

# Sustainability Action Plan

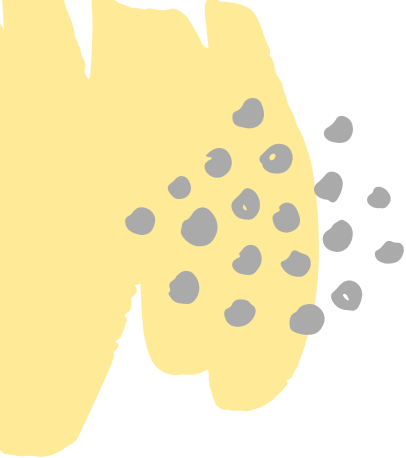
Delisle Hunt Wood  
Working Document  
2023



dhw

architecture and sustainable design

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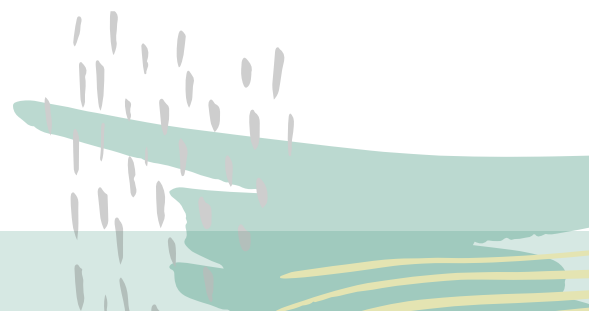


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This document is our second draft;

We aim to make this public and that as we update we help to keep ourselves accountable and continue being part of a culture of sharing, growth and responsibility.

September 2023



# COMMITMENT

DHW is a signatory to Australian Architects Declare Climate & Biodiversity Emergency (<https://au.architectsdeclare.com/>) and as a signatory we are committed to seek to:

1. Raise awareness of the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the urgent need for action amongst our clients and supply chains.
2. Advocate for faster change in our industry towards regenerative design practices and a higher Governmental funding priority to support this.
3. Establish climate and biodiversity mitigation principles as the key measure of our industry's success: demonstrated through awards, prizes and listings.
4. Share knowledge and research to that end on an open source basis.
5. Evaluate all new projects against the aspiration to contribute positively to mitigating climate breakdown, and encourage our clients to adopt this approach.
6. Upgrade existing buildings for extended use as a more carbon efficient alternative to demolition and new build whenever there is a viable choice.
7. Include life cycle costing, whole life carbon modelling and post occupancy evaluation as part of our basic scope of work, to reduce both embodied and operational resource use.
8. Adopt more regenerative design principles in our studios, with the aim of designing architecture and urbanism that goes beyond the standard of net zero carbon in use.
9. Collaborate with engineers, contractors and clients to further reduce construction waste.
10. Accelerate the shift to low embodied carbon materials in all our work.
11. Minimise wasteful use of resources in architecture and urban planning, both in quantum and in detail.

*In Australia, we as architects and designers are aware that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have long espoused the cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits embedded in the holistic relationship of Caring for Country.*

*We honour and pay respect to the land we work and build upon and all those that care for it past, present and future.*

# VISION

At DHW we strive to create an architectural design studio centred on an equitable, inclusive and collaborative working environment.

Our work aims to be client focused using a straightforward practical approach to provide cost effective solutions that create stimulating, healthy, resource-efficient homes that are holistically conceived.

We believe successful, responsible, environmental design is about making smart choices rather than costly ones.

We aim for DHW to be seen as an exemplar firm in the delivery of excellent sustainable and regenerative design.

As our own understanding of sustainability does not limit itself to either low-tech or high-tech solutions, we aim to educate and accommodate the commitments of our clients to explore the best short and long term sustainability goals that suit their given situations.

We believe that sustainable design should not be niche, but rather it should be commonplace, accessible, practical and universal, we are grateful to be part of the movement that holds these same ideals as truisms not as options.

## LEGEND



### Short term goal

the actions we are intending to take within the next 6 months or have already begun to action



### Medium term goal

the actions we are intending to take in the next 12 to 18 months






### Long term goal

the plans we have for implementation over the next 3-5 years




# DESIGN AND APPROACH

Our design phase continues to be guided by our goals. The longer term goals have the potential to considerably change the way in which our projects can have a positive environmental impact rather than simply mitigating environmental impact where possible.

		
<p>Increase conscious engagement with the project team</p>		
<p>Research available tools and frameworks to aspire to (e.g. living building challenge)</p>	<p>Learn about how these frameworks can inform the design process</p>	<p>Select a framework with appropriate targets to ensure we meet targets within our design practice</p>
<p>Integrate life cycle analysis modelling and costing as a component of the core scope of work</p>	<p>Reduce embodied and operational carbon and subsequent resource consumption through implementation of LCA modelling</p>	<p>Achieve carbon neutrality for all our projects by 2030</p>
<p>Evaluate new projects alignment with our aspirations to contribute positively the environment</p>	<p>Encourage clients to adopt this approach</p>	
<p>Implement regenerative design principals in studio</p>	<p>Design architecture that strives to go beyond net zero carbon in use</p>	
<p>Minimise wasteful use of resources in architecture and urban planning, both in quantum and in detail</p>	<p>Accelerate the shift to low embodied carbon materials in all our work</p>	
<p>Prioritise building upgrade for extended use as a more carbon efficient alternative to demolition and new build whenever viable</p>		

# EVALUATING AND REPORTING

Identification of how principles of our commitment and vision can be informed by the methods in which we report back




		
<p>Staff continue or join sustainability working groups</p>		<p>become part of industry body that oversees the processes of industry evaluation</p>
<p>Conduct carbon assessments of existing projects</p>	<p>Conduct carbon assessments of all projects from initial conception</p>	<p>Review and modify design approach accordingly</p>
<p>Develop a survey for post occupancy evaluation</p>	<p>Execute and analyse post occupancy evaluations</p>	
<p>Set benchmarks to reduce embodied carbon</p>	<p>Review ongoing projects against benchmarks</p>	

# OUTREACH AND ADVOCACY

Make commitments to being part of a larger movement. In the past DHW has made submissions to the review of the NSW Design for Place SEPP and the Public comment draft for NCC2022 Energy Efficiency Review. DHW has also been part of the Campaign for Zero Emission Homes - <https://zeroemissionhomes.com/>.




DHW is heavily involved in advocacy around energy efficiency and sustainable design practices through voluntary representation in the following forums:

- Chair of AIA National Residential Sustainability Advisory Group
- AIA - NSW Chapter Sustainability Working Group
- Renew National Board and local branch ([www.renew.org.au](http://www.renew.org.au)).

		
<p>Staff join sustainability working groups</p>		<p>Become part of industry body that oversees the processes of industry evaluation</p>
<p>Develop office resources and SAP in alignment with firm values and goals</p>	<p>Share knowledge and research on an open source basis</p>	<p>Develop a section of the company website that can act as a resource for links about sustainable design that is open source</p>
<p>Set benchmarks to reduce embodied carbon</p>	<p>Advocate for faster change in our industry towards regenerative design practices and a higher Governmental funding priority to support this</p>	
<p>Raise awareness of the climate and biodiversity emergencies and the urgent need for action amongst our clients and supply chains</p>		<p>Hold climate and biodiversity mitigation principles as the key measure of our industry's success: demonstrated through awards, prizes and listing</p>

# TRAINING AND EDUCATION

As well as undertaking required CPD for Architectural registration and Thermal Performance Assessment, DHW has delivered webinars on energy efficiency and thermal performance for AIA and BDDA. DHW regularly participates in community education through public talks for the Renew local branch.

		
<p>Collecting sustainability information and creating a pro forma document that can be sent to clients</p>		
<p>Continuing training for all staff in carbon lifecycle tools</p>	<p>▶ Enact regular review systems to ensure updated knowledge of LCA tools and modelling</p>	
<p>Learn about frameworks for industry sustainability targets</p>	<p>▶ Implement these frameworks in design to formulate a best practice approach that aligns with firm values</p>	
	<p>CPD training chosen to align with sustainability goals wherever possible</p>	



# OPERATIONS AND OUTLOOK




Everyday operations and systems

		
Ensure all new team members are made aware of the office sustainability practices	▶ Create a checklist to monitor progress and present at company meetings	
Create hiring guidelines that include sustainability expertise or interest	▶ Coordinate with other tenants and landlords to improve carbon footprint and biodiversity care in office environment	
Learn about frameworks for industry sustainability targets		
Collaborate with engineers, contractors and clients to further reduce construction waste and lower embodied carbon in buildings		
Maintain Carbon neutrality in operations		




# CURRENT PRACTICE

In most of our current projects we are consciously aiming for:

- high performing energy efficient homes
- using low carbon low impact materials wherever possible
- minimising demolition and keeping building footprints as efficient as possible

		
<p>Make our clients aware of sustainable solutions that are available</p>	<p>Assist them to make informed decisions based on verified evidence and quantified outcomes</p>	
	<p>Building awareness of the climate and biodiversity emergencies</p>	<p>Consistently setting targets for the climate and biodiversity</p>
<p>Focus on energy efficiency and minimising the environmental impact of design options for clients during each design phase.</p>		
<p>Bring awareness to clients in regards to material choices and different supply chain options.</p>		
<p>Check supplier credentials in regards to sustainability and certifications</p>		

# FRAMEWORK

		
<p>Review SAP In 2023 we reviewed our SAP in depth with the help of external auditing process with the University of Sydney</p>		
<p>Extend SAP</p>	<p>▶ In mid 2024, we will review our progress and set a new action plan for 2025.</p>	
	<p>▶ Amplify SAP</p>	
		<p>▶ Regenerate SAP</p>

# CARING AS COUNTRY

DHW acknowledges the First Nations People of Australia. As individuals we all have personal, integral, care for Country, are learning to see ourselves as integral and a part of the Country we live in and respect the principles and the knowledge of First Nations People and the potential for great learning in this sphere.

Many of our current practices as a matter or habit embody the theories and practices encouraged by first nations designers; to understand the environmental aspects of a place, the direction of sun rise, the prevailing winds and attempt to utilise these elements in an easily accessible way for our clients to engage with.

Moving forward we have set goals to work with Reconciliation Australia to develop a Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in order to progress a deeper commitment to the healing of the relationship with Country that is needed to create a truly sustainable way of life for all people.

*"everything comes out  
of the principle of  
caring for country....  
country as a person...  
a family member..."*

*Alison Page  
- spoken word- 2021*

