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Sarah Russell

Director Climate Change

Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania

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Submission: Tasmania's Draft Climate Change Action Plan 2023-25

Dear Sarah,

By way of background, the South Hobart Sustainable Community (SHSC) was formed in 2009 as a community-based organisation. Since its inception, SHSC has led a number of community projects with a strong focus on emissions reductions, including bulk purchasing of electric vehicles¹, rooftop solar photovoltaic and hot water systems, as well as building resilience in the community through initiatives such as establishing a Community Garden.

Our community has a great sense of pride in banding together on these initiatives, but recognises that a strategic statewide approach is necessary for our society to respond to the risks and contribute to stabilising the climate. On this basis, the South Hobart Sustainable Community (SHSC) Inc supports the Climate Change Action Plan.

¹ ReNew: Technology for a Sustainable Future, *Electric vehicles—Australia's first community bulk buy*, Ben Clark, No. 154 (JAN - MAR 2021), pp. 84-87 (4 pages)

About us: The SHSC group is South Hobart residents who recognise that transitioning to a sustainable way of life is one of the key challenges of the 21st century. We want to work together and share what we learn along the way.



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Our specific comments are structured to align with the consultation questions:

1 – Vision and goals

We support the vision.

We support the goals, however we would also like to see an additional sub point relating to improved residential building standards. We understand the state has deferred the consideration of the 7 star NATHERS energy efficiency rating provisions until 2025 whilst UTAS is conducting research into minimising condensation. Building for 7 stars begins with good design and passive solar orientation, and we note the State's ability for passive solar orientation to be incorporated into planning scheme requirements. Also, once adopted, these ratings should be based on 'as built', as opposed to ratings of architectural drawings and specifications only.

A 7 star NATHERS rating is now the *minimum* standard for all new homes across Australia, **except** Tasmania and the Northern Territory. Worryingly, these are the two jurisdictions with the most extreme weather conditions requiring the greatest energy efficiency targets in order to make new homes comfortable AND cost efficient. Higher ratings (8, 9 and 10) are all achievable with today's knowledge and experience from around the world. Setting ambitious targets, in response to catastrophic climate change conditions (as forecast by the IPCC and the UN Secretary General) is now critically urgent.

Clear and strong leadership is required. Tasmania has the opportunity to lead the states and territories of Australia, by not just setting a date for phasing in the 7 star rating, but coupling it with a timeframe for the subsequent steps up to the 8, 9 and 10 star requirements over the coming decade (i.e. every 2-3 years they step up). Tasmania can lead by example and show that it is possible for the design and construction industry to adapt to change when given clear timeframes to work toward. This will not only benefit the future occupants, but no doubt realise cost efficiencies within the sector. Importantly, the energy saving from this sector would allow other sector's needs to be met.

Suggested additional dot point:

- strengthened planning scheme requirements for 7 star NATHERs building design and passive solar orientation.

2 - Priority Areas

We support the three priority areas.



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3 - Information and knowledge

Will the key actions help support decision making for your organisation?

Yes, they will be helpful, however we note that much of the information has been available for several decades - the challenge lies in getting decision makers at higher levels to heed the advice and act with urgency.

As a shoestring community organisation, we have appreciated the opportunity to access Government research and funding support for our group's activities. We look forward to continued support of this type.

Currently we are working toward a proposal requiring collaboration across 2 levels of government and the network provider to develop a large scale, solar PV installation that feeds excess energy into a community battery, to then help power a bank of EV fast and slow chargers and feed into the local sub-network to provide solar-power access to heavily shaded homes. We are finding it takes a lot of volunteer effort to garner support across the relevant arms of government, elected representatives across 3 levels of government, and energy providers, to get some significant demonstration projects in our community. Having someone from RECFIT that could help advocate for this outcome - and tackle some of the administrative challenges would be very helpful.

What types of projects should be supported under the final action plan?

We think there would be merit in RECFIT either organising or co-hosting an annual 'briefing + workshop' where the leaders of various community organisations are invited to hear from RECFIT (or relevant departments), and/or relevant experts on research findings and progress or outcomes against the three priority areas. This could potentially lead into a workshop where the participants help work through a scenario and provide meaningful ways to tackle a particular climate policy challenge (kind of like a scaled down version of a citizen's jury).

4 - Transition and innovation

Will the key actions help support decision making for you and your community or organisation?

In 2020 our group organised Australia's first EV bulk purchase, and in 2021, we organised Tasmania's first E-bike bulk purchase, and both offers were strongly supported. Given both technologies are comparatively costly, our suburb's relatively strong household income worked in favour of this uptake. It is now a common sight

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for 10-15 e-cargo bikes to be delivering children to child care and the primary school in South Hobart². Given the relatively lower purchase cost of E-bikes, we recommend the Government trial a few forms of incentive (i.e. direct subsidy to 10% of bike value, or zero interest loan similar to Energy Saver Loan Scheme) to help households purchase an e-bike, as this could be a viable alternative to a second car for many households. For instance, the suburbs of Hobart, Launceston, Burnie, Ulverstone and Devonport that are within 10km of their respective CBDs would be well within the commute range of a regular cargo bike battery.

Tied to that should also be a significant boost in funding for safer cycle infrastructure (AAA standard - all ages and abilities), to help the riders from 8 to 80 that are capable of riding to feel safe whilst doing so. As international evidence from places in Netherlands and Denmark shows, this is when the changes to rider demographics really start to be noticeable, with increased female and child participation.

5 – Adaptation and resilience

Will the key actions help support decision making for you and your community or organisation?

In 2021 our group partnered with Red Cross and City of Hobart to facilitate four workshops on Disaster Resilience. As one of several outcomes we have since held an inaugural South Hobart Resilience Fair, and soon will conduct a mock evacuation exercise.

Every time we host such an activity it typically involves facility hire costs and other associated costs, for which we need to write grant applications. It would be great if there was a form of support or funding that could help enable community groups such as ours undertake this type of activity without us needing to first get funding approval or fundraise to do so. We would certainly be interested in the Statewide Climate Change Risk Assessment when it is drafted.

Thank you for inviting our feedback and we trust it is helpful in revising this draft plan to a 'final' version.

Kind regards

South Hobart Sustainable Community Facilitators - Linda Giumelli, Aaron Leeman-Smith, Dany Pacaud, Lissa Villeneuve, Jess Kneebone, Louise Gilfedder, Ben Clark, Chanchal Foxen and Stuart Barry

² Bicycle Network - *Cargo bike childcare drop-offs are a cinch* (4 May 2021)

<https://bicyclenetwork.com.au/newsroom/2021/05/04/cargo-bike-childcare-drop-offs-are-a-cinch/>

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