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**City of Port Phillip – Heritage, planning and renters**

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**What about Heritage?**

A Heritage Overlay does not necessarily prevent you from installing rooftop Solar Panels. A Planning Permit is required if the panels are visible from the street (other than a lane) or a park. However, Council will waive the permit fees and will process the application efficiently (through the VicSmart service which minimises the paperwork requirements and processing time - <https://www.planning.vic.gov.au/permits-and-applications/vicsmart>)

A Planning Officer will assess your application and together with advice from Council’s Heritage Advisor may suggest changes to the sizing or placement of the proposed system. To find out whether your property is affected by a Heritage Overlay check <http://www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/map-planning.htm>

We recommend that you discuss your proposed installation with Council’s Planning Department to confirm planning permit requirements on 03 9209 6424 or planhelp@portphillip.vic.gov.au.

**How can I install solar in my apartment building?**

The City of Port Phillip is particularly interested in supporting our residents to overcome the barriers to installing solar on apartment buildings. Any decision about installing solar in apartment buildings needs to be formalised through your Owners’ Corporation. Our Solar Partners will be available to attend your Owners’ Corporation meeting to take committee members through the quote and respond to any queries.

The two most common options are:

* **Solar to support energy use in common areas**. This is best suited to apartment buildings with shared energy costs of lighting, heating and cooling of hallways and foyers, running elevators, heating swimming pools and lighting car parks. These costs have a significant impact on Owners’ Corporation fees, installing solar can reduce emissions and owners’ costs.
* **Solar to support individual apartment owners.** This is best suited to low to mid rise apartment buildings that have a larger proportion of roof space per apartment. The Owners’ Corporation can agree to a division of roof space, allocating a percentage to each apartment owner. Apartment owners then install solar at their own cost within their allocated roof space.

Our Solar Partners will work with City of Port Phillip officers to provide an assessment of your apartment building roof to see if it is suitable for solar panels. Suitability will depend on the condition and orientation of your roof. Sometimes additional work is required to prepare the roof prior to installing solar panels.

**How can I install Solar on a building that I rent?**

Many residents and businesses are successfully negotiating with their landlords to install solar panels. There are some great examples of landlords and tenants sharing the costs of installation and the benefits from energy savings.

The most common mistake made by tenants is not seeking permission from their landlord early in the process. If the City of Port Phillip is your landlord, your building may have already been assessed for solar or energy efficiency works so please contact our Property Department on 03 9209 6777 or helpdeskproperty@portphillip.vic.gov.au before engaging with any solar program.

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