

# Solar Panels Policy:

on front roof planes in Heritage Conservation Areas



VI

<b>Title</b>	<b>Solar Panels Policy</b>
<b>Summary</b>	This policy provides clear guidelines for the installation of solar panels on the front roof planes of buildings in heritage conservation areas.
<b>Document Type</b>	Policy
<b>Relevant Strategic Plan Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Direction 1: An ecologically sustainable Inner West</li> <li>• Strategic Direction 2: Liveable, connected neighbourhoods and transport.</li> </ul>
<b>Legislative Reference</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Local Government Act 1993</i></li> <li>• <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i></li> <li>• <i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulations 2000</i></li> </ul>
<b>Related Council Documents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Model Code of Conduct</li> </ul>
<b>Version Control</b>	See last page



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## 1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidelines for the installation of solar panels on the front roof planes of buildings in heritage conservation areas.

## 2 Scope

This policy applies to proposals for the installation of solar panels on the front roof planes of buildings within Heritage Conservation Areas (HCAs).

## 3 Definitions

In the Solar Panel Policy, the following terms have the following meanings:

<b>Act</b>	<i>Local Government Act 1993.</i>
<b>conflict of interest</b>	Includes either a: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pecuniary conflict of interest.</li> <li>• Significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest.</li> <li>• Non-significant non-pecuniary conflict of interest,</li> </ul> as defined in the Model Code of Conduct and described in section 7 of the Conflict of Interest Policy.
<b>Councillor</b>	Inner West Council elected representative.
<b>Council committee member</b>	A person other than a Councillor or Council Officer who is a member of a Council committee other than a wholly advisory committee, and a person other than a Councillor who is a member of Council's audit, risk and improvement committee.
<b>Council Officer</b>	Inner West Council members of staff (including full-time, part-time, casual and contracted staff).
<b>Council Official</b>	Councillors, Council Officers, Council committee members and delegates of Council.
<b>Executive Leadership Team</b>	General Manager, Director Corporate, Director Infrastructure, Director Community, Director Planning, General Counsel.

## 4 Statement

To balance the urgency of climate action with the protection of heritage, Council has developed this policy to support the installation of solar panels on the front roof planes of buildings within a heritage conservation area (HCA) in a way that minimises their physical and visual impact.

It aligns with *Our Inner West 2041 – the Inner West Community Strategic Plan*, supporting efforts to transition to renewable energy.

This policy establishes a clear and consistent approach to solar panel installation on the front roof plane of buildings within HCAs, ensuring minimal physical and visual impact while preserving cultural and architectural values and supporting climate resilience and energy affordability.

More guidance on transitioning heritage buildings towards net zero primarily through energy performance strategies that are sensitive to heritage significance can be found in the Sustainable Heritage Buildings guide by Environment and Heritage, NSW Government, which can be downloaded from the link below:

<https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/research-and-publications/publications-search/sustainable-heritage-buildings-guide>

## 5 Policy

In accordance with Clause 5.10(3) of the *Inner West Local Environmental Plan 2022*, development consent is not required for certain works proposed within a HCA where the applicant has:

- Notified the consent authority (Inner West Council) of the proposed development via Heritage Exemption Certificate (HEC) application form; and
- Received written confirmation from the consent authority, prior to the commencement of any works, stating that it is satisfied the proposed development meets this policy.

Development that meets the conditions listed below can be exempted under a HEC as it is considered to be of a minor nature and deemed not to have an adverse impact on the heritage significance of HCA. See Council's website for further information on how to lodge a [HEC](#).

You must receive a HEC from Inner West Council advising you that the requirements of this guideline have been satisfied before any work is carried out.

### 5.1 Conditions to be met

Solar panels installed on the front roof plane of a building within a HCA that faces a primary road must comply with the following conditions to ensure exemption under a HEC:

## a) Avoid irreversible alterations or damage:

Installations must be reversible, allowing future removal without permanent damage.

To meet this requirement, solar panels and associated equipment must not:

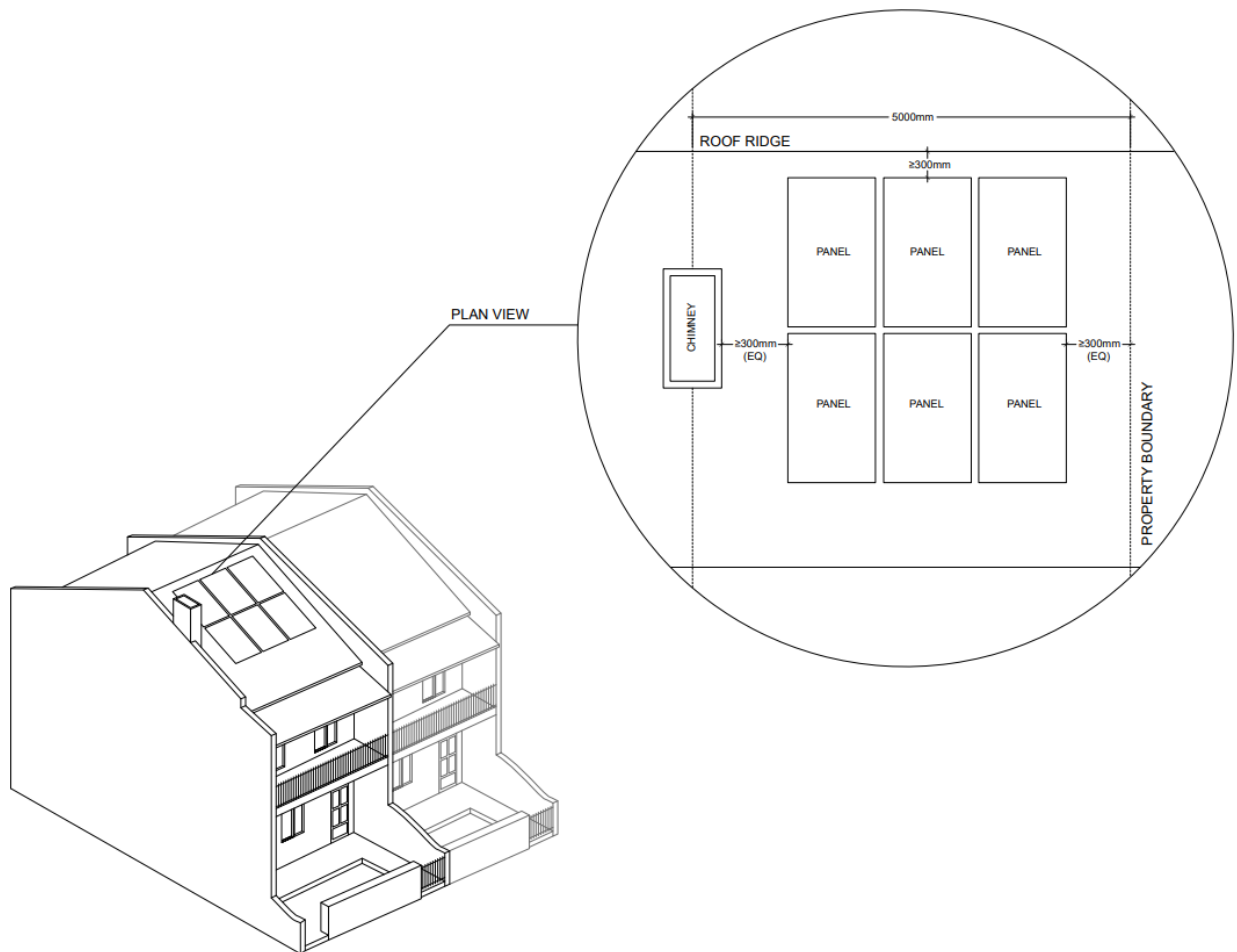
- i) require external **structural** alterations to the building or roof
- ii) be located on slate or timber shingled roofs
- iii) involve removal of roof elements such as chimneys, capping, or parapet walls

## b) Minimise visual impact and preserve the integrity of heritage streetscapes:

Installations must be designed and positioned to minimise visual intrusion and maintain the character of the heritage streetscape. Solar panel installations that comply with the following design and installation criteria are considered to meet this requirement.

- i) Solar panels are only permitted on front roof planes when it is the most energy efficient location, and is supported by evidence
- ii) Solar panels must not be installed on dormers or verandas
- iii) Set back solar panels at least 300mm from the ridge and each edge.
- iv) Offset solar panels evenly from the ridge, eaves, and roof edge and evenly space them between existing roof elements such as chimneys, skylights, and dormer windows
- v) Align solar panels so that one edge of the solar panels is parallel to the main roof ridge
- vi) Not extend beyond any roof edge
- vii) Arranged in orderly rows
- viii) Pitched to match the angle of the roof plane they are positioned on and as close to the roof surface as feasible
- ix) Attached using a bracket system and not projecting more than 250mm from any roof plane they are attached to (as measured from the point of attachment)
- x) Only solar panels, associated fixings and clips are to be visible from the street and the public domain. Wiring, inverters and conduits must be concealed beneath the panels
- xi) Supporting frames must be subtle and in keeping with the roof material
- xii) New metal finishes or structures must be chemically compatible with the buildings heritage fabric to avoid galvanic corrosion. Eg modern coated steels such as those with aluminium, zinc, or magnesium alloy must not be used near older elements like galvanised steel or lead flashing, as this may lead to deterioration over time.
- xiii) Ancillary equipment for a solar energy system must not cover building features like windows or decorative elements

- xiv) Batteries are not to be installed forward of the front building line. Exceptions can be made where it is the only feasible location, including small lots, houses built boundary to boundary and where there is inadequate shading in other locations



**Figure 1 – Indicative location of solar panels on front roof planes**

## 6 Breaches of this Policy

Breaches of this policy may result in an investigation of the alleged breach in line with relevant Council policies including the Model Code of Conduct.

Any alleged criminal offence or allegation of corrupt conduct will be referred to the relevant external agency.

## 7 Administrative Changes

From time-to-time circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made including branding, Council Officer titles or department changes and legislative name or title changes which are considered minor in nature and not required to be formally endorsed.

## Version Control – Policy History

This policy will be formally reviewed every three years from the date of adoption or as required.

Governance use only:

<b>Document</b>	<b>Solar Panels Policy</b>	<b>Uncontrolled Copy When Printed</b>	
<b>Custodian</b>	Daniel East, Senior Manager – Strategic Planning	Version #	Version 1
<b>Adopted By</b>	Council	ECM Document #	xxxxxxx
<b>Next Review Date</b>	[insert date no later than 3 years post adoption e.g. November 2028]		

<b>Amended by</b>	<b>Changes made</b>	<b>Date Adopted</b>
[Council Department]	[Describe reason for major changes]	Day Month, Year