



## **Joint Statement: Australian Councils call for energy-efficient and climate resilient homes via the National Construction Code**

Australian local governments are calling for the strongest possible building standards to be enshrined in the 2022 National Construction Code (NCC).

**We ask that the minimum standard in the National Construction Code be lifted to at least a 7-Stars NatHERS energy rating.**

As buildings account for 25 percent of national carbon emissions, a strong NCC is vital for achieving our net-zero targets.

Better performing homes mean lower energy bills, improved health outcomes for residents, and homes resilient to extreme weather.

As the level of government closest to communities, Councils play an important role in creating safe and vibrant communities. We have a responsibility to protect our diverse communities from current and worsening impacts of climate change.

### **No time to delay**

We support the proposed changes to the NCC 2022 to increase the minimum standard to 7-Stars NatHERS energy rating and introduce energy budgets for new homes. This is a good first step.

However, 7-Star is the minimum increase that is needed to cut our emissions in the next decade. Australian homes have fallen behind international standards and we need to lift their energy performance.

### **Our communities demand safe and healthy homes**

Communities across Australia want energy efficient homes that keep warm in winter and cool in summer. Councils have responded by including objectives related to environmentally sustainable building design in their community strategic plans and/or local planning strategies.

Thirty-one Victorian councils and the Municipal Association of Victoria, representing the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment, are working together to revise and elevate Environmentally Sustainable Development targets for new developments, including targets for zero carbon development in local and state planning schemes.



### **Councils already working with industry and government for better homes**

Councils are already working with developers to achieve higher performance outcomes than the mandatory construction code minimum standards. We have been successfully working with industry to support the market transition.

Councils in Western Australia are introducing policies that encourage industry to adopt sustainable design principles above the construction code's minimum standards. In many instances, industry has adopted these design principles to meet changing market demands and community aspirations.

The increase to 7-Stars is achievable, cost-effective and financially beneficial to residents.

### **Future-proofing our homes in a changing climate**

With temperatures projected to rise by 2.5°C in the next century, residential buildings and homes need to become more resilient to withstand hotter temperatures, drier climates and more extreme weather events. The findings of the *Future Proofing Residential Development to Climate Change* research project by Randwick, Woollahra and Waverley councils, showed as the climate warms in 2030 and 2070, energy demand for homes in Sydney's eastern suburbs will increase dramatically, and will fail the current NSW requirements for cooling in 2030 and 2070.<sup>1</sup>

### **Lifting standards across the country**

The National Construction Code is an efficient instrument to achieve a consistent national approach and achieve widespread benefits across our communities. People on a low income spend a disproportionate amount of energy to heat and cool their homes.<sup>2</sup> We need to ensure social equity and protect our residents from poor performing buildings and the increasing impacts of climate change.

We ask that the minimum standard be increased in the National Construction Code 2022 and Councils are ready to work with government and industry to improve the future Australian homes.

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[https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/181788/Future\\_Proofing\\_Residential\\_Development\\_to\\_Climate\\_Change\\_Final\\_Report\\_January\\_2021.pdf](https://www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/181788/Future_Proofing_Residential_Development_to_Climate_Change_Final_Report_January_2021.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> ACOSS/Brotherhood of St Laurence (2018): [Energy Stressed in Australia](#)

# Climate Emergency Australia



Climate Emergency Australia (CEA) is a network of 104 Australian councils that have declared a climate emergency. Together, we represent more than 9.9 million Australians calling for a rapid shift to a more resilient, zero-carbon society.

## Supporting Councils

