The Hotelier Review

SUMMER 2026 THE ENERGY & RESILIENCE EDITION

FOR OWNERS, GENERAL MANAGERS & ESTATE DIRECTORS

Inside...

The day you can't get back: luxury venues move to make blackouts invisible

Weddings, galas and once-in-a-lifetime moments are driving a quiet revolution in hotel plant rooms — battery storage that answers in under a second.

There is no second take on a wedding day. If the power fails mid-ceremony, the music stops, the kitchen goes dark and the first dance is lit by phone torches. No refund puts it right, and no five-star reputation escapes unscathed.

At estates like Thornmere Park – a five-star Surrey estate with an award-winning spa and one of the South East's busiest event calendars – a single lost event day can cost £30,000–£40,000 before reputational damage is counted.

Battery energy storage answers the call in under a second, long before a diesel generator has turned a shaft. Guests notice nothing: the quartet plays on, the ovens hold temperature, and the champagne stays cold.

The rest of the year, the same system quietly pays for itself, charging when power is cheapest and running the estate through expensive evening peaks – cutting electricity bills by 30–50%.

ADVERTISEMENT

Keep every promise you make to your guests.

Always Energy designs, installs and services utility-scale battery storage on the BYD MC Cube platform – the technology behind the world's largest energy projects, engineered for luxury hospitality.

- Seamless power through any outage
- 30–50% off electricity bills
- Extra capacity now; upgrades in-house
- A genuine, measurable green story

ALWAYS ENERGY
Book a free site survey
07894 854 897

Green credentials now sway the luxury booking

Planners now ask for carbon data before confirming events. Storage plus solar lets a property bank its own clean energy – and provide the data to prove it.

SPOTLIGHT

West Court Retreat banks £54-63k a year

A coordinated energy centre now runs this Home Counties hotel and spa through peaks and outages alike - banking £54–63k a year in savings and grid revenue.

The Connect bioclimatic pergola, subject to site survey and design. Image courtesy of Pratic S.p.A.

Power, hidden in plain sight: the pergola that makes the plant room beautiful

Always Energy pairs the battery installation with Pratic's Connect – an Italian-made bioclimatic pergola whose mirrored glass reflects the gardens around it, so the estate sees landscape, not infrastructure.

Most battery compounds are fenced like substations. Ours is dressed like the rest of the estate: a self-supporting aluminium structure whose modules join in length and depth, sized around the cabinets, with motorised louvres, integrated drainage concealed in the posts, and optional LED lighting and automation.

Guests walking the grounds see a beautiful garden pavilion mirroring the planting around it – while behind the glass, the estate's power quietly takes care of itself.

Spy Glass panels: the garden, reflected.

THE CONCEPT, IN BRIEF

Disappears by design
Mirrored panels reflect the gardens, hiding what sits inside

Sized to the system
Modular frame extends in width and depth, built around the cabinets

Engineered, not decorative
Ventilation, service access and fire separation designed in from day one

Beautiful at night too
Optional LED lighting, automation and sockets

One project, one team
Power system and pergola delivered as one coordinated installation

MINUTE BY MINUTE

What a power cut actually does to a hotel

ANATOMY OF AN OUTAGE

0:00 Lifts stop between floors.

0:01 Electronic door locks freeze; Wi-Fi, reception and tills drop offline.

0:05 Kitchens go dark mid-service; fridges begin to warm

0:10 Spa treatments halt; saunas and steam rooms begin to cool

0:30 Water pumps idle; the complaints begin.

Day 2 The negative reviews arrive

With a battery, the clock never starts. The handover is measured in milliseconds — and the only person who knows is the energy manager.

THE SPA PROBLEM

A spa is a power station in a bathrobe: saunas, steam generators, hydrotherapy pumps and pool circulation drawing hard all day. An outage doesn't just pause a treatment – reheating steam rooms and saunas takes hours, and takes the afternoon's bookings with it.

DIRTY POWER

Voltage dips and surges rarely make the news, but they quietly shorten the life of HVAC plant, lifts, refrigeration and IT. A modern battery system conditions the supply – smoothing voltage and frequency – so expensive equipment lasts longer and fails less often.

DIESEL'S LAST STAND

The generator isn't fired, it's demoted. The battery carries the load instantly; the generator starts only if an outage runs long. Less fuel, less noise, fewer fumes, less maintenance – for most short outages it never turns at all.

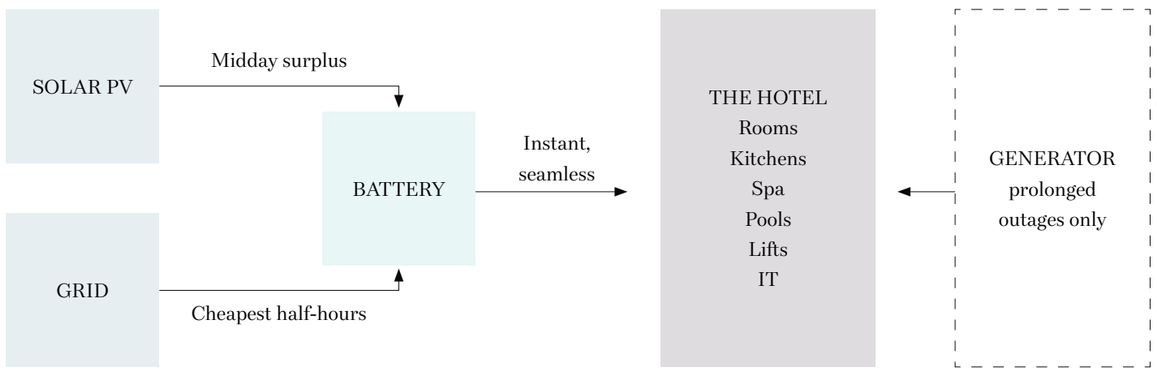
SUNSHINE, BANKED

Solar peaks at lunchtime; hotels peak in the evening. Without storage, the surplus is exported for pennies. With it, the afternoon's sunshine reheats the evening's saunas.

THE DEMAND-CHARGE TRAP

Commercial bills are driven by your single highest peak. Shave that peak with stored power, and the whole bill follows it down.

How it all fits together



Cheaper power, and more of it

ARBITRAGE, EXPLAINED

Britain's wholesale power price changes every half hour, and the swings are violent: in the past month alone it has dipped below zero at lunchtime and cleared 30p the same evening. Flat-rate contracts smooth all of this away, which feels safe, but means paying a premium for every unit, at every hour, all year. Most hotels never see the market they are actually buying from.

A battery lives on that spread. It watches the half-hourly market, fills up in the cheapest windows, increasingly the middle of a sunny day, and runs the estate through the expensive evening peak, automatically, with no lights dimmed and no routine changed. Stacked with peak-shaving and solar self-use, that daily trade is where the 30–50% reduction comes from: not by using less, but by buying better.

MORE POWER, STARTING NOW

Bigger incoming supplies are our home turf: as an Independent Connection Provider, Always Energy designs and delivers grid upgrades directly – no waiting at the back of someone else's queue. But even a well-run upgrade takes time to consent and construct, and ambitions rarely wait.

The battery closes that gap. Discharging alongside the grid at busy times, it lets the site draw more power at peak from day one – and once the new connection is energised, the pair work harder together: a bigger pipe for cheap charging, and head-room for whatever the estate dreams up next.

AN ILLUSTRATIVE TRADING DAY

4:00am	**8p**	Charge overnight	
1:30pm	**2p**	Charge hard – the midday solar glut	
5:30pm	**31p**	Discharge: the hotel runs on battery	
10:30pm	**11p**	Top up for tomorrow	

Illustrative half-hourly wholesale prices; battery shown green when charging, red when discharging. Savings modelled from your own data and tariff.

A DAY AT THE HOTEL, IN kW

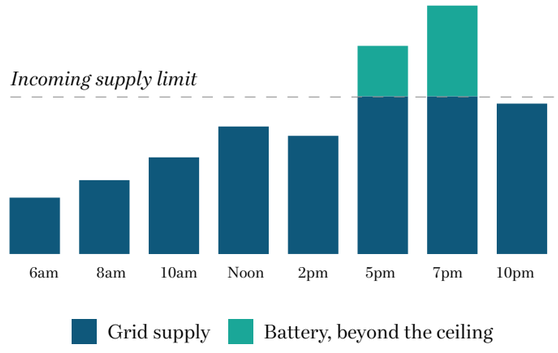


Chart illustrative: peak demand served jointly by grid and battery, sized from your half-hourly data. Table: The Hotelier Review

THE ARITHMETIC, FOR A REAL-SIZED HOTEL*

2 MWh
a day– a large-sized hotel & spa

£15,000
monthly bill at today's rates

£4.5–7.5k
back in your pocket, every month

£0
cost of the outages that never happen

£540-900k
kept over a decade, before charging revenue or grid services –and payback typically lands within the first few years.

**Illustrative*

The car park starts earning its keep

Charge points, solar carports, battery and grid upgrade: one coordinated installation

Destination charging – fed by off-peak energy and solar carports – turns guest parking into revenue that repays the whole system sooner.

PUMPS ARE OUT. PLUGS ARE IN

A hotel car park is the perfect charging forecourt: cars sit for hours, drivers pay for convenience, and demand arrives on its own four wheels. What usually stalls the plan is capacity – the incoming supply can't feed a row of chargers on top of the kitchens and the spa.

The battery solves both halves. It creates the headroom to add more bays (see page 4), and it fills them with energy bought in the cheap half-hours or made on site – sold on at forecourt rates. Every unit sold shortens the payback on the entire system.

THE CAR PARK BECOMES A POWER STATION – AND A PARASOL

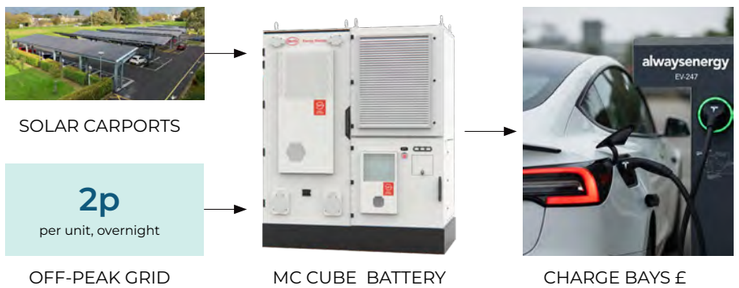
In a summer like this one, shade is a luxury guests notice. Solar carports keep the sun off the cars – no scorched seats or untouchable steering wheels at checkout – while branding the estate as visibly green and turning the car park roof into a generator feeding the battery all day. The same heat that fills the spa terrace fills the battery: daylight becomes charging revenue by evening.

AND THE GUESTS ARE LOOKING

EV drivers now plan stays around reliable charging the way motorists once planned around petrol stations. A full row of working bays isn't infrastructure — it's marketing, visible from the booking page.

FROM SUNSHINE TO SETTLEMENT

Energy bought low or made on site – sold at the socket



THE MARGIN, ILLUSTRATED*

2–8p	in: off-peak grid or carport sun
45p	out: destination tariff, set by you
Yours	the margin – fastest payback going

**Modelled from your rates and dwell times.*

Photographs: supplier press images

The cell beneath the calm

Every system we install is built on BYD's Blade cell – lithium iron phosphate chemistry famous for passing the nail-penetration test, the battery industry's harshest abuse trial, without fire or explosion.

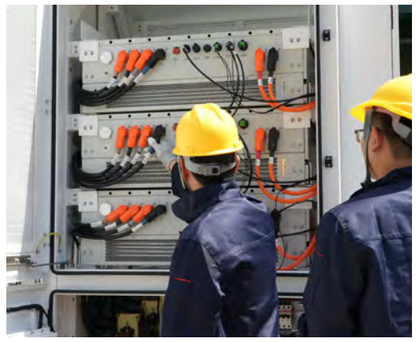
It is the same cell family BYD builds into its electric cars by the million, packaged here with liquid cooling, aerosol fire suppression and UL9540A certification, and engineered for thousands of daily charge cycles.

One hundred per cent depth of discharge means every kilowatt-hour installed is one you can actually use — no hidden reserve, no small print.

And batteries like these do not simply stop one day: capacity fades gently across decades of daily work.

TWO MEGAWATT-HOURS BEHIND ONE SET OF DOORS: THE FOUR-CABINET INDUSTRIAL FLEX

Image: BYD / EFT Energy Solutions, Always Energy's European partner



THE STATS

≤75 dBA
quieter than the kitchen extractor

-25°C to +50°C
IP55 rated

100%
depth of discharge

6,000+
cycle design

TOMORROW'S OUTLOOK

Thornmere Park

100% chance of uninterrupted power. Extended forecast: bills down 30–50%; champagne cold indefinitely.

Classifieds

For sale

One diesel generator. Low hours (soon). Reluctantly retired following arrival of something quieter, cleaner and cheaper to run. Sentimental value only. Buyer collects.

CORRECTIONS

Clarifications

In earlier editions, the grid was described as "reliable enough". We are happy to correct the record.

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†Reader offer subject to survey and standard service terms