

SOLAR AND BATTERIES FOR STRATA



1 What is the right sized solar/battery system?

If you have a digital interval meter or smart meter you can request historic metering data in periodic intervals, e.g. every 30 minutes, from your energy retailer. Using a full year of historic metering data will allow the most accurate sizing of a solar or solar/battery system.

2 Council approval

Most solar installations are Exempt Developments, which means you don't need a development application. Council approval may be required if your installation is larger than 100kW or due to heritage considerations. Batteries which are over 20kWh will require a Complying Development Certificate (CDC) which can be provided by an independent certifier and lodged with council.

3 Four types of solar install for strata schemes

1. Individual solar/battery systems can be connected to individual lot electricity meters, e.g. townhouses or villas.
2. A solar/battery system can be connected to the common area meter to reduce the costs of running lifts, lighting, ventilation.
3. A shared solar/battery system can be connected to individual apartment meters and/or the common area meter, e.g. Allume Energy Solshare or Zeco Marshall.
4. Where an embedded electrical network is present, the solar/battery system can be connected to the gate meter.

4 Understand potential prerequisite projects

Roof waterproofing may be needed if the roof is damaged as solar panels last for 25-30 years.

On the main switchboard, ceramic fuses or older residual current devices (RCD's) MUST be replaced with RCBO's in order to meet the AS3000 wiring rules.

Newly cut meter panels may be needed in some cases if the smart meters do not fit in the existing footprint of the old meters.

A structural engineering report is mandatory for a wind speed signoff and will be arranged by your chosen solar installer. For particular types of roofs, such as tile roofs with wooden cross-beams, it is optional to get a structural engineering report to see if the weight of the solar system can be supported.

5 Finding a solar installer

Check that your solar installer is accredited with [Solar Accreditation Australia](#) (SAA) and that they are offering the minimum 5 year installation warranty.

Optionally, check if the solar installers are [New Energy Tech Approved Sellers](#).

To check the year of incorporation of their business search for them on [ABN Lookup](#).

Check if the solar installer has a NSW unrestricted [electrical licence](#).

A strata scheme should get a minimum of two quotations prior to voting on proceeding with solar. There can be a wide variation in price, even when the solar and/or battery sizes are equivalent. Therefore, many strata schemes get three quotes.

6 Selecting appropriate solar system components

Bloomberg ranks battery storage, inverters and solar panels annually in their lists of [Tier 1 products](#).

If you have shading from trees or other buildings, you may have to use microinverters or DC optimisers.

If you want to add a battery to a solar sharing system in the future you will need to get a quote with a hybrid inverter.

If you are doing a solar sharing and battery sharing system, then you will need to use DC coupled batteries.

AC coupled batteries can be used with common area solar systems or individual solar systems for townhouses.

Solar panels may have 10-15 year product warranties and 25-30 year performance warranties. Inverters and batteries typically have 10 year product warranties.

7 Government rebates

Solar systems are eligible for federal Small-scale Technology Certificates (STCs) incentives. The federal 'Cheaper Home Batteries' incentive is also measured in STCs. Until 4 December 2026, there is an additional 50% rebate for strata schemes which install solar which connects to every apartment under the NSW Solar for Apartment Residents (SoAR) rebate. If you connect your common area battery to a Virtual Power Plant (VPP) the NSW Government offers a Peak Demand Reduction Scheme (PDRS) incentive.

8 Understand your electricity tariffs and how they might change

After installation of a solar system you will need to move to an electricity contract which has a 'feed-in' tariff. Use the federal government website [Energy Made Easy](#) to assist with identifying the best electricity contract to move to.

9 Financing the projects

Solar/battery systems can be paid for in three ways:

- Upfront from the Capital Works fund.
- Via a special levy.
- By taking out finance. The finance options available are a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) from your solar installer, energy leasing offered by a third-party energy leasing company (e.g. Smart Ease, Plenti) or a strata loan (e.g. Macquarie Bank, Lannock Strata Finance, Strata Loans), which typically has the highest interest rates.

10 Passing sustainability infrastructure resolutions and by-laws for the projects

In NSW, installation of a solar system on a strata will require passing of a sustainability infrastructure resolution. This is at a threshold of 50% of those present and entitled to vote based upon unit entitlements at an AGM or EGM. If only a subset of lots are participating in a solar project, then a by-law to manage ongoing maintenance of the solar system(s) is required.