

CACE Guide to the draft Darebin Climate Emergency Plan

Community Meetings Handout

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What is a climate emergency plan?

A climate emergency plan is simply both a recognition that:

1. current levels of global warming represent an extreme future threat to humanity and life around the planet and that even the impacts we are seeing today are unacceptable
2. a plan to both mitigate (reduce/remove/reverse) these impacts and to deal with the current and future impacts prior to successful mitigation in a way that protects life and assets. Critical to such plans is the concept of maximum protection of human and other life.

The Darebin Climate Emergency Plan

The Darebin Climate Emergency Plan was developed after discussions with current councilors and members of Darebin community including CACE, who wanted Darebin to declare a Climate Emergency and adopt a climate emergency response in Darebin and a campaign for candidates running for the 2016 local council election to pledge to make a Climate Emergency Declaration run by DCAN.

The new Climate Emergency Plan is a significant improvement on previous drafts but has not captured all the elements which are needed to for a true climate emergency response and is too focused on energy. In essence the Climate Emergency Plan just represents a redrafting of the previous draft Climate Action Plan and consequently falls short.

In this document CACE outlines some of the key issues we feel are strong enough to prevent the document from functioning effectively or even to be considered as a climate emergency plan. A full response to the plan will be available on CACE's website www.caceonline.org shortly.

Key issues that still need work

1. The context section of the Goal is too weak (see p17. of the draft plan)

The section describes as "Context" a outlines one goal as "Darebin Council will continue to aim for zero carbon for our Council and community." This contradicts the goals listed goals, thus is not strong enough and should be changed to "negative emissions" rather than "zero carbon". A true climate emergency goal seeks to return us to a safe climate and requires a return to pre industrial levels of greenhouse gases and hence use of drawdown options to achieve negative emissions. Given that Darebin Council has the potential to play a direct role in drawdown the Council's goal should be negative emissions not zero carbon.

In relation to drawdown and also in the "Context" section the goal of drawing down a "fair share" of carbon is also identified. The idea of a fairshare is problematic should be either dropped and replaced with the idea of maximising draw down or kept as a minimum benchmark.

2. Critical sections of a climate emergency response are missing

A true climate emergency response must act to both reduce emissions across the entire economy and to draw down past emissions. The current version of the plan lacks the following three key areas of focus *Diet, Consumption and Drawdown*. Each of these areas deserves to be included as a separate "Key Direction" with a background discussion, objectives and key actions.

3. Community engagement is not ambitious enough

The section on community engagement needs to be more ambitious and seek to build a community wide mandate for the declaration of a Climate Emergency within 12 months of the plan being adopted.

4. The plan is proposing to dump greenpower

The plan is proposing to dump the purchasing of greenpower. Greenpower is the leading market mechanism for purchasing renewable energy if you can not make it yourself. Each purchase increases the amount of renewable energy fed into our national grid system. Choosing to dump greenpower and replace it with electricity produced largely from coal is a backwards step and inconsistent with an emergency approach. Council should maintain a commitment to purchasing 100% Greenpower until it is replaced with an alternative model to purchase and or make its own renewable energy.

5. Council and Community Emissions Profiles are not full emission profiles

To respond to the climate emergency we must reduce emissions from all sources. The current Darebin Community and Council emission profiles focus on energy use and waste and exclude a number of key emission sources namely emissions relating to diet and consumption. A new approach must be adopted for a climate emergency response must be included if we are to have a community and council lead response to global warming ahead of state and federal governments and emissions from diet and consumption be included even if these are only rough estimates.

6. Council emission accounting methods are unclear

It is unclear if the current plan counts renewable energy systems installed in Darebin, including home rooftop solar, which have sold the rights to their renewable energy as zero emission energy. If this is occurring it is a form of double accounting with two parties counting the same renewable energy towards their zero emissions. The issue needs to be clarified.

7. Energy Foundation needs renaming and its role is unclear

The proposed Energy Foundation reflects the general focus of the draft plan on energy. This needs to be rectified and the Energy Foundation should be renamed something to the effect of "Climate Foundation" and its focused expanded to all areas of emissions including diet and consumption.

8. Divestment strategy needs expanded scope

The proposed divestment strategy reflects the general focus of the draft plan on energy. The scope needs to be expanded to include other high emission sources such as diet and it's link to animal agriculture.

9. Council fleet needs to be zero emissions first

Council fleet purchases should be zero emission first before considering other options as electric with range extenders or hybrid cars.

10. Inappropriate state and federal targets

The plan makes a number of the references to supporting actions by state and federal governments that are inconsistent with a climate emergency approach including references to low carbon options rather than zero emission options. CACE's full response will provide more information on this issue and be available on our website soon.

11. Plan needs to be reviewed annually

The plan need to be dynamic and be review annually most likely via the climate reference group.

Who is CACE?

CACE stands for Community Action in the Climate Emergency. CACE was started by two climate emergency campaigners and Save the Planet candidates who ran in the 2016 local government elections in Darebin, Adrian Whitehead and Bryony Edwards. They saw the potential in local councils to

lead in our response to the climate emergency and sought to create an organisation that could directly support that campaign in Darebin and beyond. This work builds on the campaign work started in 2012 by Save the Planet and RSTI (Research and Strategy for Transition Initiation Inc.). CACE works in close partnership with Philip Sutton from RSTI on the Darebin Campaign.