

# Environmentally Sustainable Development Policy Statement

October 2018 Version 0.2.

## **Acknowledgements**

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This policy statement was compiled by the Hobsons Bay Strategy and Advocacy Department. For further information contact the Hobsons Bay City Council on 9932 1000 or [www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](http://www.hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au)

Council acknowledges the peoples of the Kulin nation as the Traditional Owners of these municipal lands and waterways and pays respect to Elders past and present.

Council acknowledges the legal responsibility to comply with the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010. The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities is designed to protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of citizens. The Charter gives legal protection to 20 fundamental human rights under four key values that include freedom, respect, equality and dignity

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## Vision

Council will lead the community towards a sustainable urban environment that responds to climate change and enhances the health and wellbeing of its community through the application of visionary, vibrant and accountable environmentally sustainable development.

An ESD Policy will:

- reduce the impact of residential and industrial development and enhance the quality of its natural and built environment
- establish high environmental standards for the built environment and city infrastructure
- prioritise energy efficiency, integrated water management, waste reduction and the conservation of the natural environment
- enhance transport accessibility and connectivity through a focus on walking and cycling whilst considering the needs of all members of the community

## Introduction

Hobsons Bay 2030 sets out the community's vision for its city through six priority areas. These priorities require Council to: take a visionary, vibrant and accountable approach to urban planning; to activate sustainable practices; to be an accessible and connected community; to be proactive in terms of the enrichment, expansion and conservation of the natural and urban environment; and enhance community wellbeing and inter-connections across Council.

These priorities form the basis of the Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) policy. The policy will respond to the community's vision and address the challenge of climate change. Climate change will increasingly affect all aspects of our lives and it is imperative that an ESD policy outlines a process to reduce the impacts of our way of life on the environment.

Council has long demonstrated its commitment to ESD. The Hobsons Bay Environment Strategy 2006-10 included key directions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through: the use of sustainable energy and energy efficient design; a reduction in potable water use; improved water quality in waterways; and supporting and enabling community members to reduce their environmental impact. More specifically, the strategy included actions to progress ESD through:

- all new Council buildings and retrofitting works incorporating energy efficient design
- incorporating ESD principles into all new residential, commercial and industrial developments and subdivision plans through the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme

Subsequent environmentally sustainability and climate change related policies and plans have since been developed. These policies build on this direction and provide more specific actions related to climate change mitigation and adaptation and reducing resource consumption and waste generation. These policies are described further in the Policy context section of this statement.

During this long history of working towards our environmental objectives, Council has assisted in raising environmental awareness throughout the Hobsons Bay community. Council has delivered numerous events and programs to reduce our impact on the natural environment and empower the community to take on this responsibility themselves.

This policy statement will be an effective framework to ensure that all ESD related actions are aligned with one another and contribute to the overarching vision of embedding best practice ESD design standards and practices in the development of the built environment within Hobsons Bay. Whilst the Corporate Greenhouse Strategy 2013-20 and its associated Target 2265 have achieved significant emissions reductions, including a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions by 8.7 per cent from last financial year, savings have been offset by the addition of new buildings to Council's portfolio. Going forward, it is essential that the addition of any new buildings achieve carbon neutrality so that Council's investment in technologies to reduce emissions achieves Council's goal of zero net emissions by 2020.

## Purpose and scope of policy statement

The purpose of this Policy Statement is to provide Council with a strategic approach to establishing the social, economic and environmental standards that empower the community to demand higher ESD outcomes for their homes, their businesses and their community. This will only be achieved through the application of best practice ESD design standards and practices. This policy statement has also been developed as a response to the projected implications of climate change on Hobsons Bay's social, economic and environmental sustainability.

The Policy Statement will:

- demonstrate Council's commitment to and leadership in ESD practice by incorporating ESD within its own developments
- build the capacity of Council staff to implement the principles of ESD when planning, building or redesigning Council buildings and the public realm to continually improve environmental, social and economic outcomes
- advocate for sustainable design to be enforced through the regulatory framework and ensure that environmental performance is considered in the assessment of development proposals in planning and building reform
- encourage and support private developers to lead by example
- develop awareness in the community of the value of enhancing ESD outcomes for their homes, their businesses and in their community and showcase best practice examples to enhance adoption and awareness

To ensure the implementation of this policy statement, Council will identify priority interventions and investments based on the capital works and assets program and maintenance renewal works. This policy statement sets out a vision for Council to work towards upgrading all Council buildings to meet best practice ESD standards.

## Defining Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD)

ESD is the philosophy of designing physical objects, the built environment, and services to comply with the principles of social, economic, and ecological sustainability. It is generally accepted that sustainable development can be defined as "... development that meets the

needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) 1987). The WCED report, *Our Common Future*, provided this definition to highlight three fundamental components to sustainable development: environmental protection, economic growth and social equity. The concept of sustainable development focused attention on finding strategies to promote economic and social advancement to avoid environmental degradation, over-exploitation or pollution, and sideline less productive debates about whether to prioritise development or the environment.

### Climate Change Adaptation

Adaptation helps individuals, communities, organisations and natural systems to deal with those consequences of climate change that cannot be avoided. It involves taking practical actions to manage the risks from climate impacts such as sea level rise, extreme events such as heat waves or flooding, to protect communities and strengthen the resilience of the economy. Adaptation can involve gradual transformation with many small steps over time, or major transformation with rapid change.

### Cumulative Impacts

The effects of climate change may be compounded over time or impacts may interact to produce cumulative impacts. For example, increased temperatures during periods of reduced rainfall will likely result in greater water stress.

### Co-benefits

Co-benefits occur when policies or actions designed for a specific outcome produce benefits in other areas. For example, tree-planting for aesthetic purposes may also provide shade and cool areas that are important during heatwaves.

### Direct and Indirect Impacts

The direct impacts of climate change occur during and immediately after an extreme weather event. For example, floods can cause immediate injury and the destruction of property and infrastructure. Indirect impacts caused by climate change occur later in time. The indirect impacts of climate change may result from changes to the social, built, economic and natural environments. For example, drought causes changes to the social and economic well-being of a community, leading to health outcomes such as increased anxiety and/or depression.

## Defining the issues

The Hobsons Bay community places significant value on our natural environment – the foreshore and green, open spaces. In protecting and enhancing these elements, Council is also fostering social and health benefits such as reduced car dependency, increased active transport, reduced heat island impacts and improved access to fresh food.

Incorporating ESD principles in the design of buildings and the public realm and monitoring the results demonstrates the link between design and broader environmental benefits and impacts, for example, poor energy efficiency equates to higher utility costs, more infrastructure requirements, increased climate change impacts and health implications, to mention a few.

ESD provides multiple benefits including:

- better affordability due to reduced running costs
- improved comfort and healthy living and operating conditions
- more environmentally sustainable urban form
- integrated water management
- easier compliance with building requirements through passive design
- reduces the impact on the environment

Considering ESD early in the planning stage of any project is the most cost effective way to achieve good environmental outcomes. By the time the design for most infrastructure is completed but before they have actually been built, about 80-90 per cent of their life cycle economic and ecological costs have already been made inevitable (Amory Lovins et al, 1999). For buildings this includes good solar orientation to create liveable, comfortable and energy efficient buildings. For land use planning the provision of a range of densities in urban areas, with higher densities in areas near employment centres this promote the integration of land use and public transport services and reduces car dependency.

### **Climate Change**

Hobsons Bay is particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change due to its coastal location. Immediate action is necessary to build Hobsons Bay's capacity to respond to the challenges of climate change, enable more effective responses, and minimise social, economic and environmental impacts.

The impacts of climate change will be diverse, affecting people, infrastructure and the environment. Considering Hobsons Bay's environment, key risks for our community include flooding, sea level rise and storm surges, heat vulnerability and extreme weather events. Local impacts of such risks may include property damage, health implications, the increased cost of food, increased infrastructure maintenance and cleanup costs, and loss of biodiversity and habitat.

Both buildings and infrastructure will need to be designed to cope with the impacts of climate change. The warmer weather will require enhanced cooling options for the more vulnerable members of our community and more extreme and wet weather will lead to increased flooding. This will require measures for both resistance for initial protection and resilience for rapid recovery.

In order for the municipality to appropriately respond to the impacts of climate change, we need to support and encourage adaptive communities. For Council this means providing the broad strategic directions and a framework for decision-making. Effective environmental policies facilitate a coordinated and co-operative approach to climate change and encourage long-term planning for the benefit of the municipality and the broader environment over short-term gains.

There are a number of ways in which Council can respond and help the community to increase its resilience to climate change. One way is ensuring that the built environment is planned and developed sustainably along with our natural environment with the community as the primary focus. Council can influence:

- the sustainability of Council buildings (e.g. sustainable materials and effective design)
- planning of appropriate infrastructure (e.g. drainage systems to better handle changing conditions)

- the comfort and amenity of the urban environment and open space (e.g. increasing canopy cover to reduce heat vulnerability)
- strategic planning to facilitate integrated land and transport outcomes (e.g. increased development around public transport hubs, activity centres, open space and community facilities)
- the implementation of an integrated approach to water management to ensure multiple benefits throughout the water cycle
- the management and protection of coastal areas in response to climate change

At the same time, new buildings must use less fossil fuels to deliver on Council's Corporate Greenhouse Policy 2013-20 of zero-net emissions by 2020 and the Community Greenhouse Policy 2013-30 of zero net emissions by 2030. Homes, offices, schools and other buildings will need to maximise passive measures such as more effective insulation, improved airtightness and greater thermal mass. They will also need to make more use of solar energy and other renewable energies. New buildings will incorporate a range of new technologies to reduce their energy use and to cut the energy needed to build them, including the embodied energy in the materials they contain.

Bold and innovative land use planning and infrastructure development will provide opportunities for the community to experience new, more sustainable ways of living, be able to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies and be ready to adapt to climate change.

## Water

Council has an important role in water sustainably due to the large areas of land and extensive stormwater drainage network it manages, its role in land use planning, and its close relationship with the local community.

Hobsons Bay was identified as one of four local government areas in Victoria that have the “greatest level of risk... [of] inundation from a sea level rise of 1.1 metres and storm tide associated with a 1-in-100 year storm” (DCCEE, 2009, p.5). Sea level rise projections continue to increase as the scientific evidence is enhanced.

Council intends that by using an integrated water management approach it will achieve a greener, healthier, more sustainable community. Council's Integrated Water Management Plan 2014-2019 identified five key objectives that will help Council achieve this vision. The objectives are to increase water security, increase public amenity, increase public health, protect biodiversity and reduce nuisance flooding. The principles of storm water management, WSUD and water reuse are highly applicable to ESD and whilst generally considered within the planning scheme, further investigation is required as to the role of sustainability rating tools in enhancing integrated water management outcomes.

Further consideration is also required to establish benchmarks for discharge flow rates in relation to storm water management. A review is required to determine appropriate storm water discharge flow rates that take into consideration the consequences of climate change impacts, particularly future flood mitigation responses.

## **Heat vulnerability**

Council's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2013-18 and Climate Change Policy 2013 identifies human health and vulnerable communities as a priority adaptation focus. Changes to temperature and extreme heat days are likely to affect the distribution and severity of public health related risks. The impacts may not be evenly distributed and some communities such as the elderly, sick, young or economically disadvantaged are likely to be more affected than others.

Through the adaptation plan, Council is committed to increasing awareness and education regarding heat impacts and how the community can respond. This will also be an important priority for ESD. Additionally, we can start to recognise and monitor the value added by taking a more integrated approach. For example, planting street trees to maximise canopy cover will reduce local heat impacts on people, buildings and infrastructure, thus providing health, environmental and financial benefits. Council is in the process of developing a street tree strategy to reduce the impacts of climate change and address the heat island effect.

## **Biodiversity**

Climate change poses a significant threat to biodiversity both locally and globally. Council developed its Biodiversity Strategy 2017-22 to protect and preserve biodiversity within the municipality and reduce the threat of climate change on biodiversity. This includes reducing Council's carbon footprint (Corporate Greenhouse Strategy 2013-20) and collaborating with the community to reduce the community greenhouse footprint (Community Greenhouse Strategy 2013-30). In addition to Council policies, effective land management practices are needed to provide local biodiversity and enhance canopy cover across the municipality.

Grasslands will be impacted by increasing temperatures and decreasing rainfall. Coastal ecosystems will be impacted by sea level rise. As sea levels rise, erosion will occur in some of the sandy coastal parks around Hobsons Bay while other areas of coastal parkland will become inundated. Waterways and wetlands will be impacted by reduced rainfall and runoff as well as a decline in groundwater. The most effective way to enable waterways and wetlands to adapt to climate change impacts is to manage current threats such as pollutant loads in stormwater, to use Water Sensitive Urban Design techniques to mimic natural flow patterns, allow rainwater to infiltrate into the ground and, where possible, use stormwater to top up wetlands. Council's commitment to incorporating such activities into Council works is detailed in Council's Integrated Water Management Plan 2014-19.

## **Energy and greenhouse gas emissions**

Council is committed to the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, an international alliance of cities and local governments with a shared long-term vision of promoting and supporting voluntary action to combat climate change and move to a low emissions and more resilient society.

Greenhouse gas emissions are contributing to unsustainable climate change and without urgent action the impact on human health and wellbeing will be significant. In urban areas climate change is projected to increase risks for people, assets, economies and ecosystems, including risks from heat stress, storms and extreme precipitation, inland and coastal flooding, landslides, air pollution, drought, water scarcity, sea level rise and storm surges. These risks are amplified for more vulnerable members of our community and for people living in exposed areas (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment

Report 2014). Given that Hobsons Bay is home to a number of industrial processes and businesses and that residential land is in close proximity to hazard facilities, a further analysis is required in relation to the potential application of ESD for industrial developments as well as monitoring the impacts of pollution on residential areas.

Despite climate mitigation policies, greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuel combustion and industrial processes continues to increase. Therefore, Council has an important role in enabling, engaging and encouraging the local community to move to a low carbon future to limit the climate change risks. The ESD Policy enables Council to consider actions toward this broad goal and, in particular, to achieve the objective of becoming a zero net emissions community by 2030.

### Integrated land and transport outcomes

Integrated transport links a range of different travel methods into a more connected, sustainable and coordinated transport network. Land use planning plays an important role by promoting more convenient access to key destinations with the aim of reducing the need to travel longer distances. Enhancing employment opportunities closer to home is a key priority for integrated land and transport outcomes as is ensuring a reliable and frequent public transport network that links key destinations, such as schools, hospitals and shopping centres.

As the level of government closest to the community, Council plays an important leadership role on integrated transport. Council's Integrated Transport Plan 2017-30 provides two key goals along with supporting principles and actions. At a neighbourhood level, Council envisages "safe and connected walking and cycling routes will link people to places in their local neighbourhoods, complemented by convenient and sustainable connections to vibrant activity centres". Regionally, "convenient, safe and sustainable connections between neighbourhoods and to regional destinations will generate more efficient movement of people and goods, attracting and providing links to jobs, services, industry and recreational activities".

Car dependency and transport emissions contribute to climate change and extreme weather events which damage transport infrastructure and potentially threaten the future liveability of Hobsons Bay. It is Council's intent to understand, support and prepare for new and emerging transport models and technologies.

Encouraging new and emerging technologies, particularly electric and hydrogen fueled vehicle adoption, where and when it is suitable is relevant to a number of Council strategies. Particularly, the Community Greenhouse Strategy 2013-30 which identifies that emissions from residential travel account for 10.7 per cent of total emissions. With no action this figure is estimated to increase up to 13.9 per cent by 2030.

Council recently received a submission identifying the need for a policy to facilitate public charging points to support Council's transition to electric fleet vehicles and associated priority parking for low carbon vehicles. Similarly Council identified in its Corporate Greenhouse Strategy 2013-20 that undertaking an electric vehicle trial could be a comparatively low cost per tonne option for reducing emissions while building knowledge of the technology. This trial will be undertaken in late 2018.

## Environmentally Sustainable Development in Hobsons Bay

Hobsons Bay has a strong policy context for the implementation of ESD within Council buildings and in the community.

**The Council Plan 2017-21** provides Goal 3 as “a well-designed, maintained and environmentally sustainable place”. The plan includes a major initiative for 2017-18 to develop and adopt an Environmentally Sustainable Development (ESD) policy. This policy statement reinforces this commitment and provides the framework to deliver this initiative.

**Climate Chance Policy 2013** - Council is committed to:

- undertake actions to reduce the community's greenhouse gas emissions and lead the community towards achieving zero net greenhouse gas emissions by 2030
- respond to the risks of climate change to Council assets and services and assist the community to be more resilient to the effects of climate

**Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2013-18** - In alignment with its strategic objectives for environmental sustainability, Council has undertaken a risk assessment and identified risks based on climate change projections available for 2030. The strategy developed a series of adaptation actions involving all sections of Council and requiring collaboration with key stakeholders, including residents and businesses.

Key actions relating to ESD include (refer section 4, page 19 of the strategy):

- review and update the Asset Management Plan for buildings to take climate change impacts into consideration
- incorporate energy efficient technologies into all Council's buildings (e.g. solar panels, LED lighting, energy efficient heating and cooling systems, increased ventilation, insulation)
- ensure climate change consideration is applied to the planning and management of all new, and replacements of existing, foreshore infrastructure and assets
- undertake cost benefit analysis for major projects to factor in the costs to the environment along with the environmental benefits of the project to both Council and the community as well as the ongoing operation costs. This will include a life cycle analysis in Council's procurement process to assess environmental impacts associated with all stages of a product's life from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, repair and maintenance and disposal or recycling

Regionally, Council is a member of the Western Alliance for Greenhouse Action (WAGA) and is committed to the implementation of Low Carbon West (LCW). LCW is a strategy for the transition to a low carbon economy in the WAGA region. The strategy's Urban Growth and Development Sector Report identifies a priority action for WAGA member councils to implement planning scheme amendments and incentives to enhance environmental sustainability performance in new buildings (both residential and non-residential).

**Corporate Greenhouse Strategy 2013-20** - outlines Council's commitment to achieving its zero net emissions by 2020 through a number of actions including applying ESD principles in Council buildings, fleet management, metered lighting and waste reduction (refer section 8,

page 23 of the strategy) as well as through the procurement process to ensure that all aspects of decision making respond to the goal of zero net emissions.

**Community Greenhouse Strategy 2013-30** - Council has committed to leading Hobsons Bay to become a zero net emissions community by 2030. Facilitating uptake of efficient practices and raising environmental awareness is a key role to ensure community members incorporate ESD into their decision making. Key actions that relate to promoting and facilitating ESD outcomes include (refer section 8, page 23 of the strategy):

- low carbon energy masterplan
- bulk purchasing and direct marketing of low carbon products, particularly solar power systems
- large scale flagship building or precinct project
- promotion of existing energy efficiency resources
- implementation and enhancement of an active transport strategy

**Integrated Transport Plan 2017-30**-seeks to provide an integrated innovative and equitable transport system, providing a range of sustainable, efficient, accessible and safe ways for people and goods to reach their destination. One of the key actions is to investigate the feasibility of new and emerging transport modes.

**Integrated Water Management Plan 2014-19** - Council has an important role in managing water sustainability due to the large areas of land and extensive stormwater drainage network it manages, its role in land use planning, and its close relationship with the local community. Key ESD related actions include (refer section 7, page 19 of the plan):

- protect waterways and the Bay from key pollutants that reduce its recreational value by encouraging best practice stormwater management
- reduce potable water demand
- promote water efficiency in new developments
- promote the benefits of water efficiency to residents and businesses
- increase the community's capacity to manage stormwater sustainably

**Biodiversity Strategy 2017-22** – commits Council to strengthening land use planning practices to better protect connectivity and biolinks as well as other biodiversity values within the planning scheme.

### **Sustainable Design in Council Facilities Policy and Strategy 2011**

Council's mechanism for reducing energy and water use in its existing and new buildings is the Sustainable Design in Council Facilities Policy and Sustainable Design in Council Facilities Strategy. The objectives of the Sustainable Design in Council Facilities Policy are to:

- reduce the environmental impacts and operating costs of all Council-owned buildings while achieving previously adopted corporate energy and water reduction and zero net emissions by 2020 targets
- reduce the environmental impact of the construction and use of Council buildings by embedding sustainable design principles into existing policies and procedures and developing procedures and resources to address gaps in existing policies

- lead the community towards achieving zero net emissions by 2030 by providing opportunities for public engagement with and access to inspiring sustainable buildings

## Legislative context

The Environmentally Sustainable Development Statement 2018 has been developed within the context of federal and state government legislation and regulations that were current at the time of development.

### Australian Government

A variety of policy mechanisms and combinations of policies guide the delivery of federal environmental policies. Whilst there is no specific policy direction guiding ESD, three policy areas have the capacity to drive ESD outcomes for homes, businesses and the environment. The policy areas are energy, water and waste and key initiatives include:

- the Australian Government is currently designing the National Energy Guarantee to deliver energy reliability, affordability whilst meeting emission reduction targets
- a number of initiatives are seeking to improve competition in the urban water market as well as enhance stormwater management in urban areas
- the National Waste Policy seeks to avoid the generation of waste and reduce the amount of waste whilst enhancing outcomes for the management of waste as a resource with the aim of reducing greenhouse gas emissions

The Coalition of Australian Governments (COAG) Australian Energy Market Agreement 2009 highlights the importance of the effective operation of an open and competitive national energy market to improve economic and environmental performance and deliver benefits to households, small business and industry. At an extraordinary meeting on 7 October 2016, COAG energy ministers agreed to an independent review of the national electricity market to take stock of its current security and reliability and to provide advice to governments on a coordinated national reform blueprint. The *Blueprint for the Future Security of the National Electricity Market (NEM)* is a plan to maintain security and reliability in the NEM in light of the significant transition underway, including due to rapid technological change. The key principles are to increase security, the future reliability of the system, reward customers and lower emissions.

On 27 June 2018 the Australian Senate established the Select Committee on Electric Vehicles to inquire into the use and manufacture of electric vehicles in Australia. This Committee will consider the potential social, economic and environmental benefits of electric vehicles. This could lead to the development of incentives or policy outcomes to support both the manufacture and supply of electric vehicles in Australia and the acceleration in electric vehicle uptake.

### Victorian Government

The **Climate Change Act 2017** recognises that Victoria's climate is changing and section 14 of the Act introduces a duty that requires key government decision-makers to take climate change into account when making specified decisions. Local government is identified as one of the decision makers that must consider climate change when preparing a Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan (MPHWP).

With that in mind, the MPHWP offers an approach and a range of strategies to support local government in meeting their duty under the Act. Council responded to its legislated responsibilities by developing the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision through a community engagement process that took place over a six month period. The Community

Vision recognises that living in a clean, green and healthy environment by 2030 is strongly dependent on the success of strategies to both reduce and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Through the Hobsons Bay Community Vision, Council has identified its role in climate change adaptation and developed a series of indicators to monitor progress.

Through this policy, Council has demonstrated that they have had regard to climate change and have met their obligations under the *Climate Change Act 2017*. It is acknowledge in the *Climate Change Act 2017* that Victoria's Local Governments are leaders in climate change adaptation. Council's own Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2013-18 outlines a process to deliver on our obligations outlined in the *Climate Change Act 2017*, including establishing long term emissions reduction targets.

The Victorian Government is committed to action to keep global warming below two degrees celsius. In 2016, the Victorian Government announced a long-term emissions reduction target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This is supported by a renewable energy target to provide 40 per cent of Victoria's electricity from renewable sources by 2025, and by the Victorian Energy Efficiency Target program established in 2009. Victoria's Climate Change Framework recognises the co-benefits of adaptation responses that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as green spaces and improved thermal performance of buildings. To make the most of the co-benefits and to avoid maladaptation, the Government will prioritise the coordination of action on emissions reduction and adaptation.

**Victoria's Climate Change Adaptation Plan 2017-20** is a vision to effectively manage the risks of climate change. It is informed by the principles of the *Climate Change Act 2017* which underpins the Government's priorities for action from 2017 to 2020. These priorities are also based on understanding the roles and responsibilities of the state government, and recognising that adaptation is a responsibility shared by many different people and organisations. The Adaptation Plan lays out the priorities for the next four years for the Victorian Government to manage current impacts and to prepare for the long-term risks of climate change. It seeks to identify how Victorians understand can take action whilst clarifying the role of the Government.

**TAKE2** is the Victorian Government's collective climate change initiative. It supports Victorian individuals, business, government, educational and community organisations to take meaningful action to reduce climate change. The state government has made the pledge to reduce emissions from the operations of government departments by 30 per cent below 2015 levels by 2020. The goal is to help keep the temperature rise under two degrees.

Hobsons Bay City Council is a founding partner of the TAKE2 pledge to tackle climate change. A series of actions have been identified that range from taking a leadership role, through to enhancing sustainability outcomes for transport, land use planning, purchasing and contracting as well as identifying energy efficiencies and reducing water and waste. Through its **Corporate Greenhouse Strategy 2013-20**, Council has outlined its commitment to achieving a target of zero net emissions by 2020. In addition, through its **Community Greenhouse Strategy 2013-30**, Council has committed to leading Hobsons Bay to become a zero net emissions community by 2030.

The **Planning and Environment Act 1987** (the Act) establishes a regulatory planning framework for planning the use, development and protection of land in Victoria in the present

and long-term interests of all Victorians. Section 4 (1) of the Act sets out a series of objectives for planning in Victoria, the following of which are particularly relevant in the context of this policy statement:

The *Planning and Environment Act 1987* identifies the importance of integrating ESD in land use planning. This includes:

- to provide for the fair, orderly, economic and sustainable use, and development of land
- to provide for the protection of natural and man-made resources and the maintenance of ecological processes and genetic diversity
- to secure a pleasant, efficient and safe working, living and recreational environment for all Victorians and visitors to Victoria
- to protect public utilities and other assets and enable the orderly provision and co-ordination of public utilities and other facilities for the benefit of the community

The role of land use planning in achieving a sustainable development has been identified at various levels of the planning system. Clause 10.04 of the State Planning Policy Framework in the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme identifies the need to include sustainability principles in the planning process. This clause requests responsible authorities to integrate the range of policies relevant to the issues and balance conflicting objectives in favour of net community benefit and sustainable development for the benefit of present and future generations.

Supporting policies, strategies and plans outlined below include actions to reduce energy consumption and greenhouse emissions, promote integrated water planning outcomes, increase the community's resilience to climate change impacts, and protect and enhance biodiversity. *The Planning and Environment Act 1987* provides for the Victoria Planning Provisions (VPP). The Victoria Planning Provisions is a suite of comprehensive planning policies and controls that establish a framework for governing land use across Victoria. The VPPs are used as required to construct planning schemes.

The planning authority (usually the local council) must provide the local planning policy content, including a Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS), and select the appropriate zones and overlays from the Victorian Planning Provisions, for inclusion in their planning scheme. A Local Planning Policy (LPP) is a policy statement of intent or expectation. It states what the responsible authority will do in specified circumstances, or the responsible authority's expectation of what should happen. An LPP helps the community to understand how a proposal will be considered and what will influence decision making. Over time, the consistent application of policy should achieve the desired outcome.

The recently released *Plan Melbourne 2017 – 2050* supports Council's strategic position, with *Policy 6.1.1* stating the following:

*"Many local councils are already incorporating environmentally sustainable development considerations into their planning processes. However, there is a need for a Statewide approach to achieve greater consistency and simplicity. Options to strengthen planning and building frameworks will be reviewed to determine the most cost-effective approach for lifting*

*the efficiency of both new and existing building stock and requiring early consideration of sustainability in the planning, design and building process”*

#### Local Government

Council was one of the founding members of the Council Alliance for a Sustainable Built Environment (CASBE) in 2009, an association of Victorian councils committed to the creation of a sustainable built environment within and beyond their municipalities. Council was also one of the founding members of WAGA in 2006, an organisation focused on helping the western region of Melbourne prosper and thrive in a changing climate.

In 2006, through its Environment Strategy, Council committed to incorporating ESD principles into all new residential, commercial and industrial developments and subdivision plans through the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. Sustainable Design Assessments (SDAs) were requested for developments of two dwellings in size and above. An ESD Officer provided training to planners over this period. As the success of the implementation process varied, a permanent ESD Officer role was established in the Sustainability Team with the time allocation split between planning permit assessments and Council's internal ESD performance and projects.

In 2007, Council adopted the Sustainable Design in Council Facilities Policy (SDiCF) which applies to Council's new buildings, extensions and maintenance works. The initial Greenhouse Action Plan was dedicated to emissions reductions from streetlights, existing buildings and Council's fleet.

In 2013, an internal study investigated the ESD practices of other councils that were similarly active. Sustainability Tools for Environmental Performance Strategy (STEPS) was the environmental benchmarking tool being used at the time. The study found that Council was in the minority when it came to planners assessing SDAs. All of the councils surveyed either had a dedicated ESD Officer, or were not requesting SDAs to be performed as a part of their planning approval process.

The outcome of the study was that Council changed its ESD triggers to capture developments larger than 10 dwellings in size and SDAs were referred on to Council's Sustainability team for assessment, a process that has remained. At this point these triggers were consistent with other councils. SDAs submitted to Council are meant to show how respective developments meet Best Practice environmental standards before planning approval and ultimately construction takes place. Council informally utilises the Sustainable Design Assessment in the Planning Process (SDAPP) framework to assess these SDAs.

The SDAPP framework has been developed and used by Victorian local governments for the past decade to provide a consistent method to identify opportunities for improved environmental performance for buildings and sites. The Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS) is the recommended tool under SDAPP and has been utilised in Hobsons Bay since its release in mid-2015.

The non-enforceable nature of Council's participation in SDAPP, through the absence of an ESD LPP, means that many environmental initiatives are either being overlooked or missed.

While the planners at Council can and do request Best Practice in BESS for applicable developments, they have little statutory weight to require applicants to adopt ESD measures.

In the absence of a State-wide approach to ESD, a total of ten councils developed an ESD Policy for inclusion in their respective planning schemes. The ten Councils are, the Cities of Moreland, Banyule, Port Phillip, Stonnington, Whitehorse and Yarra, referred to as the 'First Round'. There are also two further councils, The Cities of Darebin and Manningham (the Second Round), where policy amendments came into effect on 31 August 2017. The Cities of Monash and Knox independently sought and obtained an ESD LPP at the end of 2016.

A proposed Amendment to introduce a new Local Planning Policy for ESD into the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme was presented to Council at its meeting on 13 March 2018. The Amendment seeks authorisation from the Minister for Planning under section 8A of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* for Council to prepare and exhibit the amendment. Council is currently awaiting a response from the Minister. The Amendment builds on the overarching ESD objectives of the State Planning Policy Framework (SPPF) and the Municipal Strategic Statement (MSS) as contained within the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme. It will ensure that environmental performance is considered in the assessment of development proposals.

All of the ESD LPPs are identical to ensure consistency and have a Sunset Clause (expiration date) of July 2019. The Sunset Clause was enforced by the Victorian Government with a view that a state-wide approach would be introduced and supersede the ESD LPPs. However, there is not currently a timeline or a firm commitment from the Victorian Government for the implementation of state-wide approach to ESD.

## Guiding actions

The *Local Government Act 1989* indicates that the primary objective of a council is to work towards improving the overall quality of life of people in the local community. An emphasis on the wellbeing of our community will guide a series of actions to support the implementation of the ESD Policy.

Through Council's Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision and Council Plan, Hobsons Bay City Council is committed to being a progressive Council of Excellence that seeks to address the needs of current generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. These principles are fundamentally important when considering the role of creating a sustainable community that addresses climate change through sustainable practices. ESD plays a significant role in enhancing the health and wellbeing of the Hobsons Bay community by living in a clean, green and healthy community.

To support the implementation of ESD Council will work towards achieving a series of actions which are:

### *Leadership*

Council is accountable to our community in every way; be it service delivery, advocacy, community building, being a responsible organisation and reducing risks to itself and the community. Council's recent priorities are determined through its values which are identified in the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision. Two of the key values that have led to a series

of innovative policy outcomes is being a sustainable and visionary community. In November 2007, Council adopted the target of zero net emissions from its own operations by 2020 and assist the community to achieve zero net emissions by 2030.

To achieve these targets, Council has two adopted strategies: the Corporate Greenhouse Strategy 2013-20 (adopted in 2013) and later Target 2265 – a four year emissions reduction plan (adopted in 2016). These strategies have been key enablers for Council to achieve its target of zero net emissions. Whilst these two strategies have achieved emissions reductions, these reductions have been offset from the addition of three large buildings to Council's portfolio since 2013. These three buildings have contributed over 660 tonnes or an additional 29 per cent on top of Council's 2265 tonnes target.

In 2016-17, Council greenhouse gas emissions increased by over ten per cent compared with the previous financial year. For building based emissions, there was an increase in emissions of over seven per cent.

For Council to achieve its target of zero net emissions by 2020, the increasing trend in emissions must be reversed. This will require Council to show leadership in activating sustainable practices in relation to Council buildings and the public realm which Council is accountable for.

### **What will leadership will look like?**

Leadership for Council will be to implement the vision outlined in this document so that it becomes the Council of Excellence it aspires to be. Leadership for ESD requires a review of internal Council policy and process through the development of a Sustainable Design Policy for the Built Environment and Infrastructure that:

- works towards creating carbon neutral buildings and places
- aspires to create carbon positive buildings and places
- actively reduces Council's emissions in existing buildings
- creates inspiring, vibrant buildings and public places that are loved by the community
- takes a triple-bottom-line approach to improve the socio-cultural, environmental and economic outcomes
- showcases the role of green infrastructure in reducing heat vulnerability and the urban heat island effect

Council is also committed to creating an environmentally sustainable city. Critical to achieving this commitment is for developments to meet and even exceed environmental design standards. The overarching objective is that new developments achieve best practice ESD outcomes from the design phase through to construction and operation.

Council is committed to:

- providing inspirational leadership through innovation and embedding sustainability into all of its policies and operational practices
- implementing smart city technologies to support the rollout of ESD strategies
- integrating ESD within Council's buildings and infrastructure to ensure the use of sustainable materials
- encouraging ESD within the private development sector

- building the capacity of the community and its staff to embed ESD principles in all aspects of the built environment and infrastructure
- enabling and supporting the transition to low emissions vehicles, particularly electric and hydrogen cars through the provision of charging infrastructure and the transition of Council's fleet to electric and hydrogen vehicles
- reviewing the implementation process of Council's procurement policy to ensure decision-making supports ESD goals

These commitments will be delivered in an integrated way to ensure that they are aligned with and compliment Council's broader objectives (e.g. considering neighbourhood character, heritage and climate change).

Council will:

1. develop and implement a new internal Council policy, specifically a Sustainable Design Policy for the Built Environment and Infrastructure
2. apply a minimum of 70 per cent BESS or six star Green Star Design and As Built equivalent to new buildings and major alterations
3. require evidence of achieving significant ESD outcomes for all retrofit and renewal works, including the replacement of equipment
4. apply the IDM Sustainable infrastructure Guidelines or other complimentary tools as they become available and depending upon their applicability to the project, to support the implementation of ESD principles for Council infrastructure
5. ensure impartiality, objectivity and genuine sustainability outcomes for Council through the utilisation of specialist ESD expertise on major projects
6. investigate the role of sustainability rating tools in enhancing integrated water management outcomes and determine appropriate storm water discharge flow rates that take into consideration the consequences of climate change impacts, particularly future flood mitigation responses
7. develop and implement a Council policy that outlines sustainable procurement practices required to support the delivery of ESD best practice standards
8. continue to research, collaborate, innovate and adapt to remain at the forefront of ESD best practice and identify opportunities to trial innovative ESD initiatives
9. continue to advocate to the Victorian Government to facilitate ESD best practice standards in all new developments. Council will also work with private developers and the community to encourage and assist them to meet and demand high ESD standards
10. advocate to the Victorian Government to enhance ESD outcomes in the built environment through reforms to the statutory planning system and the building permit applications process
11. develop and implement a Council policy that outlines the support required for Hobsons Bay to transition to low emissions vehicles. This will provide guidance for infrastructure to support the transition for Council and the community

The Sustainable Design Policy for the Built Environment and Infrastructure will apply to Council buildings and infrastructure owned and operated by Council. The new policy will ensure all new construction projects are sustainable through alignment with triple-bottom-line outcomes.

The goals of the new policy will be to:

1. strategically position Council to reduce current and future risks
2. assist Council to achieve its goal of zero net emissions by 2020 from Council operations
3. assist Council to achieve the objectives of its policies and strategies that are linked to buildings and infrastructure
4. drive transformational change so that Council is recognised as a leader in sustainability and climate change
5. promote the role of Council as a leader in sustainable design
6. develop a procurement process that embeds ESD in decision making
7. demonstrate to the community that Council is activating sustainable practices as identified in the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision

### *Accountability*

The principle of accountability recognises that sustainability goals cannot be achieved by the Sustainability team alone but will instead require a commitment for action across the whole of Council and the community.

Accountability is required to ensure that everyone is contributing to environmentally responsible decision making that minimises the detrimental impacts of developments. Roles and responsibilities need to be well defined and those with responsibilities should expect to be held accountable for these.

Council will:

1. develop and embed processes and tools in Council operations to ensure that expected environmental standards (e.g. 50 per cent BESS score for private developments and 70 per cent BESS for Council developments) are achieved and, in both internal and external projects, ESD is considered from project conception through development, implementation and operation
2. collaborate in the design of a procurement process that embeds ESD outcomes in the purchase of Council goods and services, particularly, in relation to energy and the transition of its fleet to electric and/or alternative low emissions fuel use
3. define clear roles and responsibilities to ensure the policy objectives are achieved:
  - a. **Councillors** will listen to the community and identify key issues; provide leadership and inspire change and innovation; monitor the statement's progress; and advocate strongly for improved environmentally sustainable outcomes
  - b. **Senior management** will support staff to enhance collaboration and integration across Council; apply ESD principles to planning, investment and

- decision making; reinforce accountability and evidence-based practice; support calculated risk taking; and expect consistent consideration and evaluation of environmental sustainability in all projects and advocacy
- c. **Council teams** will initiate and implement projects and programs; develop and implement operational plans, policies, processes and projects; respond to community enquiries; deliver services and infrastructure; apply ESD principles to planning and operations; and contribute to innovative and evidence-based responses to local planning and built form needs

## *Collaboration*

A collaborative approach ensures that Council identifies all stakeholders and engages with them by listening to their needs and approaching project management with enhanced outcomes for all. Where this isn't possible, Council will identify where a compromise is required.

Collaboration is particularly important with respect to ESD as there are many stakeholders and experts that need to be involved in the process to ensure optimal outcomes. It is at key points of decision making where stakeholder input is vital to ensure that all opportunities and concerns are addressed. Examples include: development of concepts, approval of plans and permits, and commissioning of buildings and infrastructure to ensure the use of sustainable materials as well as overall sustainable outcomes.

Council will:

1. utilise the Sustainability and Capital Works Collaborative Working Group to identify key actions and strategic issues, to champion the principles of ESD, build internal capacity, provide feedback on Council projects and programs, drive continuous improvement in Council processes, and help shape Council's strategic planning and the capital works budget. The working group will also keep the intent of the policy statement relevant, manage legislative, regulatory and best practice changes, share information and monitor learnings from project delivery
2. establish communication with and provide capacity building to the development sector, to ensure a clear understanding of Council's approach to ESD and the policy context
3. use the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Group to support the implementation of the ESD Policy and identify the key issues and concern of the community in regards to ESD
4. support Hobsons Bay Environment Action Team (HEAT), a group of staff with an interest in sustainability and the environment, to make a positive difference to our environment through simple actions that create a more sustainable working environment
5. collaborate with the Victorian Government to undertake policy changes that enhance the ESD outcomes for the built environment and respond to Council priorities, particularly, a review of building regulations and the planning scheme

## *Integration*

Pursuing an integrated approach can help achieve significant resource efficiency and productivity gains and thus help reduce pressures on the environment. Effective integration, carried out in the early stages of the design process can provide significant economic, social and environmental benefits.

A whole of system approach can enable an organisation to identify improvements in resource productivity and economic performance. This approach encourages a re-examination of assumptions underlying long established processes and may lead to the discovery of short term opportunities for reducing costs whilst also considering the long-term impacts on the environment. (The Natural Edge Project, 2009).

In project planning and delivery, Council will ensure a shared understanding of its strategic direction so that its purpose and objectives are clear. Linking measures of success to processes as well as outcomes will ensure that Council can monitor its effectiveness in addressing its drivers. Council will continue to explore the potential for solutions that meet multiple stakeholder needs.

Council will:

1. work to foster capacity building across Council to embrace a change in processes and culture to increase the organisation's understanding of ESD and its ability to integrate it in its operations. This will include ensuring a balanced approach based on knowledge and experience in relation to project development and delivery, considering all variables including environmental, social, economic and design practicality
2. develop a procedure manual that establishes internal project management processes and guidelines for incorporating ESD outcomes in project planning and design including hold points in project delivery to provide for review and support by the Sustainability team
3. introduce the use of cost benefit analysis for major projects to factor in the environmental benefits that can be achieved through enhanced project design and to consider ongoing operational costs, not only the up-front cost of the building or infrastructure
4. establish a procurement process that requires the principles of ESD to be embedded in decision making, including the use of life cycle analysis to factor in all stages of a product's life from raw material extraction through materials processing, manufacture, distribution, use, repair and maintenance and disposal or recycling to assess the total benefits of environmentally sustainable products
5. develop practical tools that will be used to apply ESD principles to Council planning, budgeting and decision making such as guidance materials (e.g. developer checklists) and updated project reporting requirements
6. facilitate ESD training for Council staff to build internal capacity, knowledge and advocacy outcomes

## *Learning Processes*

Continuous learning expands the ability of staff to learn by regularly upgrading their skills and increasing their knowledge. Strong continuous learning skills are required to successfully adapt to the changing working work environment. Embedding continuous learning into the design of policies, strategies, programs and procedures, through a strong evaluation and reporting process, ensures a successful policy implementation process.

Council will:

1. build capacity through:
  - a. an ESD officer supporting training and development of planning officers, project managers, finance officers and informing continuous improvement efforts within Council
  - b. the sustainability team taking a leadership role to inform other areas of Council about ESD benefits, new technologies, practices and innovations
  - c. designing a process that provides a reflective learning process that provides an opportunity to learn from the best practice outcomes of others
2. foster continuous learning through an effective monitoring, evaluation and reporting framework. Ongoing information sharing with the internal working group will occur and the Sustainability unit will provide technical support and capacity building across the organisation.

## *Evidence based decision making*

Council will collate evidence to support policy positions and development of business cases. The application of best practice methods and science-based targets will ensure that the potential benefits and implications are adequately considered. This will result in more effective outcomes for Council and the community.

Decision making will be informed by qualitative and quantitative results and be guided by the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision. The evidence base will consider economic, health and wellbeing out comes as well as appropriate policies, the strategic context and environmental factors.

Council will:

1. monitor, research and responds to the qualitative and quantitative results of the impacts of climate change and ESD on the built environment and continuously apply this to inform its decisions
2. continue to build an evidence base that can be drawn upon to improve environmental, social and economic outcomes over time

## *Land use planning*

SDAs submitted to Council with planning permit applications, are intended to show how developments meet best practice environmental standards. An ESD LPP provides planners with leverage to seek higher ESD performance standards from future developments within Hobsons Bay. Formalisation of the SDAPP and the ESD LPP will be accompanied by a suite of fact sheets and educational materials to support developers (and designers), Council staff and the broader community to identify the benefits associated with ESD.

Council has long been an advocate of eco-minded urban development, encouraging and assessing ESD in planning permit applications since 2007. However, in the absence of an ESD LPP, the non-enforceable nature of Council's participation in SDAPP means that many environmental initiatives are either being overlooked or missed.

Council will:

1. formally adopt the SDAPP in Council's planning permit assessments including:
  - a. set a trigger to require planning permit applicants to submit sustainability assessments for residential developments of two dwellings and above and non-residential developments greater than 100m<sup>2</sup>
  - b. encourage the utilisation of sustainability assessment tools such as the Built Environment Sustainability Scorecard (BESS)
  - c. provide resources to planning permit applicants including SDAPP fact sheets
2. work with the state government to introduce an amendment to the Hobsons Bay Planning Scheme to include more robust ESD requirements with respect to urban development (an ESD LPP)
3. fund appropriate resources to ensure the effective ongoing implementation of the local planning policy
4. monitor the outcomes of the SDAPPP assessment process and provide a report following one year of implementation with the aim of reviewing the trigger point for planning permit applications

## *Advocacy*

### *Victorian Government*

Council will continue to advocate to the Victorian Government to incorporate strong ESD requirements in the Planning Scheme, continue research and development for ESD best practice standards and tools, and provide education and incentives for the community and private sector to develop environmentally sustainable buildings, infrastructure and vehicles.

Council will also advocate to the Victorian Government to:

- establish requirements and provide resources for ESD compliance monitoring and enforcement to ensure that the benefits from proposed plans are realised and enjoyed by the community
- improve building standards as part of a review of the *Building Regulations 2017* to ensure higher standards of ESD are achieved throughout the community
- consider the role of tax incentives for enhanced sustainability outcomes

### *Development Sector*

Council seeks to become a leader in implementing ESD and making Hobsons Bay a more sustainable place for all. In doing this, Council also aims to work with private developers to encourage them to achieve high ESD standards in all developments.

For some private developments, requirements for ESD fall under the building permit stage of development. It is important to consider sustainability at the early stages of design. Council will continue to work with developers to provide information about ESD as well as encourage all private developers to engage an experienced sustainability adviser to provide advice and recommendations to assist their developments to exceed the minimum requirements for sustainability (e.g. 6 Star Standard Energy Efficiency provisions in the National Construction Code). Through the use of ESD greater operational efficiency, comfort and productivity is created, thus increasing marketability, functionality, liveability and affordability.

#### *The Community*

For Council to deliver on the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision to plan for a sustainable future and create a more sustainable place in which to live, building awareness and knowledge on ESD outcomes for the built environment is essential. Supporting the community to become advocates for ESD and demanding enhanced sustainability outcomes for their homes and community is an important function for the ESD officer.

A key outcomes for the community is for:

- an ESD officer to develop a series of fact sheets and information to support the community to demand enhanced ESD outcomes for their homes and businesses
- develop an educational program, including community forums and library displays, that showcase best practice outcomes in ESD to enhance linkages between practitioners of ESD and our community

#### **Monitoring and evaluation (MER) of this policy statement**

A plan without accountability measures is insufficient to monitor progress on the priorities established in the Hobsons Bay 2030 Community Vision. To meet the targets established through this policy, a suite of performance measures and targets is required. The selection of measures and targets, and their annual reporting and review, considers the concerns of the community and the development sector. The measures and targets create shared purpose, meaning and accountability not only for Council, but also for the groups and organisations that will contribute to achieving Council's goals and priorities.

The Policy Statement will be a live document monitored and updated on a regular basis to ensure it meets the current and future needs of the community and aligns with best practice standards and relevant changes to the planning scheme and Council processes.

Council will:

- develop an MER framework that identifies:
  - what will be measured and why?
  - what methods will be used to evaluate the data and information?
  - are our internal review processes timely, efficient and effective?
  - describe the reporting process – what will be reported and when?
  - what support will the ESD Officer provide to planning permit applicants and the Statutory Planning team?
- Complete a thorough annual review to appraise what has been achieved, barriers to achieving results, community needs and priorities

Monitoring and evaluation is critical to keeping the Policy Statement relevant and effective as well as understanding how it is improving environmentally sustainable outcomes in Hobsons Bay. It will also drive continuous improvement in Council planning and processes.

## Further Information

For further information concerning this Policy please contact the Sustainability Team on Ph: 9932 1000 and/or email [sustainability@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au](mailto:sustainability@hobsonsbay.vic.gov.au)

## Document Control

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## Version History

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