Resolution of Council

29 June 2026

Item 15.3

Equitable Access to the Energy Transition in the City of Sydney

Moved by Councillor Arkins, seconded by Councillor Miller –

It is resolved that:

(A) Council note:

(i) electrification, rooftop solar and electric vehicle uptake are central to reducing emissions and lowering household energy costs;

(ii) households with large rear roof areas and off-street parking are better positioned to benefit from the energy transition;

(iii) many properties within the City of Sydney have limited rear roof area and can face practical constraints installing rooftop solar under current planning settings;

(iv) the Transport and Infrastructure State Environmental Planning Policy (SEPP) broadly enables rooftop solar panels as exempt development. However, in heritage conservation areas, the solar panels cannot be visible from a primary road (at the property boundary) as exempt;

(v) the City of Sydney Development Application exception for solar panels in heritage conservation areas Guideline supports solar installations within heritage conservation areas where development consent may not be required, including certain instances on front facing roofs;

(vi) advances in solar panel design and mounting technology may allow greater rooftop solar uptake while maintaining heritage outcomes; and

(vii) residents without off-street parking should not be disadvantaged from participating in vehicle electrification;

(B) Council further note:

(i) the City's Electrification of Transport in the City Strategy and Action Plan adopted by Council in 2023 supports publicly accessible kerbside charging deployed in residential areas with low levels of off-street parking;

(ii) in 2024/25 the City participated in 2 rounds of the NSW Government's Electric Vehicle Kerbside Charging Grants, which will deliver on-street EV charging at 45 locations across the City, with 79 chargers available;

(iii) in June 2025, Council approved substantial changes to our Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and Development Control Plan (DCP), which we hope will be finalised soon by the NSW Government. They include measures to make it easier for households to transition to solar and electric:

(a) expand where solar panel installation can be exempt development;

(b) exclude public EV charging spaces from parking rates;

(c) include retrofitting bicycle and EV parking in existing buildings as exempt development; and

(d) ban indoor gas appliances in new residential development; and

(iv) in June 2026, the Lord Mayor wrote to the NSW Minister for Climate Change and Energy seeking increased and accelerated funding for the delivery of more fast EV charging infrastructure within the City at service stations and publicly accessible car parks, in recognition of the increased demand for charging and the many demands for using the City's kerbsides;

(C) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to investigate and report back on:

(i) updating Council's Development Application exception for solar panels in heritage conservation areas – Guideline to support greater rooftop solar uptake and allow solar panels on street facing rooftops under exempt development;

(ii) opportunities for the City to advocate to the NSW Government for reforms to planning frameworks that better facilitate the energy transition and lower energy bills;

(iii) further options for kerbside electric vehicle charging for residents without access to off street parking, including:

(a) charging integrated into existing street infrastructure;

(b) cable management and accessibility requirements when charging across footpaths or in rear lanes;

(c) faster access to shared and community charging models;

(d) pilot programs in comparable local government areas;

(e) any required advocacy to the NSW Government; and

(f) further opportunities for Council to enable access to clean energy technologies for residents currently disadvantaged by housing type, heritage constraints, upfront costs, and for renters; and

(D) the Chief Executive Officer be requested to provide an update on current NSW planning controls applying to solar installations in the City of Sydney and approaches to equitable access to electric vehicle charging.

Carried unanimously.

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