



Powering Up Your Portfolio

A strategic guide for commercial landlords and asset managers to increase asset value, future-proof their portfolios and reduce costs for themselves and tenants through solar and energy storage.

Five things to look out for:

How commercial landlords can turn the key to solar and storage - **page 2**

The benefits to be secured through investment in solar and battery storage solutions - **page 3**

How commercial asset managers can invest in solar without paying anything upfront - **page 7**

A solar and storage checklist to guide your decisions - **page 8**

How a commercial property investment manager is boosting portfolio returns with solar - **page 10**

Turning the key to solar success

With energy prices climbing and climate accountability now a business imperative, commercial property owners – whether landlords or owner-occupiers – face mounting pressure from tenants, investors and regulators to rethink how their buildings consume and generate energy.

Energy price hikes have intensified the cost of doing business – especially for energy intensive occupiers and tenants. Solar offers a timely solution, helping owners lower operating costs, improve EPC ratings, unlock new revenue streams and boost asset performance.

For tenants and occupiers, the benefits are immediate: lower energy bills and stronger sustainability credentials. As businesses align with rising ESG expectations, buildings powered by clean, renewable energy become significantly more attractive.

At a time when nearly 25% of commercial landlords risk fines under new energy efficiency rules – and over 13,000 buildings in England and Wales remain rated F or G – delaying action could be costly.

According to Search Acumen, without urgent action, the sector could miss the UK Government's 2030 EPC B target by a full decade – exposing landlords to fines, asset devaluation, and dwindling tenant demand.

Progressive property owners are already leading the way, turning underused rooftops into high-performing energy assets while future-proofing their portfolios. The question is, are you ready to turn the key on solar.



Stephen Barrett,
Founder and Chairman,
SolarSense

The benefits of solar energy

Boosts Asset Value

Solar installations add tangible, long-term value to commercial properties by improving energy efficiency. As clean energy becomes a priority for investors and occupiers, buildings powered by renewables become more competitive and resilient assets.

Reduced operational costs for tenants and occupiers

Solar slashes electricity bills by replacing costly grid energy – typically around 24.5p per kWh with clean power that costs just 4p – 8p per kWh to generate. For owner-occupiers, this means a significantly reduced energy spend. For landlords, this means you can sell energy to your tenants at a reduced rate, helping minimise their operational costs while creating income for you.

New revenue streams

Commercial property owners can also generate income by exporting excess solar energy to the grid. Solar carports also represent an opportunity to secure more revenue – more on solar carports on page 5.

Enables Rapid Payback

Solar energy systems today offer a high-speed payback on installation costs due to the rapid decline in the price of solar panels (estimated to be a reduction of 80% since 2010). In some cases, payback can be achieved in as little as two years, delivering strong returns for decades.

Aligns with energy regulations

Solar helps commercial property owners meet tightening energy efficiency standards, including MEES and EPC requirements. Avoiding non-compliance reduces legal risk and protects against declining asset value in a more regulated property market.

Attract high-quality tenants

By reducing their operational costs, allowing for more effective budgeting and forward-planning and helping them enhance their own reputations, buildings that have integrated solar are an increasingly desirable option.

Maximises Use of Space

Commercial sites often have underused roof space or land that receives strong sunlight. Solar allows commercial property owners to repurpose these areas to drive income, reduce emissions and meet sustainability targets.

The wide-ranging solar opportunity

Solar panels can be installed in a variety of locations, turning unused land or roof space into an asset. Solar panels come in a variety of shapes and sizes, making them one of the most versatile renewable energy sources available. Some of the ways solar panels can be installed include:

1. Roof-Mounted Solar PV – The most common installation type for solar PV panels, particularly for buildings with plenty of roof-top real estate such as those controlled by commercial property owners.



2. Ground-Mounted Solar PV – Ideal for sites with plenty of unused or underutilised spaces. Ground-mounted PV modules can be adjusted for optimal pitch and orientation, ensuring maximum daylight capture.

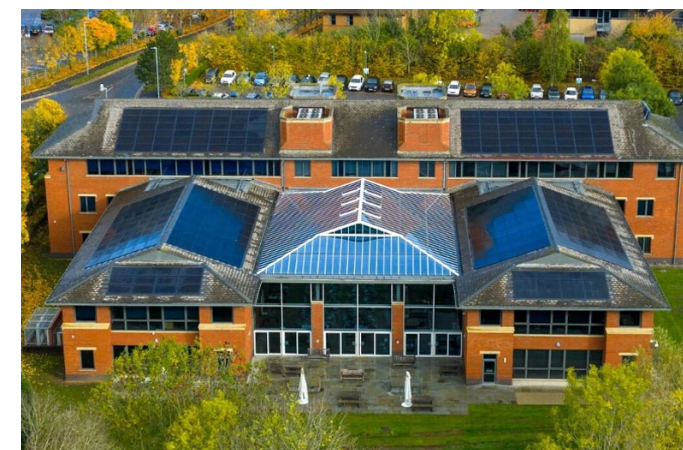


3. Solar Carports – Ideal for commercial properties with car parking, solar carports are multi-purpose structures that provide sheltered parking while generating renewable electricity for use across the estate and for EV charging. They are particularly attractive for landlords who have already maximised rooftop solar and want to deploy additional generation without using valuable lettable space.

For commercial landlords, solar carports can create a new, landlord-controlled income stream through paid EV charging for tenants, staff and visitors, with modern platforms enabling tiered tariffs by user, tenant or time of day. They also enhance EPC ratings, ESG performance and the long-term value of the asset while visibly demonstrating sustainability leadership to occupiers and investors.



4. Building Integrated Photovoltaics (BIPV) – BIPV refers to the integration of solar PV technology directly into the building's structure, such as the roof, walls, or windows. This can include in-roof solar PV systems, solar tiles, brise soleil, canopies, and more. BIPV systems are often chosen for their aesthetic appeal and can be designed to match or complement the building's design.



5. Battery Storage – Integrating solar panels with a battery storage solution allows commercial landlords to increase the efficiency of their solar PV system and maximise the potential benefits. This is because you gain greater control over your energy consumption and can store excess solar energy to be used when it's needed most, or when it is most cost effective. Even without on-site solar energy generation, organisations may choose to charge up a battery at a time when energy prices are low (e.g. at night) for use during peak times (e.g. 4pm - 7pm). Battery storage can also enable businesses to supply extra power (above their DNO connection capacity) if they are constrained by grid capacity, or to provide back-up power for emergencies. Battery storage will become increasingly valuable as half-hourly settlement makes time-of-use pricing more important.



Unlocking solar – with zero upfront costs

Thousands of UK businesses and commercial property owners are already tapping into the benefits of solar and energy storage. With SolarSense, you can install a tailored renewable energy system with zero upfront investment and start saving from day one.

The clean energy generated begins delivering immediate savings from the moment your system is switched on – cutting costs instantly, rapidly repaying installation costs and delivering exceptional long-term returns year after year.

What's included?

-  **Solar PV** - Generate clean energy to cut energy costs, reduce grid reliance, and lower your carbon footprint.
-  **Battery Storage** - Store energy for peak times to reduce exposure to peak tariffs and maximise savings.
-  **Solar Carports & EV Charging** - Generate clean energy from underutilised space to charge EVs and power your business.
-  **Solar PV Extensions** - Expand your existing system to increase capacity and unlock additional savings.
-  **Solar PV Upgrades** - Upgrade to higher-efficiency modules to boost generation and increase savings, whilst retaining your Feed-in Tariff payments.
-  **Re-roofing or roof repairs** - Integrate essential roof works to future-proof your business and ensure long-term solar performance.
-  **Monitoring and Maintenance** - Ongoing monitoring and maintenance to optimise performance and maximise your ROI.

See how much your business could save today

Get a Personalised Savings Estimate

Book a 15-Minute Consultation with an energy expert



The Solar Checklist

There are several considerations that commercial property owners should take into account when looking at investing in solar and battery storage to ensure they understand the potential challenges, benefits and end up with a solution that will have the best positive impact on their sustainability, financial and energy ambitions.

When discussing your needs with a solar energy specialist, here are a list of questions that will help you make the right choice.

For landlords

- ✓ How much revenue could be generated by selling energy at reduced rates to tenants?
- ✓ How will solar help make my property more attractive to high-value tenants?

For owner-occupiers

- ✓ How much can I save in energy costs by investing in solar?
- ✓ How will solar shield my operation from volatile energy costs?
- ✓ How will the predictability of solar costs help me with financial forecasting?

For both

- ✓ What are my main motivations for installing solar?
- ✓ How will solar help me meet mandated energy efficiency requirements?
- ✓ How much revenue could be generated by selling energy back to the grid?
- ✓ What is the estimated payback period for my installation and could this be covered through new revenue streams opened up by solar investment?
- ✓ What financial support options do I have and what's best for my organisation?
- ✓ How will a solar investment increase the value of my property portfolio?
- ✓ Are there any ongoing maintenance and operational costs I should be aware of?

- ✓ What insurance do I need to take out to cover my solar panels?
- ✓ How many solar panels do I actually need/how many do I have the space for?
- ✓ What solar energy systems are best for my specifications?
- ✓ What legislation and regulation do I need to comply with?
- ✓ Will the DNO restrict the number of solar panels I can install? Are there ways around this limit to maximise my PV system and benefits sought?
- ✓ What does ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M) involve, and how can SolarSense help ensure optimal performance and warranty protection?

Speeding up the process of installing solar

We all know time is money, so to speed up the process of deploying solar on your site, it is highly recommended that you have the following information to hand to assist your solar energy provider:

- ✓ Google earth image or marked image of the building roof and surrounding area
- ✓ Type of roof (e.g. flat, tiled or trapezoidal)
- ✓ Type of power supply (e.g. single or three phase)
- ✓ Annual half hourly data (or as much data as possible)
- ✓ Current unit price of energy
- ✓ Finance in place or needed (e.g. asset finance, PPA, Solar as a Service)
- ✓ Any future expansion plans (e.g. fleet of electric vehicles)



Solar in action

Sector: Commercial Property

Company: Orchard Street

Tenants: Lidl, M&S, TK Maxx and more

Technology: Solar PV

Orchard Street Investment Management (OSIM) is a commercial property investment manager, focused on delivering long-term value for institutional investors. With a proven track record across core, value-add, and impact strategies, the company manages a diverse portfolio spanning retail, office, industrial, and mixed-use sectors.

As part of its ongoing drive to cut emissions and improve energy performance across its commercial property portfolio, Orchard Street partnered with SolarSense to **deliver solar PV installations** across key retail and industrial sites through a **landlord-tenant solar PPA**.



Spanning properties occupied by major national brands such as Lidl, M&S, Carpetright and TK Maxx, alongside a diverse mix of small and medium-sized businesses, these projects represent an important step in aligning landlord and tenant sustainability goals with financial objectives.

SolarSense delivered a fully integrated clean energy solution that went far beyond installation. This included initial advice on optimising the installs, implementing advanced sub-metering, and enabling real-time monitoring of on-site energy generation, usage, and export. Automated billing systems were also introduced, allowing Orchard Street to accurately monitor and charge tenants for the solar power they consume – creating a new, profitable and sustainable revenue stream for the landlord without disrupting tenant supply arrangements.

This model demonstrates how sustainability-led investment can deliver meaningful returns for both tenants and property owners. By generating clean electricity on-site, tenants benefit from lower energy costs and protection from rising grid prices, all while reducing their carbon footprint. For commercial property owners, the solution creates a reliable and profitable inflation-linked income stream, enhancing asset value, reducing carbon emissions and increasing the EPC ratings of buildings.



About the guide's publisher

This guide is published by SolarSense, one of the UK's most established clean energy providers. Founded in 1995, SolarSense designs, installs and maintains commercial and industrial clean energy systems across the UK, supporting many of the country's leading organisations in their transition to Net Zero.

Quality, performance and long-term value sit at the heart of every project. SolarSense has been recognised with more than 20 national awards for its technical expertise, customer service and pioneering renewable energy solutions.

Operating nationwide, SolarSense is an employee-owned Certified B Corporation, providing a range of complementary clean energy solutions that deliver measurable financial savings, carbon reductions and greater energy independence for clients across multiple sectors.



Proudly
employee
owned.



Certificate Number ACL 1040



Certificate Number ACL 1040B



Making solar work for your balance sheet

SolarSense understands that for commercial landlords, solar is an investment decision as much as a sustainability one. That is why every project is underpinned by detailed financial and technical modelling.

Using industry-leading software, SolarSense accurately forecasts how much energy each building will generate, how it will be consumed by tenants, and the income it can produce through private wire, export and EV charging. This allows landlords to clearly see expected payback, long-term cashflow and the impact on asset performance before committing to a scheme.

Whether you are targeting improved investment returns, stronger EPC ratings or future-proofed buildings, SolarSense structures every project to deliver measurable financial returns alongside carbon reduction.