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Applications for Artificial Intelligence in Building Electrical Systems: Case Studies, Integration, and Future Requirements

Rusu Daniel Sorin

Technical University of Cluj-Napoca, Faculty of Building Systems, B-dul 21 Decembrie 1989, nr. 128-130, Cluj Napoca, Romania
Email: *daniel.rusu[at]insta.utcluj.ro*

Abstract: ***Artificial intelligence (AI) is redefining building electrical installations by enabling adaptive, data-driven control that enhances energy efficiency, reliability, and sustainability. Buildings account for a major share of global energy use and carbon emissions. Recent studies estimate that AI could reduce energy consumption by 8–19% by 2050, especially when paired with strong efficiency policies and clean electricity. This paper reviews key AI applications in electrical installations, including load forecasting, energy monitoring, HVAC optimization, digital-twin operations, and grid-interactive demand response. Future directions include AI-augmented electrical design, self-healing distribution, and microgrid orchestration. Successful deployment requires robust computational resources, high-quality sensing, interdisciplinary expertise, and effective cybersecurity and regulation. AI-enabled electrical systems thus represent a cornerstone of the next generation of sustainable, intelligent buildings.***

Keywords: Artificial intelligence; Building energy management; Smart buildings; Energy efficiency; Sustainable building design

1. Introduction

Electrical installations in buildings have traditionally been designed and operated using static methods and deterministic engineering rules. Fixed schedules and manual control dominate everyday practice. Such systems rarely adapt in real time to changing occupancy, weather conditions, or fluctuating energy prices, leading to inefficiencies, higher peak demand, and underutilization of installed electrical capacity. Over the past decade, rapid advances in sensing, connectivity, and AI have made it possible to operate building electrical systems as dynamic, data-driven cyber-physical systems.[1]. AI and machine learning (ML) techniques can continuously learn from high-resolution operational data to forecast loads, optimize equipment control, detect incipient faults, and support maintenance and planning decisions. At the systems level, AI-enhanced building energy management systems (BEMS) and building management systems (BMS) integrate electrical distribution, HVAC, lighting, and on-site generation into coordinated control frameworks. The main objectives in these deployments are to reduce energy consumption and cost, manage electrical demand peaks, improve power quality, and maintain or enhance occupant comfort while respecting safety and code requirements.[2]

Scenario analyses underscore the scale of the opportunity. Ding et al. (2024) show that AI could reduce energy consumption and carbon emissions of U.S. medium office buildings by roughly 8% in a business-as-usual scenario by 2050 and by about 19% with strong energy-efficiency policies, with even larger reductions when AI is combined with low-emission power generation. Related studies on smart buildings and digital twins indicate that AI-enabled operation can significantly improve cost and carbon performance in both retrofit and new-build contexts. Artificial neural networks (ANNs), model predictive control (MPC), and hybrid physics-informed models have been widely applied to building load prediction and HVAC control, demonstrating high accuracy and adaptability in real-world building systems.

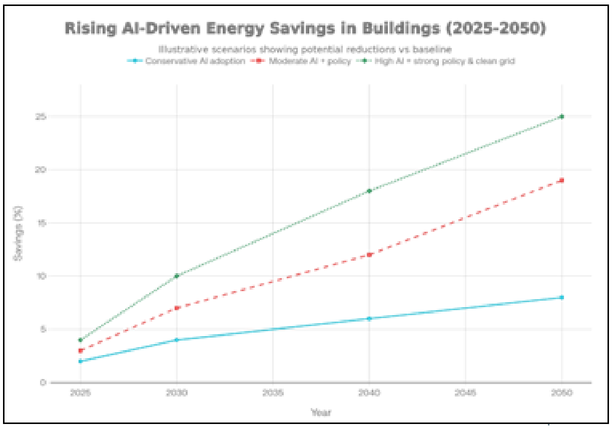

Figure 1: Illustrative potential building energy savings from AI under different adoption and policy scenarios

Figure 1 synthesizes the projected potential of AI in building operations under different adoption and policy scenarios, consistent with the ranges reported in recent literature.

This article synthesizes current knowledge and practice on AI in electrical installations for buildings, emphasizing the perspective of electrical engineering. Section 2 reviews the state of the art in AI-based load forecasting, energy monitoring, HVAC optimization, and integrated smart building control. Section 3 presents real-world case studies at building and campus scales to illustrate technical implementations, performance outcomes, and engineering implications. Section 4 explores future directions in AI-augmented electrical design, autonomous distribution, and AI-orchestrated microgrids, while Section 5 examines computational and data resource requirements. Section 6 discusses challenges and limitations related to safety, regulation, cybersecurity, and model reliability, followed by conclusions in Section 7.[3]

2. Current Applications of AI in Electrical Installations

2.1 AI-Based Load Forecasting and Energy Monitoring

AI-based load forecasting in buildings leverages time-series data, weather, and occupancy information to predict electrical demand with high temporal resolution, often at 15-minute or sub-hourly intervals. Such forecasts enable demand-side management strategies, peak shaving, and more precise sizing or operation of on-site generation and storage. ANN-based and hybrid ML models have demonstrated superior performance compared to traditional statistical methods in predicting electricity use in residential, commercial, and office buildings.[4]

High-resolution monitoring at the panel and equipment level is a prerequisite for advanced AI applications. Data from smart meters, panel meters, and embedded sensors are increasingly combined with BMS point data (temperatures, valve positions, statuses) to provide a rich picture of electrical usage patterns and anomalies. Recent reviews emphasize that non-intrusive load monitoring and AI-based diagnostics play a critical role in identifying energy waste, detecting malfunctioning equipment, and benchmarking performance across portfolios of buildings.

2.2 AI-Driven HVAC Optimization and Autonomous Control

HVAC systems are often the largest electrical load in commercial buildings, making them prime targets for AI-driven optimization. AI controllers learn the dynamic thermal behavior of buildings and the performance of HVAC components, using techniques such as ANN-based model predictive control (MPC) and adaptive-predictive control to minimize energy use while preserving comfort and indoor air quality.[5]

Experimental and simulation studies show that AI-enhanced HVAC control can reduce energy use by 10–30% relative to conventional rule-based control in various building types. For example, adaptive-predictive control strategies for HVAC systems have demonstrated substantial savings and improved comfort by continuously updating models based on real-time measurements and forecasts. AI-powered HVAC systems in educational buildings have similarly reported double-digit energy and cost reductions, with careful tuning to local climate and occupancy patterns.[5]

From an electrical engineering point of view, improved HVAC efficiency reduces both average and peak electrical demand, decreasing transformer and feeder loading and potentially extending asset life. Moreover, AI-based control can shift HVAC operation in time through pre-cooling or pre-heating strategies, aligning building load profiles with periods of lower tariffs or lower grid carbon intensity.[6]

2.3 Smart Building Integration and Real-Time Optimization

Beyond individual subsystems, AI is increasingly used as a supervisory layer that coordinates HVAC, lighting, plug loads, and distributed energy resources (DERs) in smart buildings. AI-enhanced BEMS integrate data from electrical meters, environmental and occupancy sensors, and external sources such as weather and tariffs to continuously optimize building operation. Recent reviews emphasize that AI can support both energy efficiency and occupant comfort by learning patterns of use and automatically adjusting setpoints, schedules, and control strategies.

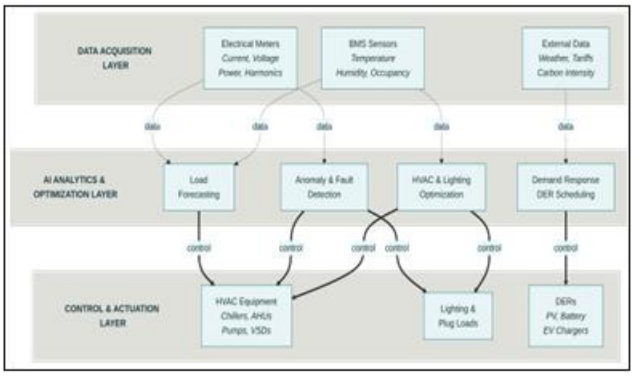

Figure 2: Conceptual architecture of an AI-enabled electrical installation, showing data acquisition from electrical and building sensors, AI analytics, and control outputs to HVAC, lighting, and distributed energy resources

At the grid interface, AI-enabled buildings can serve as flexible loads, providing demand response and ancillary services through automated modulation of non-critical loads, storage, and on-site generation. AI and AI-powered digital twins are also being used to simulate and evaluate the impact of control strategies on energy use, comfort, and emissions before deployment, reducing operational risk.[7]

3. Real-World Case Studies of AI in Electrical Installations for Buildings

3.1 The Edge, Amsterdam – AI-Optimized Electrical and Low-Voltage Systems

The Edge office building in Amsterdam is widely cited as a benchmark for smart and sustainable offices, combining advanced architecture with highly integrated electrical and low-voltage systems. The building incorporates tens of thousands of sensors for occupancy, illuminance, temperature, humidity, and equipment status, embedded throughout lighting circuits, power outlets, and building automation networks. Data from these sensors are processed using analytics and AI tools to implement occupancy-aware and daylight-responsive control strategies for lighting and HVAC.

A distinctive feature of The Edge is its extensive use of Power-over-Ethernet (PoE) LED lighting, which allows simultaneous power delivery and data communication over structured cabling. Each luminaire and its associated sensor nodes are addressable, enabling fine-grained zoning and dimming based on real-time occupancy and daylight levels. This architecture reduces installed lighting power density, lowers peak demand, and increases controllability of low-voltage distribution circuits.

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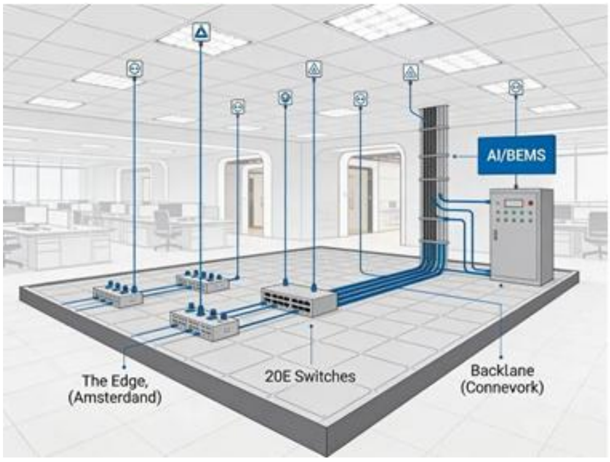

Figure 3: Schematic floor plan of a modern office level at The Edge, Amsterdam, showing an open-plan workspace overlaid with a regular grid of PoE LED luminaires and associated occupancy/light sensors.[5]

Empirical assessments indicate that The Edge consumes significantly less electricity than conventional office buildings of similar size, with reductions on the order of 70% when combined with other efficiency measures such as high-performance envelope and on-site photovoltaics. The building has achieved top-tier sustainability ratings, illustrating that AI-enabled, highly networked electrical installations can be deployed in compliance with European electrical safety standards and IEC regulations.[6]

3.2 Keppel Bay Tower, Singapore – AI-Controlled Electrical Load Distribution

Keppel Bay Tower in Singapore illustrates the integration of AI and digital twin technology into the electrical and mechanical systems of a high-rise commercial building. Electrical demand from chillers, pumps, air handling units, and auxiliary loads is monitored at high granularity and fed into a calibrated digital twin model that replicates the building's thermal and electrical behavior.

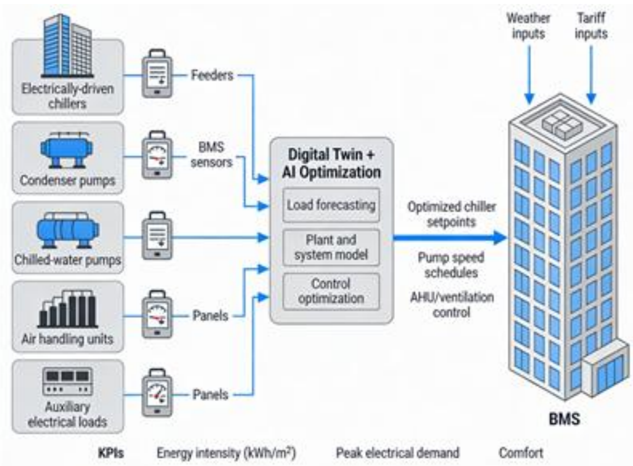

Figure 4: Schematic representation of the AI-enabled digital-twin workflow at Keppel Bay Tower, Singapore.

The schematic diagram is illustrating the AI-enabled digital-twin workflow for electrical load distribution optimization at Keppel Bay Tower, Singapore. The building's major electrical and mechanical systems—electrically driven chillers, condenser and chilled-water pumps, air handling units, ventilation fans, and auxiliary services—are equipped with advanced metering and sensors that feed real-time data into a digital twin platform. Within the central "Digital Twin + AI Optimization" module, algorithms perform load forecasting, system modeling, and control optimization using weather data and tariff inputs. Optimized operating schedules and setpoints are transmitted back to the building management system to adjust chiller sequencing, pump speeds, and air-handling unit settings. The framework continuously evaluates key performance indicators such as energy intensity (kWh/m²), peak electrical demand, and indoor comfort, enabling engineers to validate control strategies virtually before implementation and progressively refine system performance over time.

AI and optimization algorithms within the digital twin are used to predict short-term and long-term demand and to test different control strategies under realistic operating conditions. The resulting strategies are then deployed in the real building, focusing on improving part-load operation of electrically driven chillers and pumps, which is critical in Singapore's cooling-dominated climate. Reported results indicate additional energy savings of approximately 7% on top of earlier retrofits, contributing to an overall reduction in energy intensity of around 30% and significant annual electricity cost savings.[7]

This case demonstrates how AI-enhanced digital twins support risk-aware optimization of electrical and mechanical systems, allowing engineers to validate control strategies virtually before deployment. The approach reduces commissioning risk, improves reliability, and enables continual performance tuning over time.

3.3 Infosys Campuses, India – AI for Electrical Capacity Management at Scale

Infosys has implemented AI-enabled energy and electrical management systems across a portfolio of large campuses in India, encompassing office buildings, data centers, and support facilities. Over roughly a decade, Infosys increased its workforce by approximately 166% while limiting the increase in electricity consumption to about 20%, implying a strong decoupling between growth and energy use.

This result was achieved through a combination of high-performance building design, aggressive efficiency retrofits, extensive solar deployment, and analytics-driven energy management. AI models were used to analyze historical energy consumption, occupancy growth, and climatic data to forecast future load requirements and to design demand-side management strategies such as peak shaving, optimal chiller operation, and scheduling of major loads. Portfolio-level analysis helped prioritize investments and defer upgrades to transformers and substations without compromising reliability.

The Infosys experience illustrates how AI and advanced analytics can support electrical capacity planning and portfolio-level optimization, enabling organizations to balance growth, cost, and sustainability.

3.4 Public and Institutional Buildings- Grid-Interactive Electrical Installations

In Northern Europe, public and institutional buildings increasingly act as grid-interactive resources through AI-enabled BEMS and digital twins. Predictive control algorithms modulate non-critical electrical loads—such as ventilation, electric heating, and thermal storage—in response to dynamic electricity prices, grid frequency, and carbon intensity signals.[7]

Technical roadmaps and case studies compiled by international organizations show that such buildings can provide demand response, frequency support, and congestion management services while maintaining occupant comfort and regulatory compliance. For municipalities, AI-enabled coordination of multiple buildings yields substantial annual savings and supports the integration of variable renewable energy into the grid.

4. Future Directions and Emerging Applications in Building Electrical Engineering

4.1 AI-Augmented Electrical System Design and BIM Integration

While most current applications focus on operation, AI is increasingly moving upstream into the design phase of building electrical systems. AI-enhanced BIM environments can automatically generate and evaluate electrical designs, including cable routing, panel and distribution layouts, and protective device coordination.[13]

Generative design and optimization algorithms can explore large design spaces subject to constraints on voltage drop, short-circuit levels, thermal ratings, space, and compliance with IEC and NEC standards. By embedding manufacturer data and code rules into the BIM context, AI can propose designs that minimize conductor length and material use while improving constructability and maintainability. Such workflows promise to reduce design errors and coordination problems, especially in complex projects with dense electrical and communication infrastructure.[7]

4.2 Autonomous Electrical Distribution and Self-Healing Systems

Future building electrical systems are likely to feature increasing autonomy, including self-healing capabilities in low-voltage and medium-voltage distribution networks. AI-based diagnostics can continuously analyze measurements of current, voltage, harmonics, and temperature from cables, busbars, breakers, and protective devices to detect early signs of degradation and abnormal conditions.

In advanced implementations, AI can work alongside conventional protection schemes to recommend or execute reconfiguration actions, such as opening and closing automatic transfer switches or re-routing power through redundant feeders to maintain supply to critical loads. Hospitals, data centers, transport hubs, and other mission-critical facilities stand to benefit from such self-healing architectures, which can reduce outage durations and improve resilience. Clear rules and constraints are required to ensure that AI actions remain compatible with protection coordination and fail-safe principles.

4.3 AI-Orchestrated Microgrids and Renewable Integration

As buildings adopt rooftop or façade photovoltaics, battery energy storage, and EV charging infrastructure, AI will play a key role in orchestrating building-scale microgrids. AI-based controllers combine forecasts of building load, solar generation, EV charging demand, and electricity prices to optimize power flows, storage schedules, and interactions with the upstream grid.[8]

AI-orchestrated microgrids can reduce reverse power flows, mitigate transformer overloading, and manage voltage and frequency deviations, especially in distribution networks with high DER penetration. During grid disturbances or outages, AI-enabled controllers can prioritize critical loads, manage state of charge of batteries, and coordinate black-start procedures, improving resilience and continuity of service. Digital-twin-based approaches extend these capabilities by enabling detailed scenario analysis and robustness testing in a virtual environment.

5. Resource Requirements for AI-Driven Electrical Installations

5.1 Computational Infrastructure

Most AI deployments in building electrical systems use hybrid edge–cloud architectures. Edge devices, such as industrial PCs or smart gateways, host local analytics and control functions that must operate with low latency and high availability, even when connectivity to the cloud is interrupted. Cloud resources are used for data storage, large-scale model training, and fleet-wide optimization across multiple buildings.[13]

Efficient MLOps practices are essential for managing multiple AI models, ensuring version control, monitoring performance, and supporting safe rollback when needed. As model complexity and data volumes grow, computational requirements will increase, motivating careful design of model architectures and deployment strategies to balance accuracy, robustness, and resource use.

5.2 Data Acquisition and Electrical Sensing

High-quality, high-granularity data are critical for AI performance. Electrical installations must incorporate sufficient metering and sensing at feeders, panels, and equipment to provide the current, voltage, power factor, and harmonic data needed for forecasting, diagnostics, and control. Additional data such as temperature, occupancy, and indoor air quality metrics are necessary for comfort-aware optimization.[9]

Interoperability standards, including BACnet and Modbus for building automation and IEC 61850 for substation and protection automation, support the integration of heterogeneous devices into unified data platforms. Reviews of BEMS and AI integration emphasize that data cleansing, time synchronization, and standardized point naming are major practical challenges that must be addressed for successful AI deployment.

5.3 Human Capital and Organizational Readiness

AI-enabled electrical installations demand interdisciplinary collaboration between electrical engineers, energy modelers, control engineers, data scientists, software developers, and cybersecurity specialists. Electrical engineers must understand the capabilities and limitations of AI to frame appropriate problems, define constraints, and interpret model outputs. Data scientists and AI engineers, in turn, must be familiar with the physics and operational constraints of electrical systems to develop valid and robust models.[10]

Organizational readiness also encompasses training, change management, and the establishment of governance structures for AI deployment, including clear responsibilities for monitoring, override, and incident response. Empirical studies on AI and digital-twin adoption in buildings emphasize that human factors and institutional capacity are as important as technology readiness for realizing sustained benefits.

6. Challenges and Limitations

6.1 Safety, Reliability, and Regulatory Compliance

Electrical installations are subject to stringent safety and reliability requirements under standards and codes such as IEC 60364, IEC 60947, and national wiring rules. AI-based control must operate within these frameworks, honoring conservative design margins and ensuring deterministic behavior under fault conditions. Regulatory frameworks for certifying AI-based control in safety-critical applications are still emerging, leaving open questions regarding liability and acceptable levels of autonomy.[14]

Technical reviews and roadmaps stress that AI is best used to complement established protection schemes, with clear limits on control actions, fallback modes, and human oversight. Formal verification, hardware-in-the-loop testing, and rigorous commissioning procedures will be critical for integrating AI into mission-critical electrical installations.[14]

6.2 Cybersecurity and Data Integrity

AI-enabled electrical installations introduce a larger attack surface due to increased connectivity, cloud integration, and the central role of data. Compromised AI systems could manipulate control signals, falsify measurements, or disable monitoring, potentially creating unsafe conditions.

Best practice guidance emphasizes network segmentation between operational technology and IT networks, secure gateways, encryption, authentication, and continuous monitoring with anomaly detection. Ensuring data integrity in both training and operational phases is essential to prevent model poisoning or drift that could degrade performance or safety.

6.3 Data Quality and Model Reliability

AI models are sensitive to data quality, completeness, and representativeness. Sensor errors, missing data, changes in building occupancy, and equipment upgrades can degrade model performance if not properly handled. Reviews of AI in BEMS and digital-twin applications highlight the need for continuous model validation, performance monitoring, and periodic retraining.

Hybrid and physics-informed approaches, as well as interpretable machine learning, can enhance trust and robustness by incorporating domain knowledge and providing explanations for AI decisions. From a practical standpoint, AI control architectures must incorporate safe defaults and clear boundaries so that the system can revert to conservative operation under uncertainty or model failure.

7. Conclusions

AI is reshaping the design and operation of electrical installations in buildings, enabling them to function as adaptive, sensor-rich, and data-driven systems that continuously optimize performance. Existing applications in load forecasting, energy monitoring, HVAC optimization, smart building integration, and grid-interactive demand response already demonstrate significant energy, cost, and emissions benefits. Flagship projects such as The Edge, Keppel Bay Tower, and the Infosys campuses show that AI-enabled electrical and mechanical systems can achieve high energy performance and defer infrastructure investments while maintaining reliability.

Future developments are likely to expand AI's role into early-stage electrical design via BIM, autonomous self-healing distribution, and orchestration of building microgrids with high DER penetration. Realizing this potential requires robust computational and sensing infrastructures, interdisciplinary human capital, and strong frameworks for safety, cybersecurity, and regulation.

Recent research suggests that widespread AI adoption in building electrical and energy systems could reduce building energy use and associated carbon emissions by approximately 8–19% by mid-century, with even greater reductions in ambitious policy scenarios. As AI and digital-twin technologies continue to mature, AI-driven electrical installations are poised to become a core component of sustainable, resilient, and intelligent buildings, placing electrical engineers at the forefront of the digital transformation of the built environment.

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Author Profile

Rusu Daniel Sorin received his Phd. Diploma in Civil Engineering from Techincal University of Cluj-Napoca in 2012. Currently he is a lector at the Faculty of Building Services, specialized in Computer Aided Engineering. He is also a consultant and a designer in energy efficiency systems for residential and industrial sectors.