

18 September 2023

Councillor Susan Wynne
Mayor of Woollahra
536 New South Head Road
Double Bay NSW 2028

Dear Cr Wynne

RE: Waverley Council Development Control Plan 2023

Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) commends Woollahra Municipal Council on its leadership and commitment to tackling climate change through measures such as the aspirational target to achieve net zero carbon emissions for the Woollahra Local Government Area (LGA) by the year 2030, becoming certified carbon neutral in 2019, and the in-principle commitment to reducing greenhouse emissions from gas, both from Council operations and from the broader community.

Removing fossil fuels from buildings is a critical element of global efforts to reduce carbon emissions. A report from the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council (ASBEC), [Unlocking the pathway: Why electrification is the key to net zero buildings](#), confirms 100% electrification is the lowest cost, fastest emissions reduction pathway for Australia's built environment.

GBCA has released two resources to support the electrification of the built environment: [A practical guide to electrification: For new buildings](#); and [A practical guide to electrification: For existing buildings](#).

Following extensive consultation with industry and government, GBCA developed the [Climate positive roadmap for the built environment](#) which plots a world-leading pathway to raise the benchmark for sustainable design, construction and building operation in Australia's built environment. The Climate Positive Pathway will be embedded within all Green Star rating tools to ensure that all Green Star-certified projects will play their part in the collective effort to try and limit global warming to 1.5 degrees and meet Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement.

All rating tools in the Green Star rating system are being updated to integrate the Climate Positive Pathway. Green Star Buildings (released in 2022) was the first of the new generation of Green Star rating tools and includes a graduating set of minimum requirements. This means that a 6 Star Green Star rating under Green Star Buildings requires fossil fuels to be eliminated and all electricity sourced from 100% renewables. This requirement cascades down to 5 Star ratings in 2024 and 4 Star ratings in 2027.

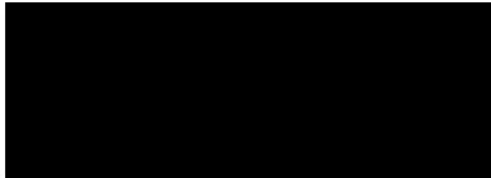
Green Star Homes, developed in partnership with Australia's leading residential developers, requires all homes certified under this standard to be fully electric and powered by renewables.

Transitioning buildings to clean energy also has benefits beyond emissions reduction. Beyond the negative environmental and health impacts of gas extraction, fossil gas appliances and equipment can be less efficient than new electric appliances and have been linked to negative health impacts. For example, cooking with gas is estimated to be responsible for up to 12% of the burden of childhood asthma in Australia and a child living with gas cooking in the home faces a comparable risk of asthma to a child living with household cigarette smoke.¹ GBCA is proud to be a member of the Global Cooksafe Coalition which aims to promote collaborative action to replace dangerous cooking fuels with safe, affordable, energy efficient appliances.

Planning systems will have a critical role to play in transitioning buildings to clean energy to address the challenges of climate change, air quality and energy affordability. GBCA supports Woollahra Municipal Council's consideration of how changes could be made to the Woollahra Local Environment Plan 2014 and Development Control Plan 2015, to reflect the phasing out of gas connections to new dwellings and in alterations and additions to existing dwellings.

I wish Woollahra Municipal Council all the best in its ongoing efforts to reduce emissions within the Woollahra LGA and improve the wellbeing of the community. Please do not hesitate to contact Katy Dean, Senior Policy Adviser, via email at [REDACTED], should you require any further information.

Yours sincerely



Davina Rooney
Chief Executive Officer
Green Building Council of Australia

¹ Climate Council. 2021. Kicking the gas habit: How gas is harming our health