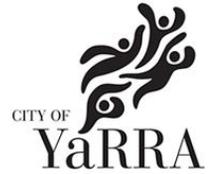


A guide to help a homeowner apply for a planning permit for solar panels



Yarra City Council supports the installation and use of solar power but sometimes there are **heritage** factors that must be considered and appropriately balanced with **environmental sustainable design** factors.

This guide is tailored to a **planning application** for **solar panels** to a **dwelling** in a **heritage overlay**.

If your solar panels will be visible from the street (other than a laneway) or a public park, and if your dwelling is located in a Heritage Overlay, you need a planning permit.

If your solar panels will not be visible from the street, you do not need a planning permit, even if your property is located in a Heritage Overlay.

For some, planning can feel complex. Knowing what you need to lodge with a planning application, and what Council will likely support when it comes to what solar panels look like and where they should be located on a dwelling, can feel overwhelming. This guide will assist you.

This guide outlines what information and documents you need to lodge for your planning application, so that Council can process your application efficiently and not need to ask you for more information, so that the outcome of the application and your experience with Council are both positive.



[Find out if you need a planning permit.](#)

What requires a planning permit?



My dwelling is in a heritage overlay. Do I need a planning permit to install solar panels?

If your solar panels will be visible from the street (other than a laneway) or a public park, and if your dwelling is located in a Heritage Overlay, you need a planning permit.

If your solar panels will not be visible from the street, you do not need a planning permit, even if your property is located in a Heritage Overlay.

You can apply for a planning permit on the City of Yarra website using the **VicSmart** application process. You do not need to pay a fee to Council for a planning application to install solar panels on your dwelling.



Documents required for **ALL** applications:



- A copy of title with 'search statement' less than 3 months old from Victorian Land Registry Services at www.landata.vic.gov.au
- Plans (*refer to next pages of this document for full details)
- Photo(s) of your existing dwelling marked-up, to show where the solar panels will be located

Documents that **MIGHT BE** required for an application:



- Demolition plan(s)

Click here to find out if your property is in a heritage overlay:

<https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/the-area/heritage/heritage-overlays-and-gradings>

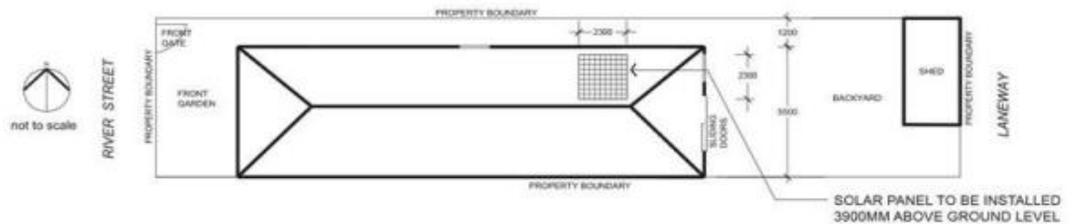
Click here for more information about the [VicSmart application process](#).

Click here to view the [Getting Started Guide - Title Plan](#)



Proposed site plan

A proposed site plan is a drawing that shows where you want to install solar panels on your property. It shows what you would like to do in the context of your whole property. It helps Council understand what impact your solar panels might have to your neighbours and the surrounding area.



When preparing your proposed site plan, do...



Show the full site (enlarge the page size or reduce the scale of the image if needed) and the existing conditions accurately.

- Show the northern point of the site.
- Show the shape and size of your property (i.e.. length and width) and cross-reference your measurements with your Certificate of Title.
- Show the context to your property if you think there might be an impact to your neighbours. For example, show what is within 3 metres of your property boundaries, or, the adjoining properties either side of yours.
- Show consistent scales of measurement (dimensions).
- Show the proposed location of the solar panels and the building they will be installed on.
- Write dimensions of the solar panels.
- Write the distance of the solar panels from the title boundaries.
- Write whether the solar panels will be flush to the roof, or, at an angle.

When preparing your proposed site plan, do not ...



- Use inconsistent scales of measurement (dimensions).
- Show unnecessary details.

Proposed elevations

An elevation is a drawing that clearly shows how your dwelling will look with the solar panels from the street as well as from each side.

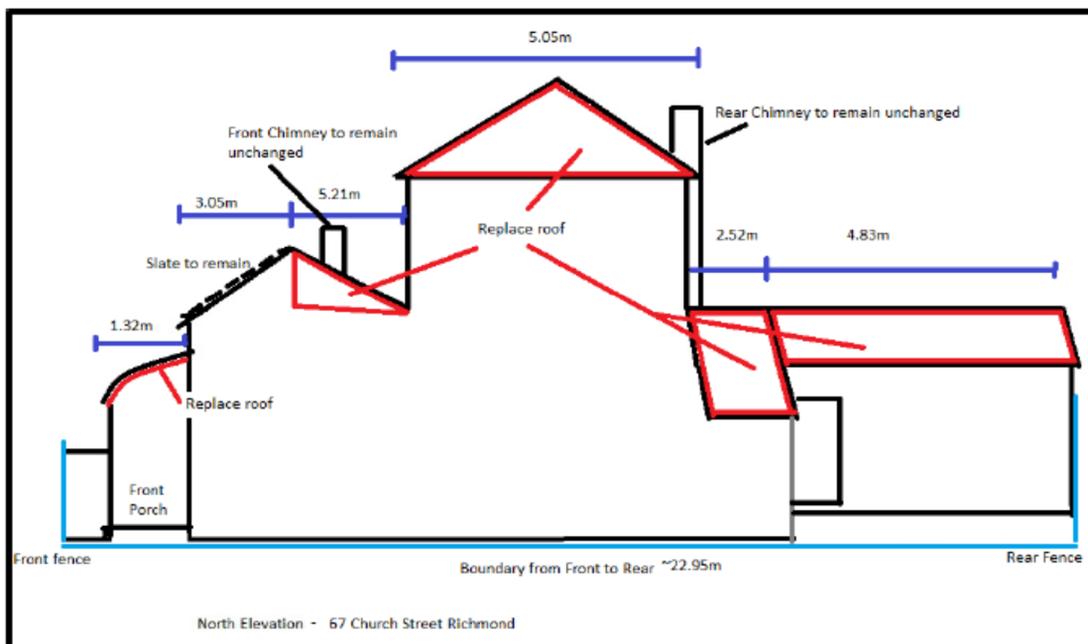
You are likely to have more than one elevation for your dwelling.

The front elevation of your dwelling is sometimes called the 'proposed streetscape elevation' as it shows how your solar panels will appear from the street.

'Side elevations' show how your solar panels will appear from the sides of your dwelling (from your neighbours perspective).

A 'rear elevation' shows how your solar panels will appear from the back (the rear) of your dwelling.

North Elevation view:



*You should be able to draw an elevation yourself without the assistance from a professional.

*The solar panel supplier should be able to assist you with how high on the roof the panels will be installed, and the dimensions of them.

When preparing a front elevation, **do...**



- Show all title boundaries accurately (with measurements).
- Show the orientation of the elevation (for example, 'north elevation').
- Show elevations for each angle the solar panels will be visible from (for example, north elevation, south elevation etc)
- Show the proposed location of the solar panels
- Write dimensions of the solar panels
- Write the distance of the solar panels from above the natural ground level (i.e. the wall height of your dwelling)
- Write whether the solar panels will be flush to the roof, or, at an angle
- Show existing conditions accurately.

When preparing an elevation, **do not ...**



- Use inconsistent scales of measurement (dimensions).
- Show unnecessary details.

*You should be able to do all of these items yourself without the assistance from a professional.

*The solar panel supplier should be able to assist you with how high on the roof the panels will be installed, and the dimensions of them.

Photographs

Photographs help Council understand the existing conditions of your property and give some context of the surrounding area.



When preparing your photographs, **do...**

- Make sure they are current and accurate.
- Make sure you have existing photographs, as seen from the street, and write (annotate) existing relevant conditions (e.g. "galvanised metal roof").
- Make sure they are clear and well-lit.
- Make sure they are in jpeg format.
- Show all parts of your property, especially if the area is not visible from a street.
- Show oblique views of the roof, i.e. on an angle where you can see the front and the side of the property in one photo.
- Clearly explain what it is you are trying to show with mark ups / annotations, of where the solar panels will be.



When preparing your photographs, **do not ...**

- Write unnecessary annotations on them or over complicate them.
- Show cars, animals or people to demonstrate what the scale of the solar panels will be.



*You should be able to do prepare photographs yourself without the assistance from a professional.
*The solar panel supplier should be able to assist you with the dimensions of the solar panels.

Materials, colours, finishes and other specifications

The colour, material, finish and other specifications of your solar panels and how they will be fixed to a roof, help Council to understand how your solar panels will appear on your dwelling and in the streetscape. You can ask the solar panels supplier to give you these details.

You can provide this information in **one, or each**, of the following ways:

- Write the information on your proposed elevation plan(s) in the form of 'annotations'.
- Write the information on a separate sheet and call it a "Materials Schedule".
- Take a photograph of another property as an example of what you want.
- Give us a material sample and/or suppliers product brochure, or your solar quote, showing the types of panels to be installed and how they will be fixed to the roof.
- Give us an extract from the suppliers product brochure / quote.

When preparing your specifications, **do...**



- Provide this information in **one, or each**, of the ways described above.
- Write information on your proposed elevation plan(s) e.g. write the sentence "the solar panels will be black, shiny, and flush to the roof".
- Provide a photo as an example of what it is you would like. This will show us visually what your solar panels will look like, but remember to label these photos as examples, so we don't confuse them with photos of your property.
- Include dimensions and measurements for your solar panels, wherever possible.
- Provide extracts from the suppliers product brochure / quote if you have them.

When preparing your specifications, **do not ...**



- Post or hand deliver any physical documents / samples to Council.
- Give us black & white documents.
- Give us a photo with no explanation of what the photo is showing.
- Give us a document with no dimensions or measurements.

*The solar panel supplier should be able to assist you with a brochure / illustrations of what the solar panels will be made of.

Where should I locate solar panels on my property?

Aim to conceal your solar panels so that they cannot be seen from a street.

Yarra City Council supports the installation and use of solar power however **heritage** factors must also be considered and appropriately balanced with **environmental sustainable design** factors for a dwelling in a heritage overlay.

Remember, if your solar panels will not be visible from the street, you do not need a planning permit, even if your property is located in a Heritage Overlay.

We encourage you to discuss all of the possible locations with your solar retailer, factoring in the heritage overlay and this guidance, so that you decide on the best placement when you lodge your application.



When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, **do...**

- Conceal them from the street wherever possible.
- Discuss with your solar retailer all of the possible alternatives of location, before you lodge your application.
- Consider installing them on a hidden section of roof or on a part of the roof that isn't in full view of the street
- Consider installing them on the roof of a pergola, rear extension, or rear studio if the wiring is connected to the dwelling.



When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, **do not ...**

- Have them in full view of the street.
- Install them on frames that are at odd angles with the roof, making them highly visible from a street.
- Have them in full view of the street and cover the entire roof with them.
- Lodge an application with more than one alternative for position.

Where it is not possible to conceal solar panels from street view, ask your solar retailer to provide you with a brief explanation of what the alternative options were and why this is the only / preferred option for your property. Ask your solar retailer to review this guidance / contact the City of Yarra statutory planning team for some pre-application advice.

Heritage and environmentally sustainable design guideline A

Yarra City Council supports the installation and use of solar power however **heritage** factors must also be considered and appropriately balanced with **environmental sustainable design** factors for a dwelling in a heritage overlay.

The balancing objectives are:

- to ensure that the location and installation of solar panels does not detract from the significance of the heritage place or damage any heritage fabric of a dwelling; and
- to conceal solar panels from street view, but, where this is not possible or practical, locate them and install them as sensitively as possible.

This document illustrates where to locate where to locate, and where not to locate, your solar panels.



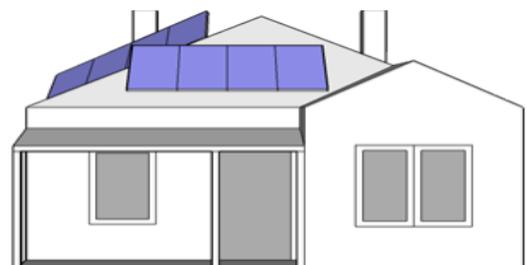
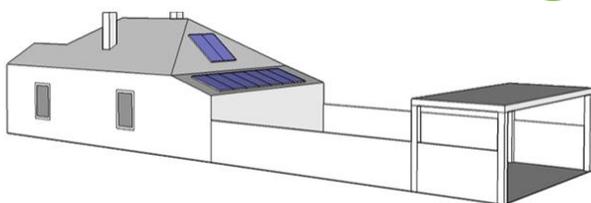
When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, do...

- Try and locate them at the rear of a dwelling.
- Try and conceal them from being seen from a street or public park.
- Try and conceal them behind a roof parapet.



When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, do not ...

- Have them in full view of the street.
- Install them on frames that are at odd angles with the roof, making them highly visible from a street.
- Have them in full view of the street and cover the entire roof with them.
- Only consider one position with no thoughts of an alternative / compromise.



Where it is not possible to conceal solar panels from street view, ask your solar retailer to provide you with a brief explanation of what the alternative options were and why this is the preferred option for your property. Ask your solar retailer to review this document / contact the City of Yarra statutory planning team for some pre-application advice.

Heritage and environmentally sustainable design guideline B

Yarra City Council supports the installation and use of solar power however **heritage** factors must also be considered and appropriately balanced with **environmental sustainable design** factors for a dwelling in a heritage overlay.

The balancing objectives are:

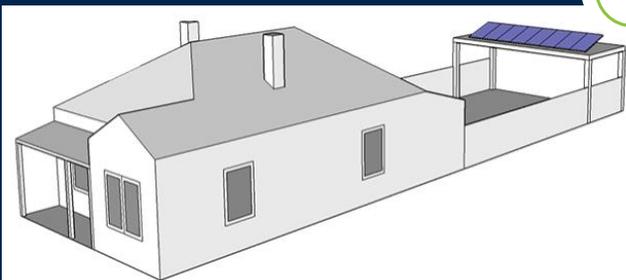
- To ensure that the location and installation of solar panels does not detract from the significance of the heritage place or damage any heritage fabric of a dwelling
- To conceal solar panels from street view, but, where this is not possible or practical, locate them and install them as sensitively as possible

This document illustrates where to locate, and where not to locate, your solar panels.



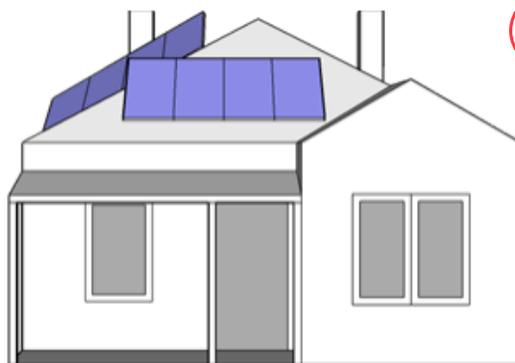
When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, do...

- Install them on an outbuilding such as a garage, carport, pergola, shed or contemporary addition wherever possible and practicable.



When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, do not ...

- Locate them in a highly visible location
- Install them on frames that are at odd angles with the roof, making them highly visible from a street.



Where it is not possible to conceal solar panels from street view, ask your solar retailer to provide you with a brief explanation of what the alternative options were and why this is the preferred option for your property. Ask your solar retailer to review this document / contact the City of Yarra statutory planning team for some pre-application advice.

Heritage and environmentally sustainable design guideline C

Yarra City Council supports the installation and use of solar power however **heritage** factors must also be considered and appropriately balanced with **environmental sustainable design** factors for a dwelling in a heritage overlay.

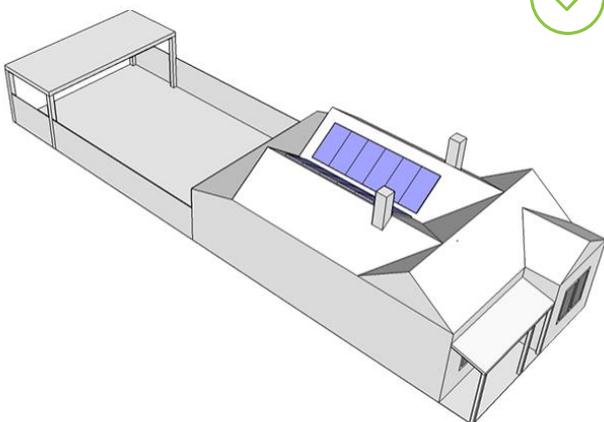
The balancing objectives are:

- to ensure that the location and installation of solar panels does not detract from the significance of the heritage place or damage any heritage fabric of a dwelling; and
- to conceal solar panels from street view, but, where this is not possible or practical, locate them and install them as sensitively as possible.

This document will illustrate where to locate, and where not to locate, your solar panels.

When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, **do...**

- Try and install them on a concealed part of the roof e.g. a plane or 'internal valley'



When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, **do not ...**

- Have them in full view of the street
- Have them in full view of the street and at angles to the roof
- Have them in full view of the street and cover the entire roof with them
- Only consider one position with no thoughts of an alternative / compromise



Where it is not possible to conceal solar panels from street view, ask your solar retailer to provide you with a brief explanation of what the alternative options were and why this is the preferred option for your property. Ask your solar retailer to review this document / contact the City of Yarra statutory planning team for some pre-application advice.

Heritage and environmentally sustainable design guideline D

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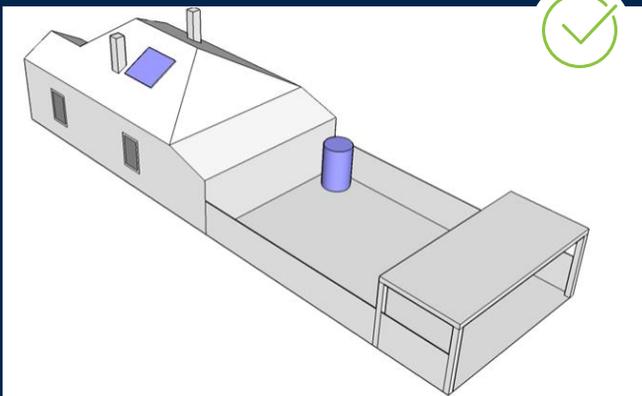
The balancing objectives are:

- to ensure that the location and installation of solar panels does not detract from the significance of the heritage place or damage any heritage fabric of a dwelling; and
- to conceal solar panels from street view, but, where this is not possible or practical, locate them and install them as sensitively as possible.

This document illustrates where to locate, and where not to locate, your solar panels.

When thinking about where to locate solar panels for a split solar system, **do...**

- Try and install the solar panels and the water tank on a roof that is not the main roof of the dwelling.



When thinking about where to locate your solar panels for a split solar system, **do not ...**

- Locate them in a highly visible location.
- Install them on frames that are at odd angles with the roof, making them highly visible from a street.



Where it is not possible to conceal solar panels from street view, ask your solar retailer to provide you with a brief explanation of what the alternative options were and why this is the preferred option for your property. Ask your solar retailer to review this document / contact the City of Yarra statutory planning team for some pre-application advice.

Heritage and environmentally sustainable design guideline E

Yarra City Council supports the installation and use of solar power however **heritage** factors must also be considered and appropriately balanced with **environmental sustainable design** factors for a dwelling in a heritage overlay.

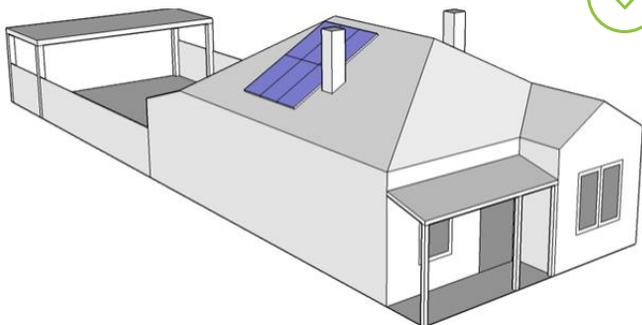
The balancing objectives are:

- to ensure that the location and installation of solar panels does not detract from the significance of the heritage place or damage any heritage fabric of a dwelling; and
- to conceal solar panels from street view, but, where this is not possible or practical, locate them and install them as sensitively as possible

This document illustrates where to locate, and where not to locate, your solar panels.

When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, do...

- Try and install them on a section of roof which is concealed by a chimney, roof parapet, fence etc.
- Try and install solar panels on a part of the roof that is set back from the street.
- Consider a split array, with panels on each side elevation, if multiple panels are needed.
- Keep the number and size of them to what is required to meet your household needs.



When thinking about where to locate your solar panels, do not ...

- Locate them in a highly visible location.
- Install them on frames that are at odd angles with the roof, making them highly visible from a street.



Where it is not possible to conceal solar panels from street view, ask your solar retailer to provide you with a brief explanation of what the alternative options were and why this is the preferred option for your property. Ask your solar retailer to review this document / contact the City of Yarra statutory planning team for some pre-application advice.

Orientation of solar panels on my property

Environmental factors are an important factor in where solar panels need to be located in order to function effectively.

It is important to note that solar panels do not have to face north in order to achieve sufficient benefit. They can sit at a variety of angles and directions (orientations) and still achieve high levels of solar energy generation.

As a guide, the table below shows the efficiency of a solar panel at several different angles and orientations



		PANEL ANGLE FROM HORIZONTAL (PITCH OF ROOF OR FRAMING)						
		0°	10°	20°	30°	40°	50°	60°
PANEL ORIENTATION	North	86%	93%	98%	100%	100%	98%	93%
	Northeast	86%	90%	92%	93%	92%	89%	85%
	East	86%	85%	84%	82%	78%	74%	70%
	Southeast	86%	81%	74%	67%	59%	53%	47%
	South	86%	80%	71%	62%	54%	46%	39%
	Southwest	86%	81%	75%	68%	62%	55%	50%
	West	86%	87%	87%	85%	82%	78%	74%
	Northwest	86%	92%	95%	97%	97%	95%	90%



Where it is not possible to conceal solar panels from street view, ask your solar retailer to provide you with a brief explanation of what the alternative options were, and why this is the preferred option for your property. Ask your solar retailer to review this document / contact the City of Yarra statutory planning team for some pre-application advice.