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Solar Apartments

Opportunities for deploying PV on multi-occupancy residential buildings

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Solar Apartments - Workshop

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Our task today: *Identify some key findings and policy approaches to highlight in the final report*

12:15 – 1:00 Overview of project findings

1:00 – 1:15 Grab a Sandwich

1:15 – 1:35 Panel Contributions:

Lynne Gallagher : Energy Consumers Australia
Chris Byrne : Green Strata
Murray Hogarth : Wattwatchers
Gareth Huxham : Energy Smart Strata

1:35 – 1:55 Group Discussion

1:55 – 2:00 Summary

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Green Strata

wattwatchers DIGITAL ENERGY

EnergySmartStrata

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Why?

How much?

What for?

Where & how?

What's it worth?

What's stopping us?

What is to be done?

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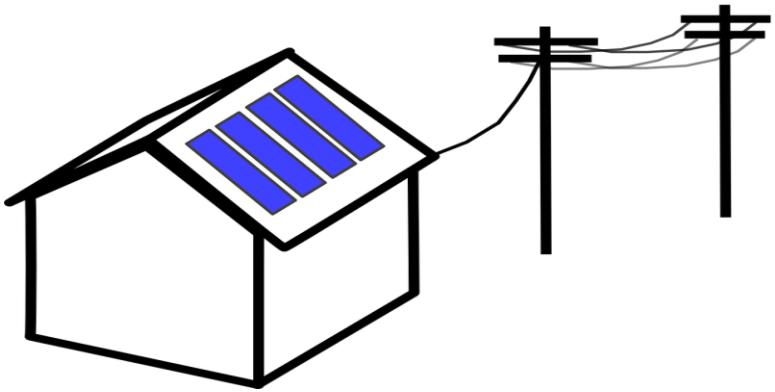
Why Solar Apartments?

GHI: Australia: 0.7 – 2.7 MWh/m² /year
Sydney: 1.7 MWh/m² /year



2 million solar households
(23% penetration, 50% in some areas)

10% of Australians live in 1.4 million apartments / units

Why Solar Apartments?

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For households

- Clean electricity
- Lower bills
- Increased energy independence

For society

- Low cost generation
- Reduced fossil fuel reliance
- Reduced CO_2 emissions
- Energy Equity

For networks

- Reduce network demand
- Generation close to (commercial) loads
- Defer network augmentation

An opportunity for a clean energy community?

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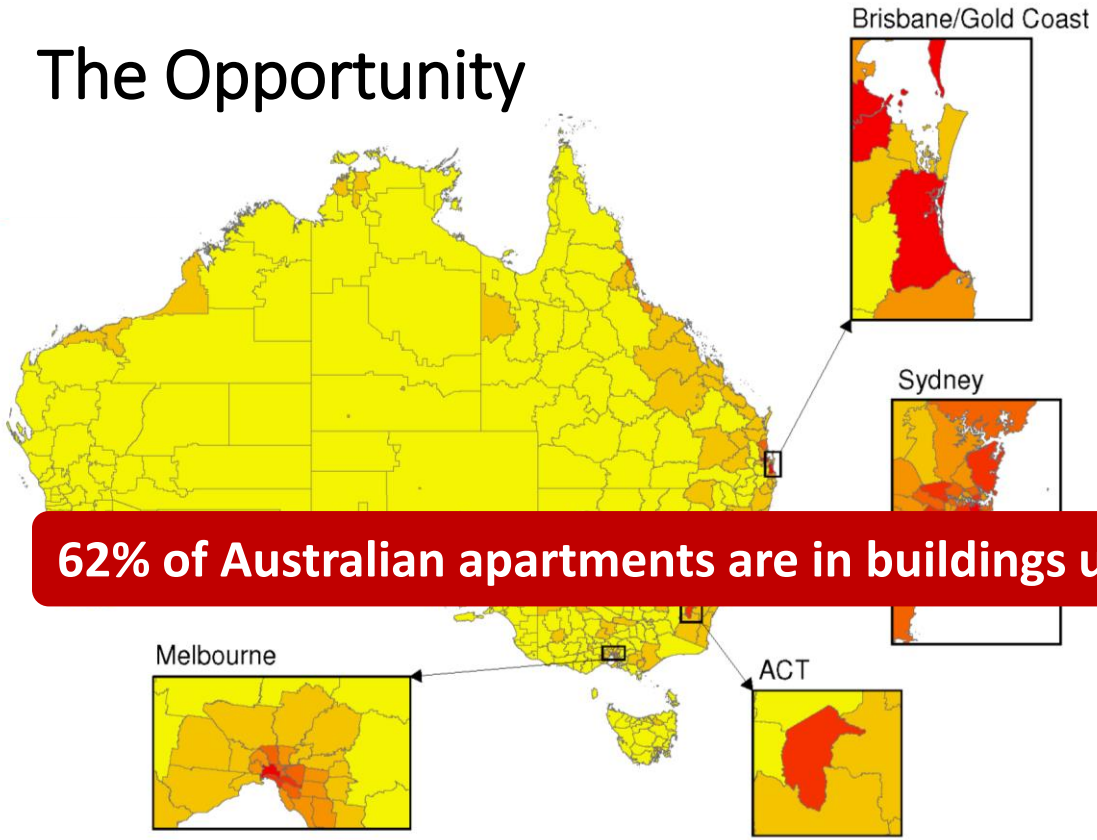
The Opportunity



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62% of Australian apartments are in buildings under 4 storeys

1.4 million apartments

Housing 10% of Australians

Up to 70% in some LGAs

A third of new dwellings

The Solar Opportunity

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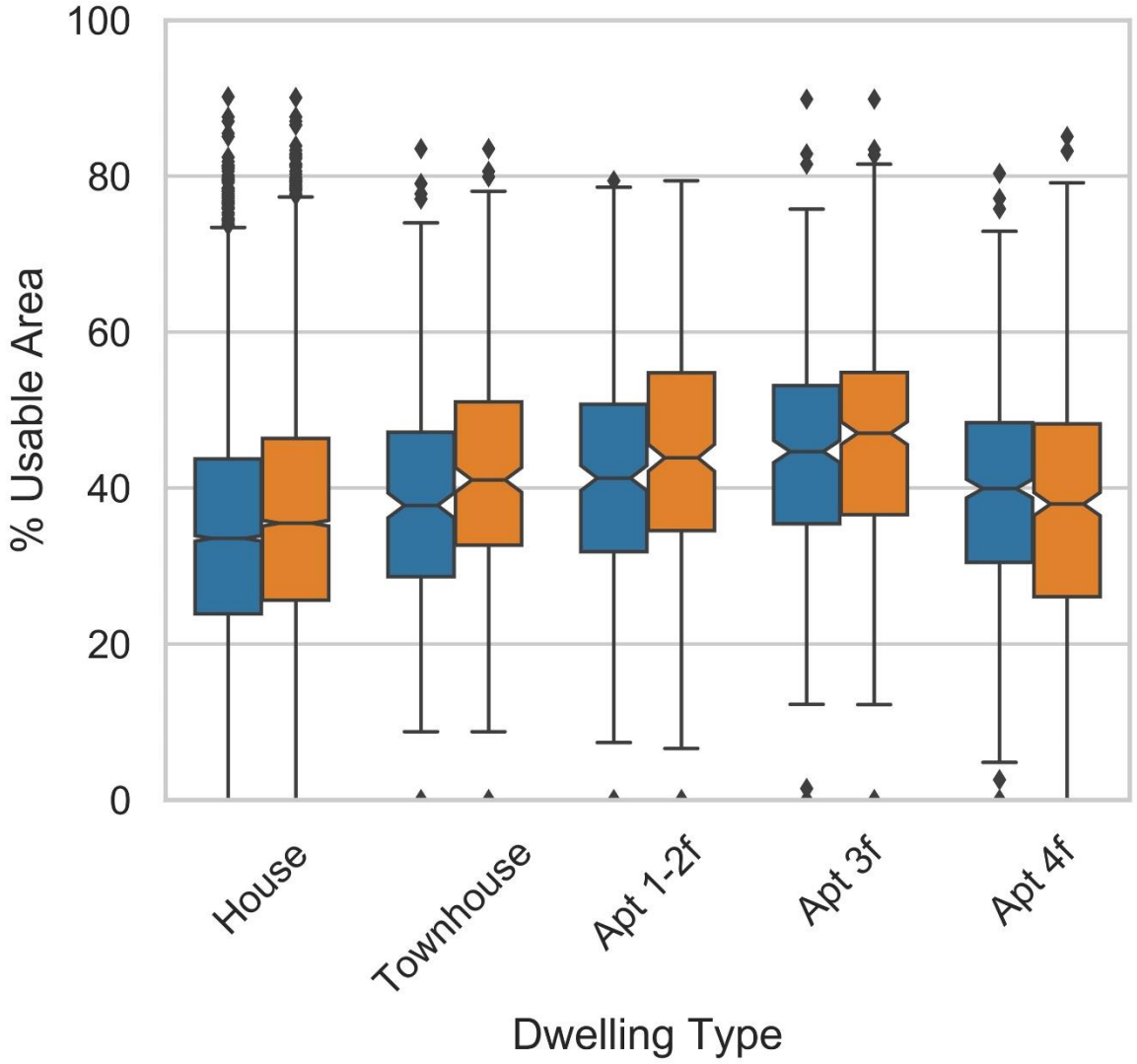

Based on 3D model of City of Melbourne LGA, with 2 methodologies*

* Roberts, M., J. Copper, and A. Bruce, *An analysis of Australian rooftop solar potential on residential buildings*, in *Asia Pacific Solar Research Conference*. 2018: Sydney.

The Solar Opportunity

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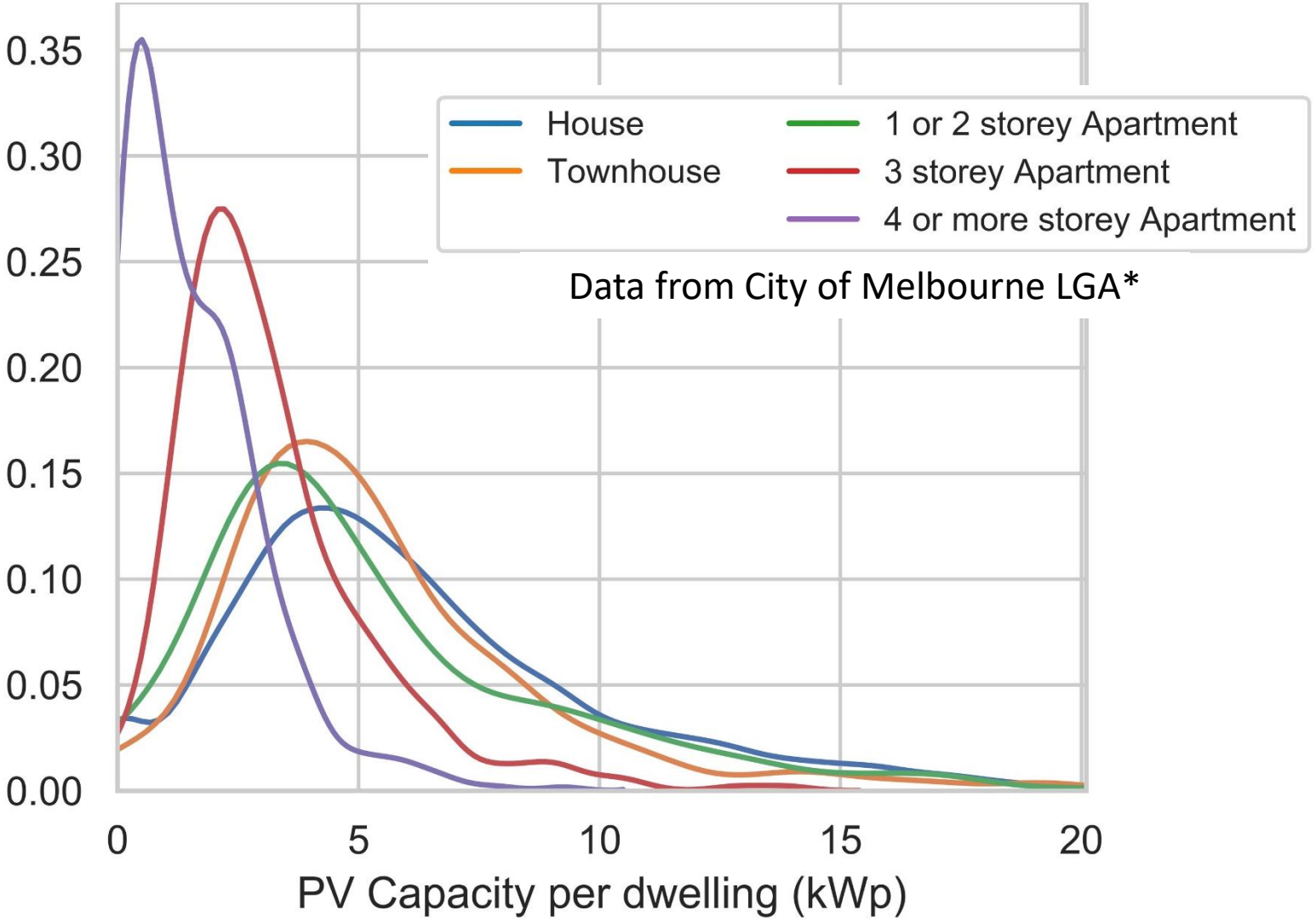

Roberts, M., J. Copper, and A. Bruce, *An analysis of Australian rooftop solar potential on residential buildings*, in *Asia Pacific Solar Research Conference*. 2018: Sydney.

Rooftop Issues

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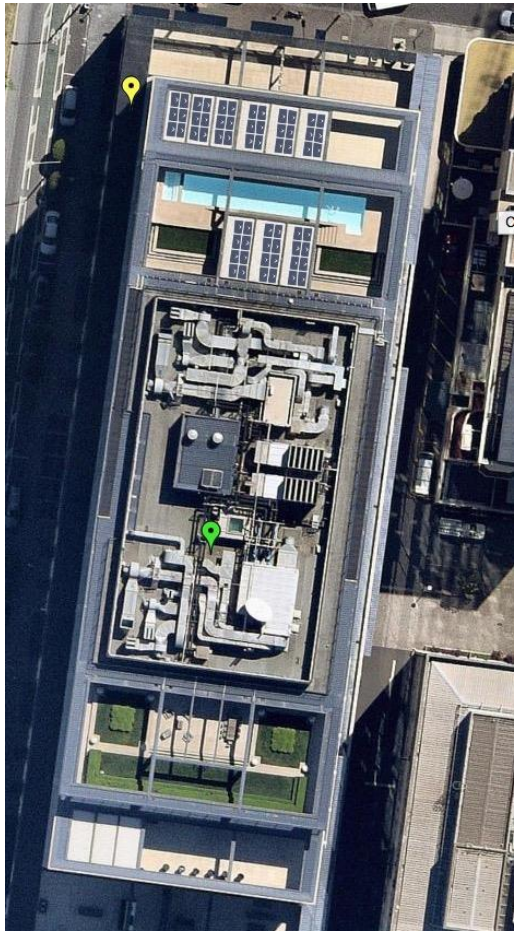

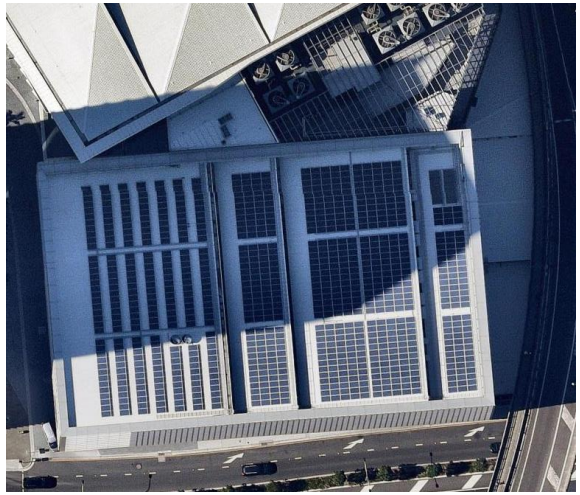

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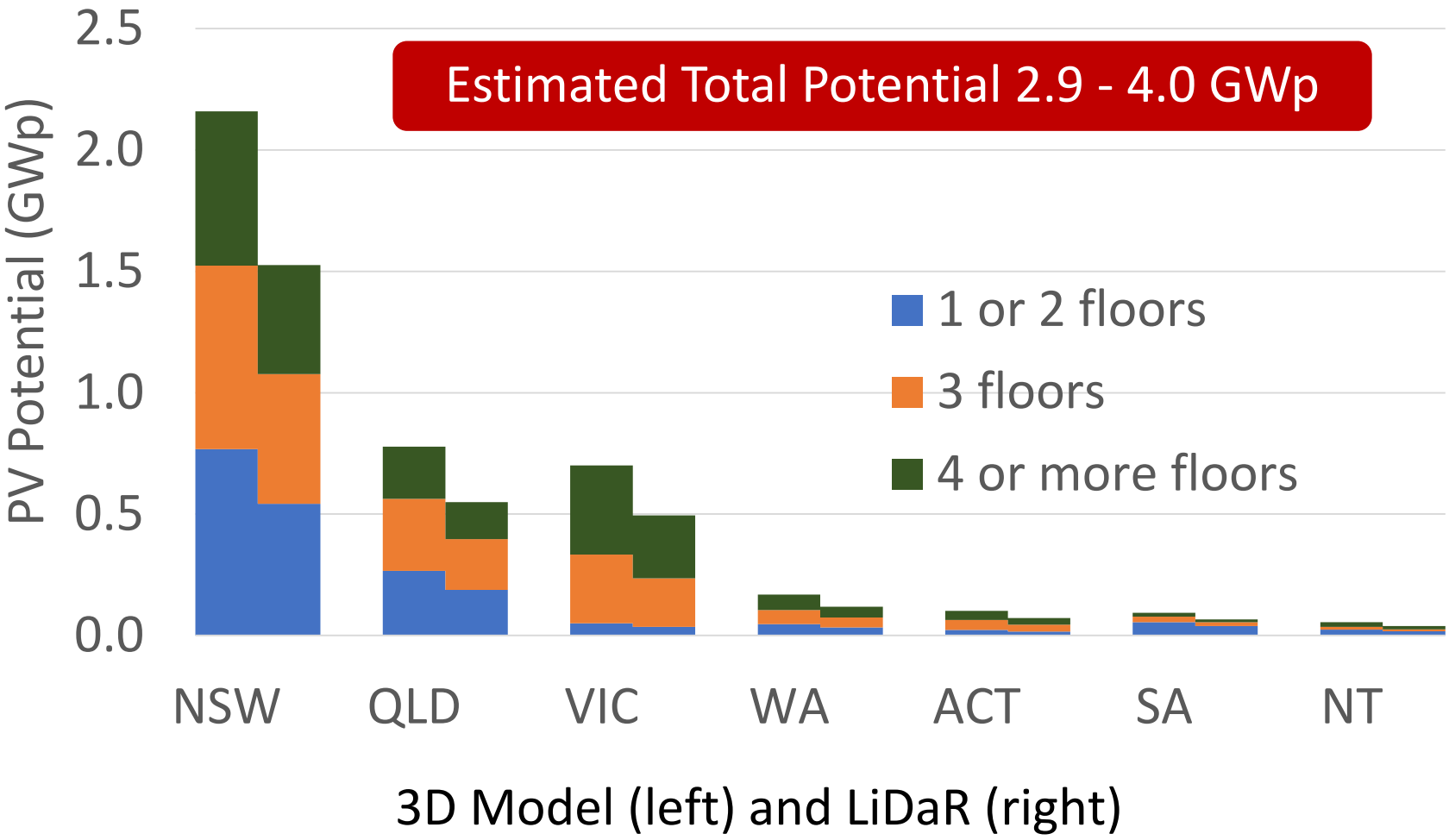

Roberts, M., J. Copper, and A. Bruce, *An analysis of Australian rooftop solar potential on residential buildings*, in *Asia Pacific Solar Research Conference*. 2018: Sydney.

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Apartment Electricity Loads

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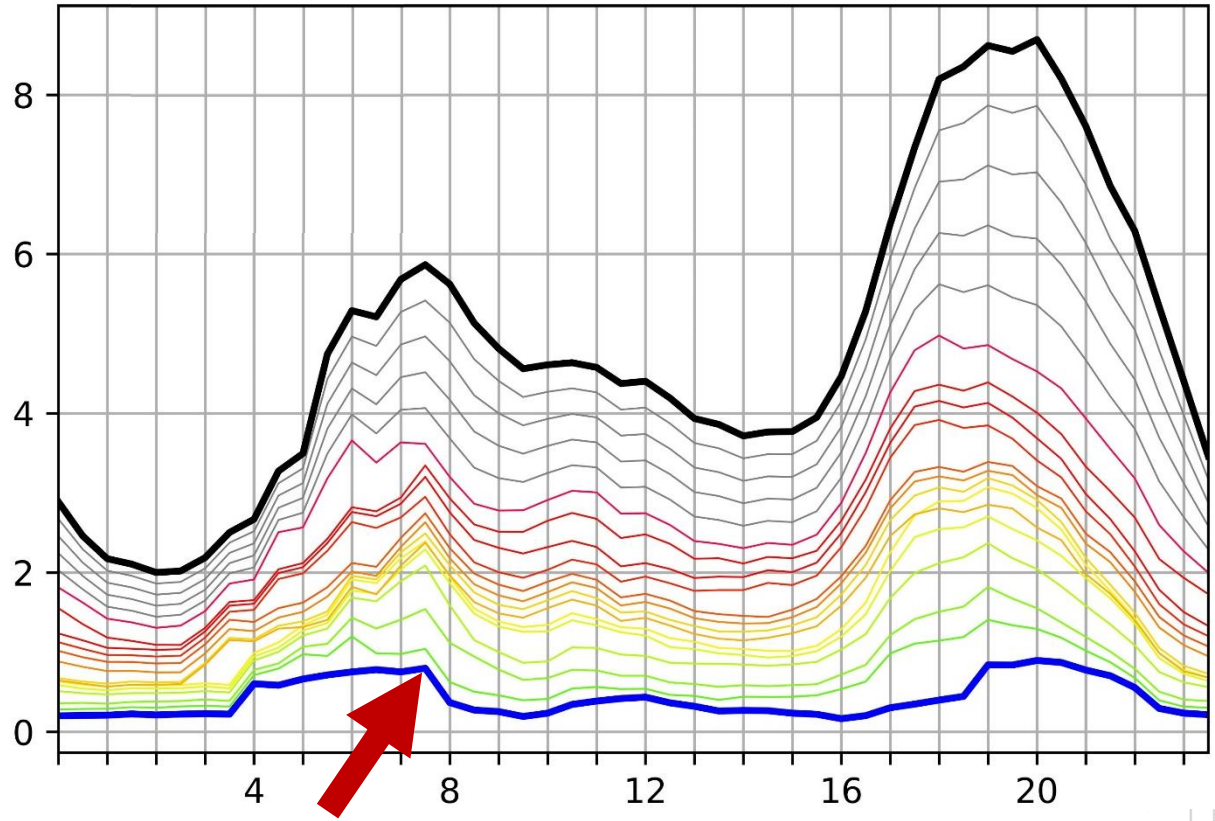


Average Energy 41% compared to houses

Average energy per occupant 79% of houses

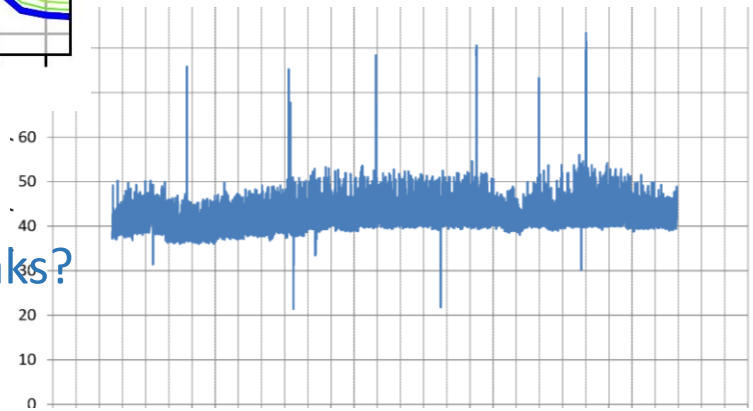
Higher daily variability

Common Property

Highly diverse

5% → 60% of building load

- Daytime load?
- High demand peaks?
- Control issues?



Roberts, M.B., et al., *Using PV to help meet common property energy demand in residential apartment buildings*. *ASSEP*, 2016: Sydney.

Aggregating Loads

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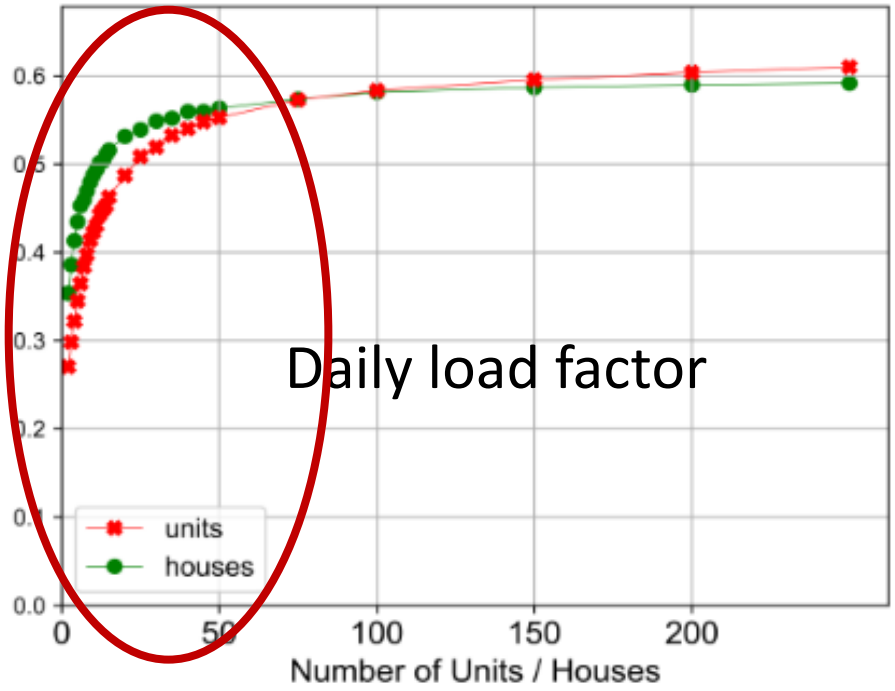

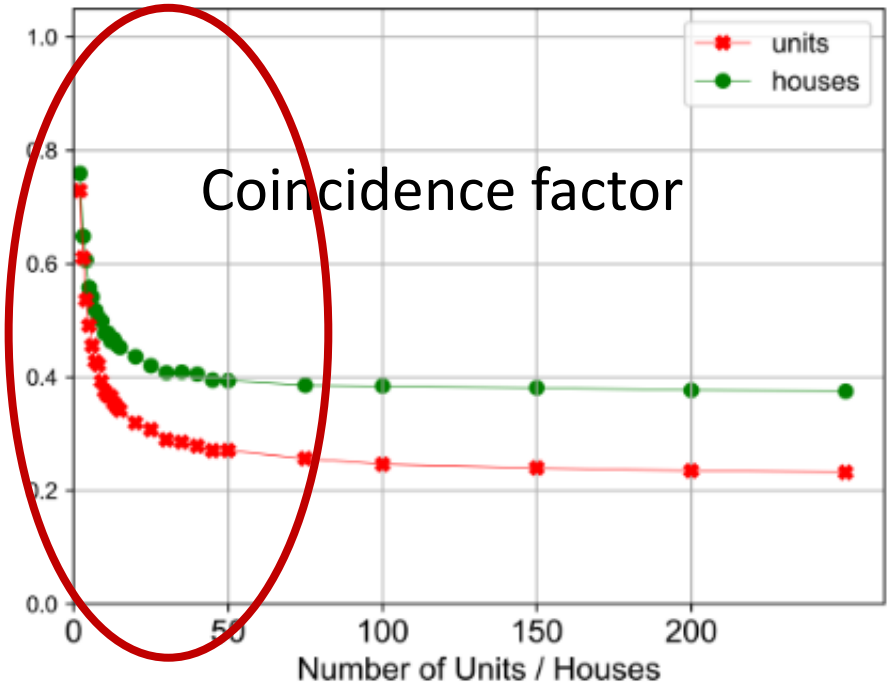

Lower load factor
Higher variability

Lower coincidence factor
Greater diversity

Greater benefits from aggregating diverse loads

Roberts, M.B., et al., *Cluster-based characterisation of Australian apartment electricity demand and its implications for low-carbon cities*, (under review).

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PV Technical Arrangements

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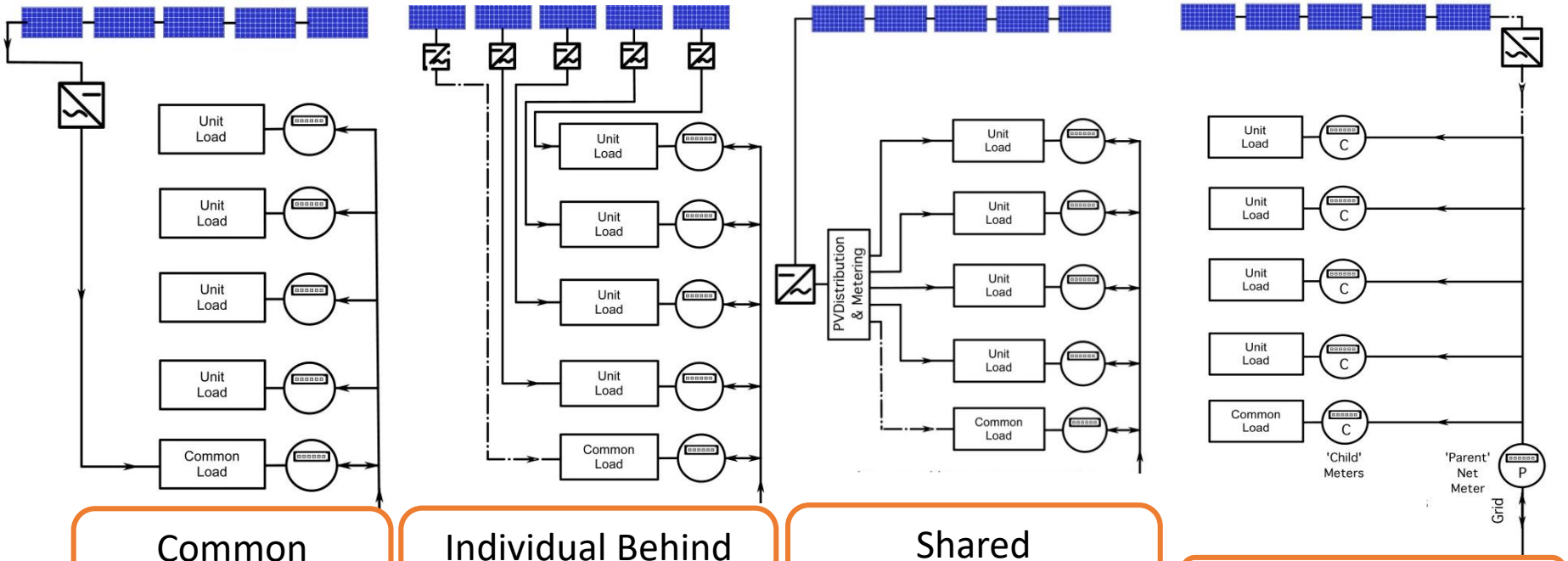

Common Property Only	Individual Behind the Meter	Shared Behind the Meter	Embedded Network
cp_only	btm_i	btm_s	en_pv

Common Property Only (cp_only)

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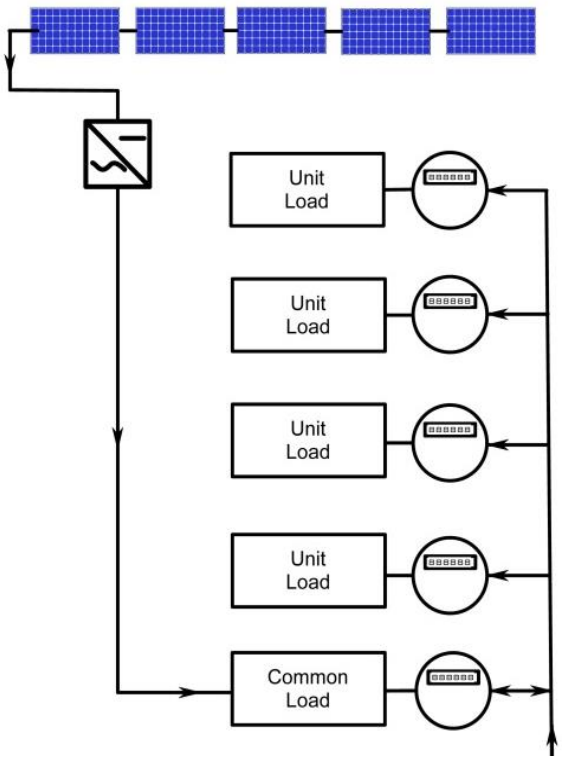

Common system on common roof applied to common load

For high-rise, high self-consumption

Low self-sufficiency

For low-rise, unutilised roof space

~~Tax issues for FiT~~

Individual Behind the Meter (btm_i)

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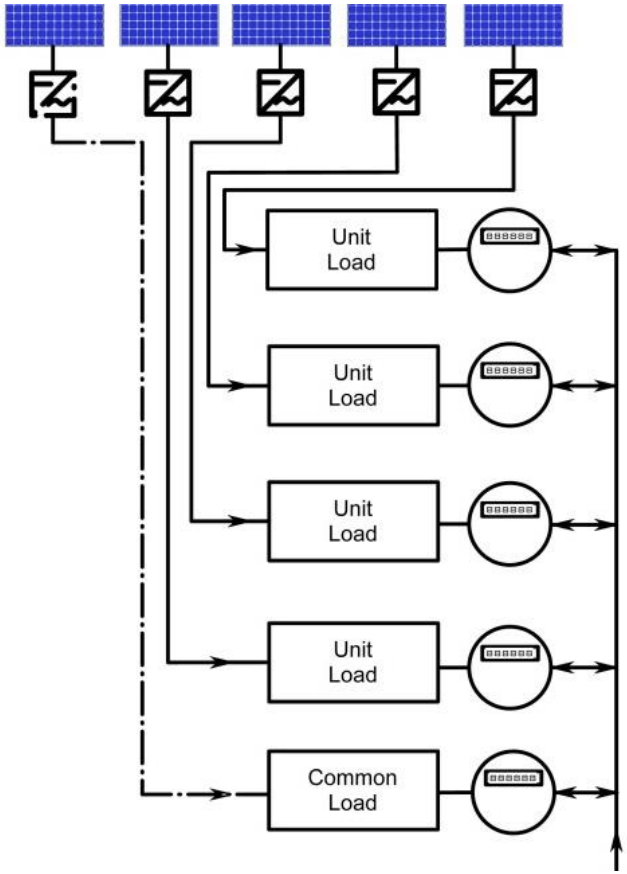

Choice rests with each apartment owner

Owner occupier can be investor and beneficiary

Individual system on common roof - bylaw

Low self-consumption

Landlord / tenant Split incentives

PV Self-Consumption

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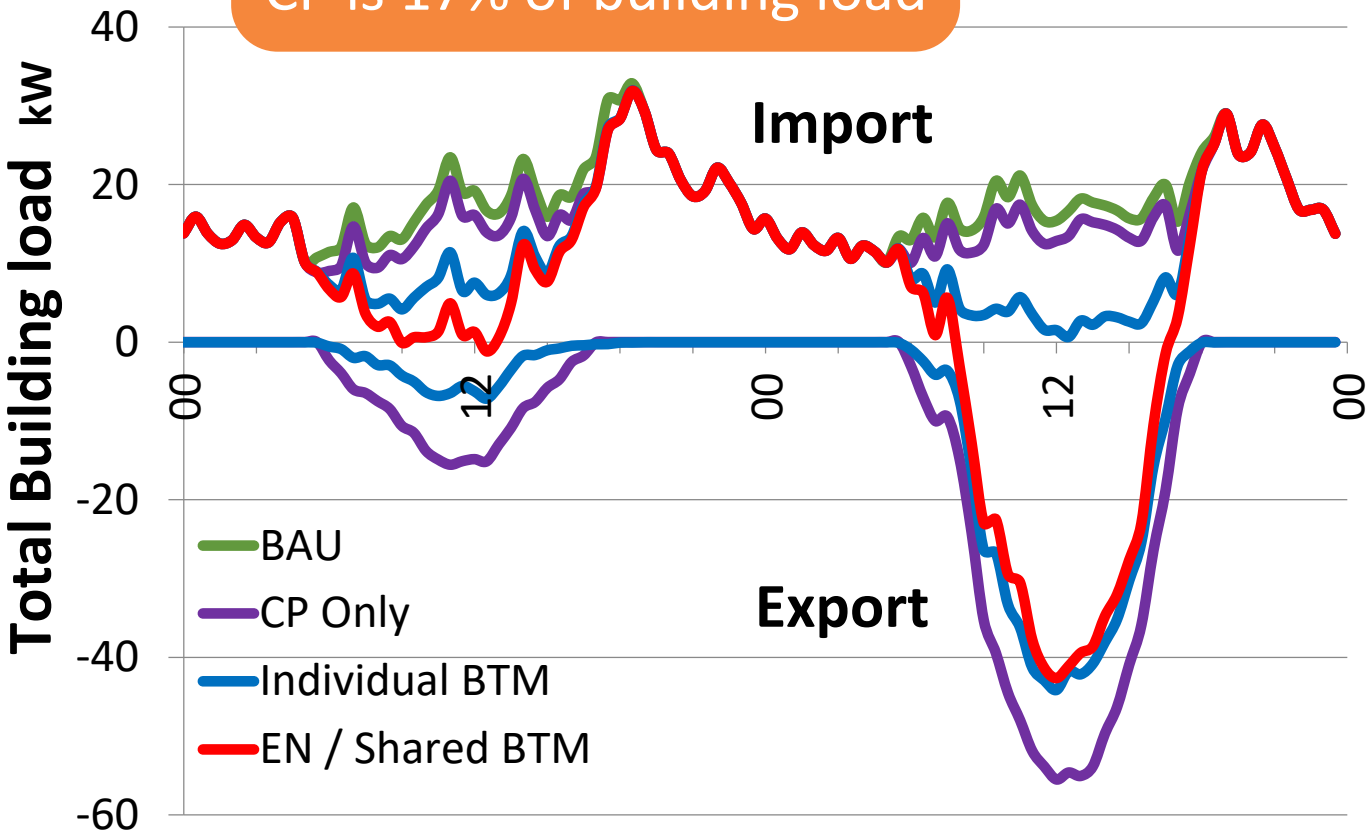
44 apartments
PV = 77kWp
CP is 17% of building load



Self-Consumption and Self-Sufficiency

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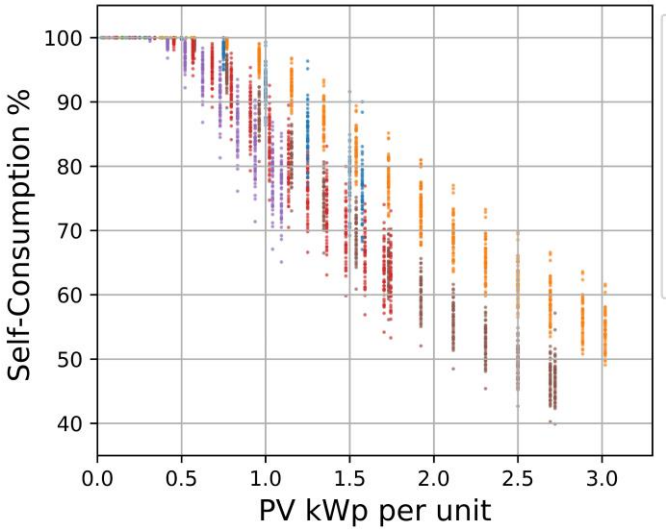
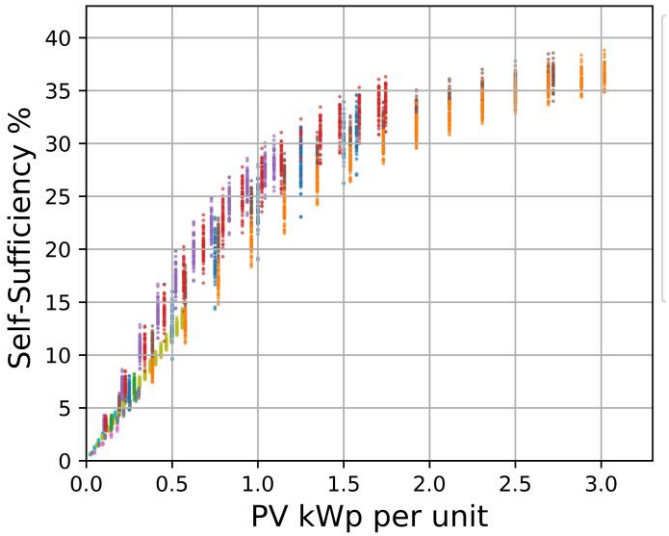
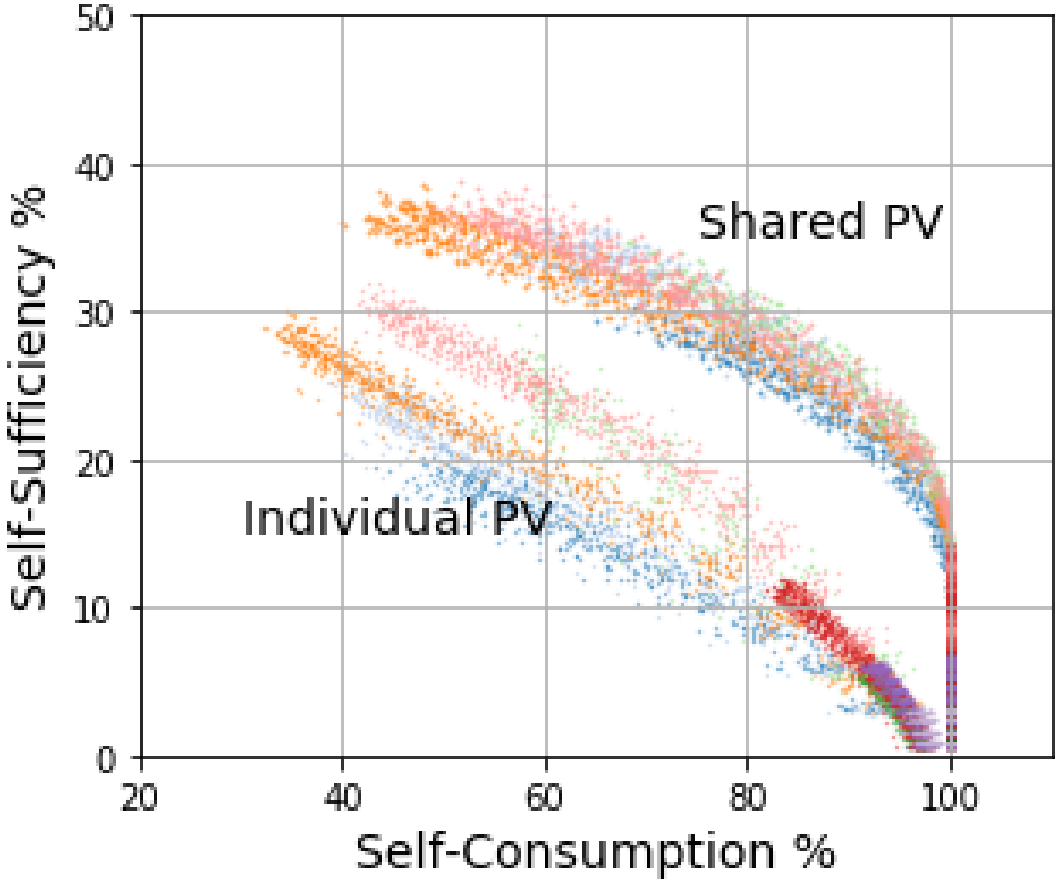




…increased by aggregating loads



Roberts, M.B., A. Bruce, and I. MacGill, *A comparison of arrangements for increasing self-consumption and maximising the value of distributed photovoltaics on apartment buildings* (forthcoming)

Embedded Network (EN)

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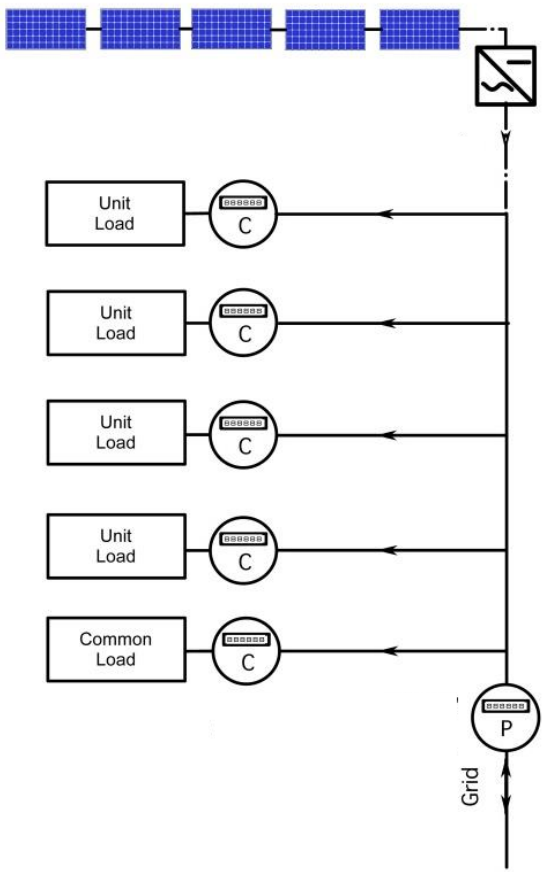

- Shared PV system / shared roof
- Maximise Self-Consumption
- Economies of Scale – PV Capex
- Access Commercial Tariffs

- Split Incentives
- EN Installation Costs
- Regulatory Barriers
- Finance Issues

Shared Behind the Meter

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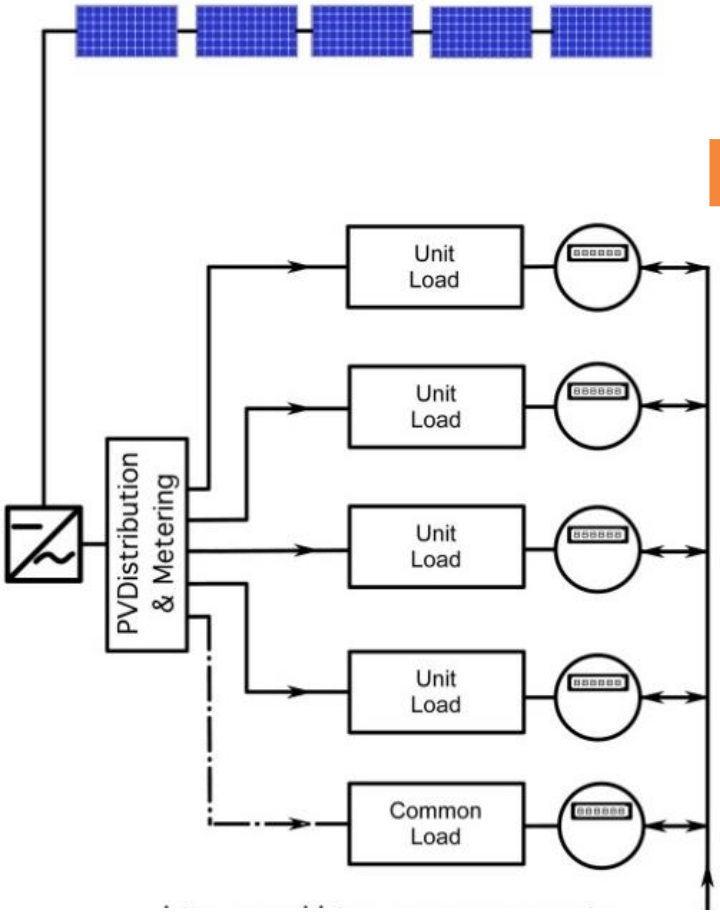

- Maximise Self-Consumption
- Avoids EN Costs
- Economies of Scale – PV Capex
- Avoids EN Regulatory Issues

- Two Bills
- EN Installation Costs
- No bulk buy benefits

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Savings for whole building

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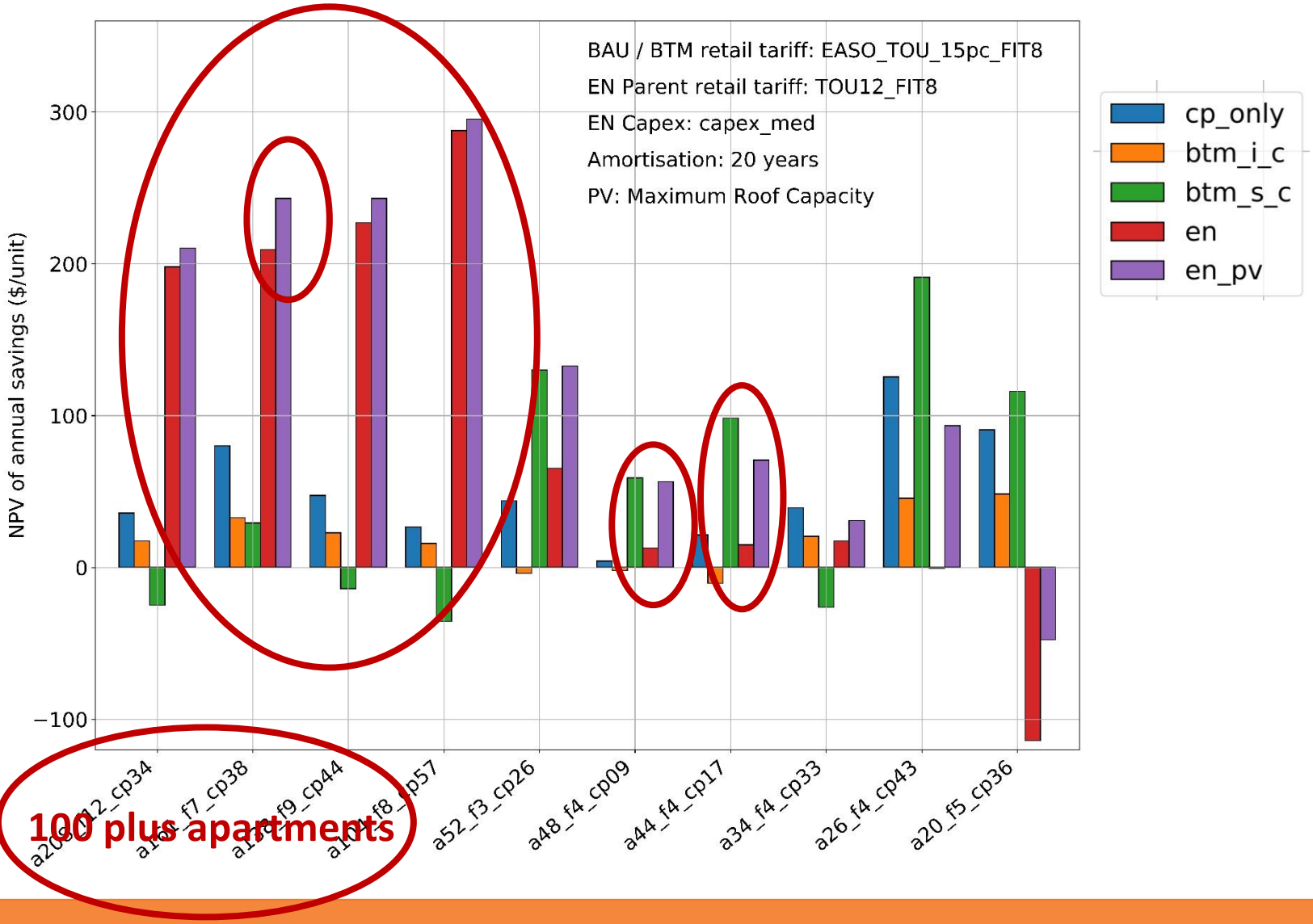

Case Study W

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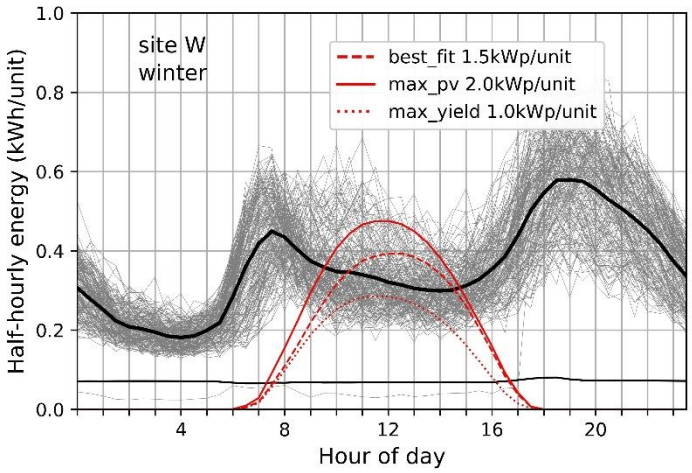
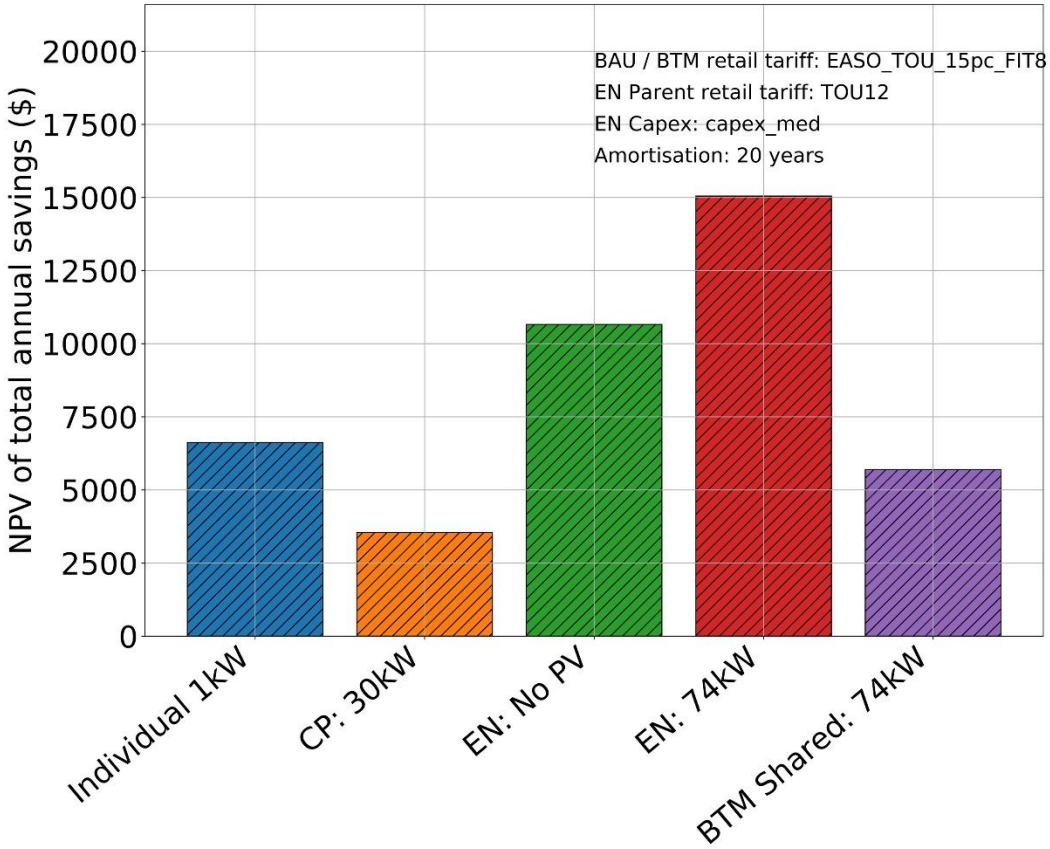
72 apartments
3 floors
Lifts, carparks, etc
CP is 22% of load





Case Study W – Embedded Network

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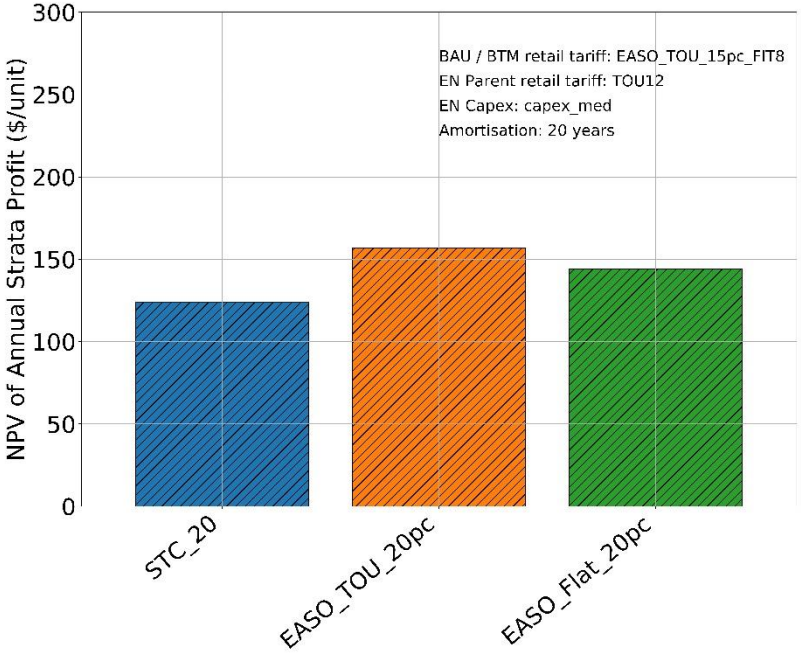
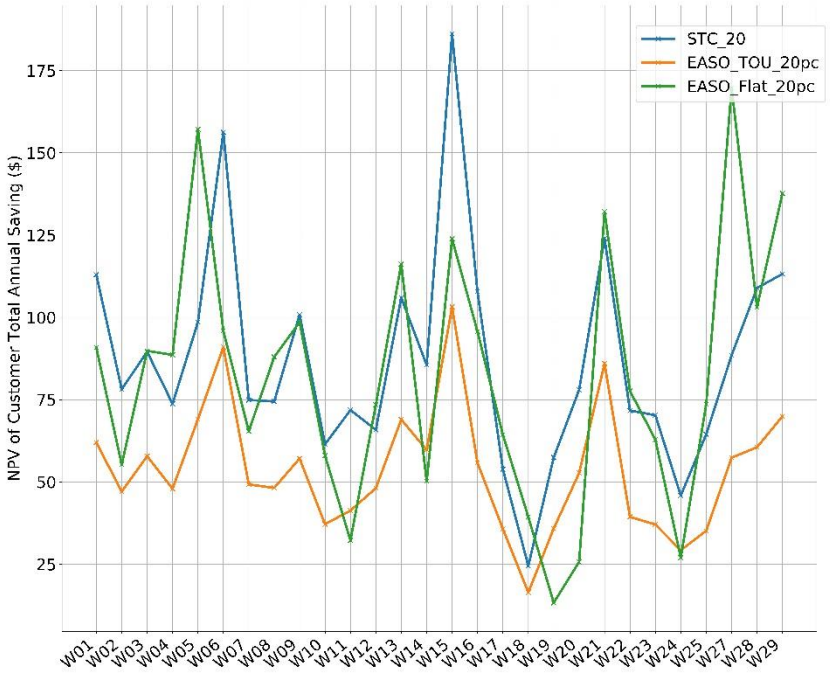
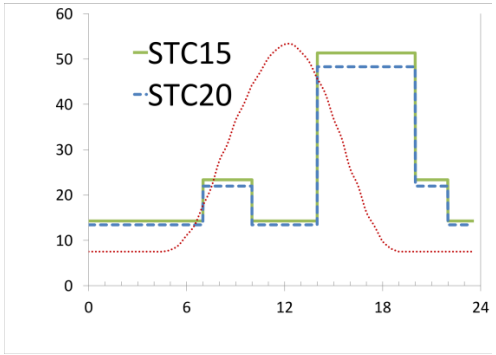
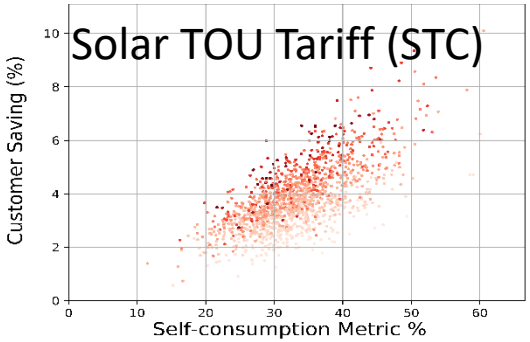




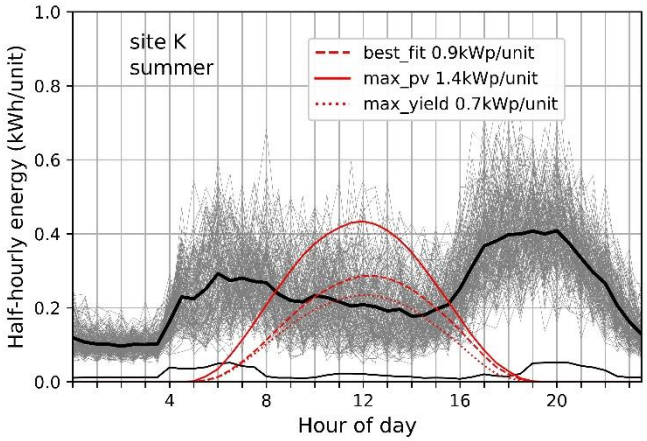


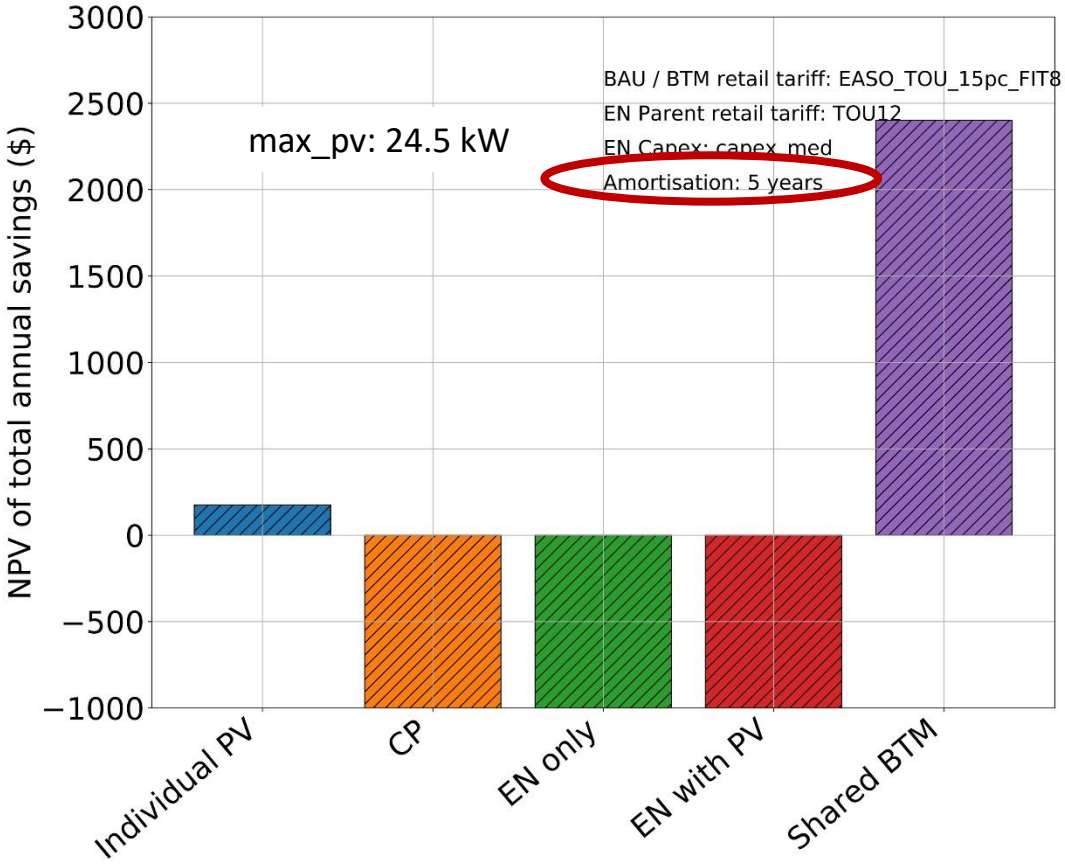


wattwatchers DIGITAL ENERGY

Case Study K

18 apartments
3 floors
CP is 9% of load





Embedded Networks

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Capital Costs

- Parent meter
- Child meters ($200- $300)
- Meter Abolishment ($300-$400)
- Switchboard and wiring upgrades
- Highly variable for brownfield sites

Business Models

- Strata Body owns EN pays ENM / ENO for service
- Strata / ENO share risks and benefits
- Third Party

Operating Costs

- Parent tariffs (9c-15c/kWh?)
- Billing ($15 - $35 /meter /month)
- Metering (~$3 /meter /month)
- Compliance (~$2/meter/month)

Finance

- Sinking Fund
- Strata levy
- Finance: @ 7%—11% ?
- May need longer term (10-20 years) to repay capex

Some Generalisations:

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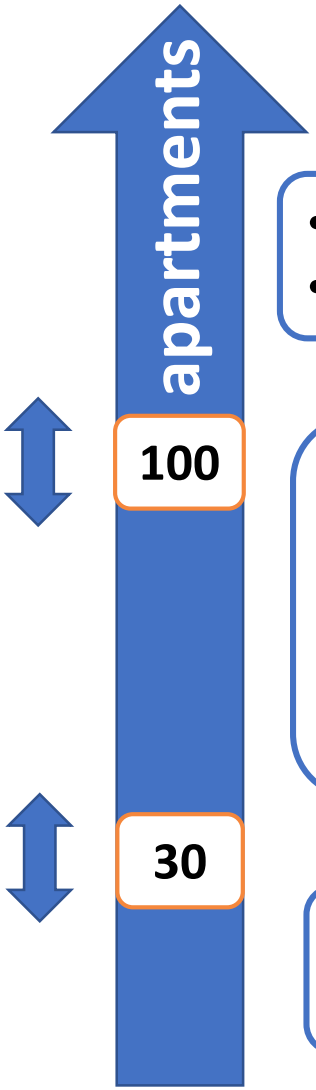

- Greatest $ benefits are from EN & commercial tariffs
- For hi-rise, PV best suited for Common Property

- EN viability is site-dependent
- PV (1.0 – 1.5kW/unit) may add value to EN
  With cost recovery in 10 years (with FiT) or 20 years without
- Shared BTM of 1-1.5kW / unit can also be competitive

- Retrofit EN unlikely to be viable (but PV may help)
- Shared BTM may increase value of PV

Battery Storage (BES) for ENs

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Parent Tariff	Control Strategy
High Demand Charge	Peak Demand Shaving
No / low Feed-in Tariff	Increase Self Consumption
High peak / Off-peak Ratio	Demand Shifting

	Individual PV and BES	EN, shared PV and BES
Optimum size	3 – 4 kWh / apartment	~ 1 kWh / apartment
Threshold capex	~ $750/kWh	~ $400/kWh

Current Capex ~ $1000 / kWh BUT:

- Government Incentives (e.g. QLD, VIC, federal ALP…)
- Decreasing Capex?
- Increasing Tariffs
- Potential Network Benefits

Roberts, M.B., A. Bruce, and I. MacGill, *The impact of aggregated battery storage on photovoltaic self-consumption and customer value in apartment buildings.*

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(Any questions?)

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Some of the barriers

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Embedded Network Regulation

- Administrative complexity
- Exemption Framework -> Authorised Retailers
- Small ENO's, Community, Strata squeezed
- VIC: "Abolish Embedded Networks" (but Microgrids)

Embedded Network Costs

- Meter contestability reducing costs, but:
- Unnecessary meter churn
- Meter abolishment charges
- Switchboard upgrades

Organisational

- Split Incentives
- Communication
- Apathy
- Lack of information

Finance

- Strata access to finance

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Potential Policy Approaches

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Embedded Networks

- Is market access the only solution?
- Is the "Power of Choice" restricting choice?
- Better regulated Embedded Networks:
  - Constraints on developer incentives
  - *Meaningful* tariff controls
  - Recognition of customer benefit
  - Contract time limits

Strata Law

- Sustainability Exemptions (e.g. ACT, QLD)
- Tenant involvement

Incentives

- State & Federal PV / Battery Grants -> Strata Bodies
- Feasibility Grants (every building is different)
- Project Grants

Metering

- Customer ownership
- Simplify meter transfer

Network Charges

- Cost-reflectivity
- Local Generation Credits

Finance

- Low-cost strata finance for sustainability (not EUAs)
- Rationalise strata tax rules

What are the key findings to highlight in the project report?

What policy approaches would most increase PV deployment on apartment buildings?

What future work is needed in this space?

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Key outcomes from discussion

- Apartments don't have the same access to solar as stand alone housing
- Lack of information/motivation, cost/payback/other priorities are key barriers
- Embedded networks are challenging – need to work for residents
- Solar enables ENs and vice versa (depending on scale and solar penetration)
- Metering and regulatory issues are barriers to choice despite opportunities presented by DERs
- Tax on revenue is an issue

Policy approaches

- Stop objections within strata organisations from restricting solar
- Need specific policies and support for apartments, community energy
- Removal of strata law barriers

Future work

- Disseminate info and help apartment owners to help decision making (not a role for solar installers). Currently need tailored solutions. Can they self assess, or do they need assistance? Role for user-friendly tools, step by step guide for apartment solar.
- EVs – complexities around fleet cars, different business models
- Compare with other options e.g. off-site