In the final quarter of 2018, a huge milestone was reached when the 2 millionth rooftop in Australia installed solar panels. 21.6% of residential houses now have solar panels installed. However, residential strata continues to be ‘locked out’ of the solar revolution for a number of reasons. It is estimated that less than 0.5% of apartment buildings have installed solar panels at present.

Strata energy consultancy, Wattblock, released a “Solar on Strata Whitepaper” on 12th January 2019 to assist the nation’s strata schemes increase their uptake of solar. Based upon information collected through over 250 solar feasibility studies for residential strata schemes and real experience from 20 solar installs on apartment buildings, it aims to de-mystify solar for strata committees.

The whitepaper can be read [here](https://www.wattblock.com/uploads/4/4/9/8/44984189/solar_on_strata_whitepaper.pdf).[[1]](#footnote-1)

Academic research is also coming to the strata on solar space. In December 2018, a UNSW team led by PhD candidate Mike Roberts revealed preliminary findings from a year-long study, with the full report to be published in 2019. The ‘solar potential’ opportunity they see in apartment buildings across Australia is 2.9-4 GWp, which is a lot.

According to Mike, “now that solar panels are 90 per cent cheaper to install than they were 10 years ago, some solutions for renters and apartment dwellers are being offered up.”[[2]](#footnote-2) As it turns out, 6.5% of the unused roofspace suitable for solar panels in Australia is located on residential strata buildings. Furthermore, 62% of the residential strata buildings are under 4 storeys high.

Wattblock’s whitepaper considers the main issues for strata committees:

* governance models for managing ownership and sharing benefits across owner occupiers, owner investors and tenants
* applying solar to common property and also into the individual apartments
* solar and battery rebate schemes available
* key issues such as waterproofing, metering upgrades etc

This area is increasingly important as apartments now make up a third of new developments in Australia.

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1. https://www.wattblock.com/uploads/4/4/9/8/44984189/solar\_on\_strata\_whitepaper.pdf [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/newslocal/the-express/figures-reveal-140000-people-in-canterburybankstown-locked-out-of-solar-power-because-of-living-situation/news-story/206f5a3c6e79826897ce3867c995e429 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)