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City of Hobart
16 Elizabeth Street
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Date: 25.09.2020

By email to: coh@hobartcity.com.au

Dear Sustainable Hobart team,

RE: Draft Sustainable Hobart Action Plan

On behalf of the Tasmanian Chapter of the Australian Institute of Architects (the Institute), we would like to thank the City of Hobart (the City) for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Sustainable Hobart Action Plan (Action Plan), and we commend the City for the work that it is undertaking to address climate change. The Institute has completed the online feedback from but would like to accompany our response with this letter.

We understand the Action Plan is broad and forms part of an ongoing piece of work that is being undertaken by the City. As the peak members body for architects, we commend the projects that are included that relate to the built environment and believe these are a great starting point. Our sense of place as a city is so important, and a large component that makes up this sense of place is our built environment, and so we are particularly focussed on actions that relate to these two 'pillars' as set out by the City of Hobart to set out its key strategic work.

We note that the construction industry accounts for nearly 40% of energy-related carbon dioxide emissions as well as significant landfill waste, and we suggest that strong targets are set for Hobart's construction industry and built environment via strategic policy, pillars and projects.

We note that the Action Plan makes it difficult to locate the actions that directly relate to the built environment (and the other 'pillars' outlined by the City's strategic plan documents) and it would be helpful to note which pillar each action relates to, and further outline how they tie in with the City's key strategies and action plans that relate to climate

change in a way that is quick and easy to visualise. This may be in a form of 'colour-coding' the actions or similar.

The Institute would like to make the following suggestions for further consideration by the City in relation to the six areas identified in the action plan:

Leadership

- We encourage social inclusion incentives in developments, both public and private.
- We suggest establishing emergency shelters for victims of large scale weather or other events, for example, pandemic homelessness and domestic violence victims.

Mobility

- Along with encouraging the use of alternative modes of transport, we suggest considering the river as an alternative mode of transport to decrease road traffic congestion and allow for short-term metered boat parking berths for boat commuters.

Energy

- We encourage the City to reduce and eventually remove the use of natural gas as an energy source (as this is a contributor to greenhouse gas emissions).
- We encourage the City to consider its use of building materials for carbon footprint reduction; for example, by reducing the use of concrete, increasing the use of structural timber and considering using low-fired clay bricks.

Resilience

- Given COVID-19, there will need to be new approaches to urban design and building design and we encourage this to be explored and considered by the City.
- We encourage the City to consider ways to utilise lost space (RESI-04) that may include city rooftops. These could be used to house stormwater holding ponds, wind farms or solar farms, beehives, or rooftop gardens with public access. We note that [Paris currently has a plan to implement new green spaces](#) in the city.
- Increase public open space with a community and social purpose, for example, city-centre community gardens for active lunchbreaks. There is opportunity for pocket parks to be created around the city – for example, the space on Harrington Street where a small toilet was demolished. The Inner West Council area of Sydney are [developing a plan for pocket and neighbourhood parks](#).

- We encourage the river to be included in the consideration of habitats (RESI-01 & RESI-02) and suggest a clean-up and revegetation of the river floor to encourage biodiversity.
- We encourage the consideration of stormwater run-off in the way that the urban design of the city is considered, potentially by incorporating holding ponds. We also note the surfaces that are used in the urban design of both public spaces and private spaces have an impact on stormwater run-off, for example, in driveways, and encourage the use of surface materials that are permeable where appropriate. This has the potential to assist with RESI-07 and RESI-08.
- We encourage the City in supporting residents to create resilient homes and buildings that are able to withstand strong winds, fire, floods and encourage undertaking upgrades to existing buildings. We note that architects are able to support this.

Waste

- We encourage the City to focus on 'dismantling', rather than demolition of buildings to enable the reuse of materials. We support the implementation of a pre-dismantling audit; the implementation of a City of Hobart reusable materials storage depot at McRobies Gully (but separate from and targeted at the building industry rather than the existing tip salvage only materials) and an online data platform to track materials at building / dismantling sites and the storage depot.
- We encourage actions to eliminate construction waste and recognise the City of Hobart Waste Management Strategy.

Governance

- The Institute particularly welcomes the GOVE-06 action to develop public realm design guidelines and would suggest that the City seek input from built environment private practitioners in the development of these, for example, urban designers. We also suggest that built environment professionals assist when collaborating with other local governments in developing strategies and plans (as noted at GOVE-10), and in the development of the Climate and Sustainability Working Group (GOVE-02).
- We suggest that housing is considered when thinking about infill development in the city.
- We encourage improved regulation supporting heritage conservation through adaptive re-use and encourage other approaches to repurposing heritage buildings, for example, through the adoption of the Burra Charter by the City of Hobart to allow for best practice and a broader leeway to the heritage conservation of built fabric.

- We encourage upgrades to all existing government buildings and structures to meet energy/emissions and waste targets and for all new government buildings and structures to meet a high sustainability standard (for example, a Green Star rating).
- We encourage the City to support innovative sustainable construction technologies by independent Tasmanian companies.
- We encourage the City to support local and sustainable building material production.
- We encourage the City to incentivise medium to high-density in established service zones/communities.

It is exciting to think that the Hobart could become a leader in the area of sustainable building design and construction, and we suggest that there may be scope for a dedicated action plan and policy focussed on the built environment that includes achievable but ambitious targets.

The Institute would like to acknowledge that the Tasmanian cohort of the [Architects Declare Australia](#) organisation is also submitting a response to the Action Plan, and we note that the Institute endorses this organisation and supports what it stands for.

The Institute would be more than happy to provide input and support to the City in any way we can.

Kind regards,



Shamus Mulcahy
President, Tasmanian Chapter
Australian Institute of Architects



Jennifer Nichols
Executive Director, Tasmanian Chapter
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The Australian Institute of Architects is the peak body for the architectural profession, representing 11,500 members across Australia and overseas. The Institute actively works to improve the quality of our built environment by promoting quality, responsible and sustainable design. Learn more about the Institute, log on to www.architecture.com.au.