

Creating a Planning Pathway to Net Zero Buildings

Forum 1

31 May 2018 is the first forum of a series of forums to help local and state government and industry better understand current practice, as well as planning issues and opportunities within the NSW planning framework to support the transition to net zero development. The forums target new non-residential (office, hotels and mixed-use) and multi-unit residential developments.

Forum brief

Purpose

The forum partners would like to explore, with the property sector, the planning challenges of how to achieve low-carbon, high efficiency buildings and precincts to contribute to the NSW's target of net zero emissions by 2050 and reduce climate change impacts.

In Greater Sydney, the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions is energy use in buildings, hence the forums' focus on buildings and precincts.

The way Greater Sydney's urban structure and built form develops and redevelops over time can support NSW's transition towards net zero emissions.

Net zero

There are many definitions, constraints and expectations for the term 'net zero'. For the purpose of this forum, we will be using a European Union definition to guide discussions.

EU, Energy Performance of Buildings Directive
Nearly zero-energy buildings (NZEBS) have very high energy performance.

The low amount of energy that these buildings require comes mostly from renewable sources.

We understand there are inherent issues with the definition, such as 'very high energy performance' not being defined, and lack of clarity around on-site vs off-site renewables. Please remember the definition is to provide guidance for discussions on the day, and not define net zero for forum partners or your organisation.

NSW planning framework

The NSW planning framework provides the broad context and boundaries for this series of forums.

We would like forum invitees to consider all aspects of the NSW planning framework when thinking of the current perceived and real issues, barriers and challenges encountered for new developments to transition towards net zero. The planning framework consists of the Environmental Planning & Assessment Act 1979; state environmental planning policies (SEPPs) (e.g. BASIX SEPP, Infrastructure SEPP); Region and District Plans; local environmental plans; development control plans; other planning tools (e.g. NABERS, Green Star).

Greater Sydney's most recent and comprehensive planning document, the [Greater Sydney Region Plan – A Metropolis of Three Cities](#), identifies improved building efficiency as one of the most important pathways towards net zero emissions in Greater Sydney. The five District Plans are a guide for implementing the Region Plan. All District Plans contain the Planning Priority Reducing carbon emissions and managing energy, water and waste efficiently. This series of forums will discuss how to support the objectives and strategies identified in the Region and District Plans to achieve a low-carbon, efficient city.

Forum questions

Over page.

Forum questions

Prior to the forum, consider your role or potential role in planning for, designing and/or building net zero developments. Engagement might be in developing a planning proposal, negotiating a development application, or designing a building to meet a condition.

You'll be asked to use a 'land use planning lens' on the day of the forum.

Forum 1 will explore the below questions:

- Q1** What are the current challenges and barriers in land use planning to net zero buildings and precincts in NSW? (e.g. legislation, planning controls prevent use of technology, using current tools, capital cost, skills and expertise)
- Q2** In the planning system, what are the most important opportunities and incentives to facilitate net zero buildings and precincts?
Consider opportunities to strengthen existing tools (e.g. BASIX, NABERS, Green Star etc.) and National Construction Code.
- Q3** Are there any lessons learnt from previous experience of in other jurisdictions that will help us to achieve high-performance outcomes?
- Q4** Should we consider mandatory or voluntary planning controls to achieve high-performance outcomes?
- Q5** What will support the delivery of net zero building projects across the property sector (i.e. from Tier 1 to Tier 3 companies)?
- Q6** Who are the key players within the property sector that will facilitate broad uptake and delivery of high performance building standards?
- Q7** Looking at the opportunities identified in the previous discussion, what are the priority actions within the NSW planning framework to facilitate net zero buildings and precincts? Who should lead each of these actions?
- Q8** What are the quick wins that can help achieve higher performance buildings and precincts?

Other

This is the start of the conversation. We welcome any and all ideas on the day.

Feedback on the day will be anonymous, and the findings of the forum will be reported but no organisation or individual will be identified.

