by heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems, lighting, kitchen operations, laundry services, and electronic devices in guest rooms. Since hotels are spending at least 6% of their total operating costs on energy[\[2\]](#), the installation of solar carports has the potential to help hotels regain power over their expenses and recover this high cost.

Typically, hotel car parks remain underutilised spaces, making them perfect sites for installing carports. By covering parking areas with solar canopies, hotels can provide shaded parking plus electric vehicle charging facilities for guests, enhancing the customer experience while generating renewable energy – a significant benefit for environmentally conscious clientele.

While some renewable energy solutions require landowner or planning permission, solar carports can gain

signoff within eight weeks under permitted development with prior approval. After receiving this, facilities must receive authorisation from the District Network Operator (DNO) to secure grid capacity and export.

Through the use of land that is readily available to them, hotels can significantly reduce the cost of energy bills, as well as sell any excess power back to the grid to help fund the investment. Alongside this, hotels can have the canopies installed free of charge if they enter into a power purchase agreement with a provider such as RenEnergy. This would result in the hotel only having to pay for the power that they use, at a lower rate than that offered on the energy grid.

Damian Baker, Managing Director of RenEnergy, said: "Hotels looking to reduce their energy costs while using sustainable power can take back control by installing and using solar carports. Businesses have the capability to regain a significant portion of their budget by generating all the power they require on their doorstep.

"While our current findings already show significant opportunity with hotels, we have only scratched the surface on the number of spaces within the sector that have the potential be used to generate energy. "

The installation of carports is a mandatory practice in countries such as France and Slovenia in locations where there are more than 80 spaces. This helps these nations generate sustainable power for residents and help reduce their overall carbon emissions. By following in their footsteps, car parks across the UK can help solve our current energy uncertainty concerns.

Damian concludes: "Hotels have a significant opportunity on their doorstep to not only help achieve their sustainability goals but also reduce a large financial cost that they could use elsewhere. With the installation being free of charge with a PPA, and planning permission being streamlined, the hospitality industry can make a significant leap towards clean energy in a short amount of time."

For more information about how solar carports could transform energy security at a hotel, please [click here](#).