



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PLANNING, TRANSPORT, AND CITY SERVICES
Ms Jo Clay MLA (Chair), Ms Suzanne Orr MLA (Deputy Chair),
Mr Mark Parton MLA

Submission Cover Sheet

Inquiry into electric vehicle (EV) Adoption in the ACT

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Submission to the Inquiry into EV Vehicle Adoption in the ACT

The Executive Committee of Manhattan [REDACTED] present the following submission to the Chair of the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services, Ms Jo Clay MLA.

The Executive Committee notes the support the ACT Government has for reducing emissions and the assistance provided to individual home owners in particular. However, this support appears lacking when it comes to Strata developments, particularly those that pre-date current policy initiatives.

The Executive Committee, [REDACTED] offers the following as background to this submission.

- We represent a building where many lot owners are committed to emission reduction. Many owners are financially able to consider conversion to EV but are held back by the lack of charging facilities.
- Manhattan at 54 Moore St in Turner was built in 2003.
- It is typical of apartment blocks built in that time with infrastructure able to support fibre to the premises, but generally a lack of forethought to efficiency in heating, cooling and water use.
- Our building suffered from poor build quality and after taking the original builder to court received a part settlement. Since then, the building has been fully revitalized to a state that exceeds many current apartment builds but lacks much of the infrastructure needed to support Electronic Vehicle adoption in the ACT.
- There are 32 apartments and 36 parking bays. There are three power points installed in the garage. There were no disabled, visitor, or tradesperson parking spots nor any space available to create additional parking bays.
- The building has a mix of residential owners, tenanted residents, and some short stay accommodation.
- At this point, the lack of supporting EV charging infrastructure sees no permanent EV vehicles garaged at Manhattan.
- The requirement for future EV charging stations is not unique to Manhattan. Some simple measures from the ACT Government can facilitate the implementation of EV charging infrastructure to Manhattan and thus become a catalyst for uptake of EV vehicles for many of the 32 residential apartment dwellers.

Manhattan is an environmentally conscious entity.

The Owners of Manhattan [REDACTED] have undertaken a number of steps to facilitate fossil fuel reduction. For instance:

- all common area lighting has been switched over to LED;
- the garage fluorescent lighting that was 24 x 7 has been changed over to an LED solution triggered by auto sensors;
- installed 12KW solar power to the roof of Manhattan that is used by Manhattan with any remaining power generated fed back into the grid;
- developed a proposal for solar battery installation that has stalled due to concerns over the cost of building a special room to host the battery, and the current cost of battery technology .versus return on that investment;
- considered the installation of rainwater tanks however the footprint of the building leaves little or no room; and

- have an active community garden, worm farm and composting capability on site.

The Manhattan Sinking Fund

Manhattan Owners had to dig into their own pockets close to \$500,000 to rectify past poor building quality and certification processes. This could only be met through the charging of increased levies. Further, the lift faces major upgrade requirements as a twenty-year-old building.

The ACT Government is already benefitting

In our opinion, the ACT Government has earned significant income from strata buildings over recent years though significant rate rises as well as the ACT Government's Land tax. Both these income streams end up being passed onto tenants. We consider it an unfair situation that the Owners of a strata building should bear the whole cost of providing EV infrastructure to assist governments obtain green credentials.

Insurance provisions

We have not yet investigated the impact providing EV charging infrastructure would have on insurance premiums and would like this situation clarified.

Legal Risks

As an EC, it is unclear if we would need to defect the Unit Plan in ACAT should an Owner or Resident challenge a Unit Plan decision to not install EV charging infrastructure. This is most concerning to the EC of the Manhattan.

Impact of Investors

██████ has already expended heavily to rectify the building and thus the EC of ██████ has experienced resistance to strata levy increases. This resistance is not just from resident owners, but further resistance to increases in levies to fund EV Charging infrastructure can be expected from non-resident investors seeking to maximise a return on their investment. It would be likely that any increase in strata levies would result in an increase to rent being charged for properties.

We can see a situation where a Unit Plan resident owners may be outnumbered by investors that as a block could effectively stop EV infrastructure upgrades thus impacting government's policy of EV uptake.

The support that would enable us to move forward

Currently, most schemes, advice and subsidies assume recipients are acting as individuals, whereas lot owners need to act collectively. Subsidies to vehicle purchasers do not take into account many of the additional obstacles and costs incurred by the need for large scale installation and collective decision making.

Design of ACT Government Policy

The Executive Committee of Manhattan ██████ would like to see the ACT Government:

- ensure free assessments of buildings as to their current draw down capacity;
- free advice on the infrastructure upgrades that would be required to upgrade Manhattan and allow other strata developments to install adequate EV charging stations;

- ensure subsidies for installation of chargers in apartment buildings are designed to support the ACT Government's stated policy to ban the purchase of non EVs from 2035;
- recognise there is a transitional phase where only a minority of owners may be gaining the benefit of installation through their ownership of EVs. This is a particularly important equity issue as early uptake can be expected to predominantly favour the most affluent of residents.

The Executive Committee of [REDACTED] thanks the Inquiry into EV Vehicle Adoption in the ACT for accepting and considering this submission.

[REDACTED]

Mr. Mark Farrell
Secretary

On behalf of the EC Manhattan [REDACTED]