

5 July 2013

Tasmanian Climate Change Office
Department of Premier and Cabinet
GPO Box 123
HOBART TAS 7001

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: LOW CARBON TASMANIA – ISSUES PAPER

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the *Low Carbon Tasmania – Issues Paper*. The Green Building Council of Australia (GBCA) supports the Tasmanian Government's *Beyond 2020 Vision* as a means for informing a *2020 Climate Change Strategy* that will set Tasmania on a course towards achieving its legislated 2050 greenhouse gas emissions target, as well as demonstrating world-leading climate change aspirations.

The GBCA agrees that the Guiding Principles proposed by the Tasmanian Government are critical to achieving the desired outcome of greenhouse gas emission mitigation and moving Tasmania to a low-carbon future. The GBCA believes an integrated approach to planning for our buildings, transport networks and communities is essential if Tasmania is to be more efficient, liveable, productive and sustainable and reach its full potential. We believe that use of an holistic approach and 'joined-up thinking' is essential in order to achieve the best outcomes for a building, community, city or state and, ultimately, to reduce emissions.

The GBCA applauds the visionary leadership that the Tasmanian Government has shown through their commitment to reaching 5 Star Green Star benchmarks for all new and redeveloped significant education and healthcare facilities. Achieving Green Star certification for these facilities will reduce their environmental impact as well as providing more productive and healthy places to learn and heal. As identified in the *Issues Paper*, the built environment provides the greatest and most cost-effective opportunity to reduce the world's greenhouse emissions significantly and as such, we urge the Tasmanian Government to continue in its endeavours to lead by example and design, construct and tenant sustainable buildings.

About the GBCA

The GBCA is Australia's authority on green buildings and communities, established in 2002 to develop a sustainable property industry in Australia and drive the adoption of green building practices. The GBCA promotes green building programs, technologies, design practices and processes, and operates Australia's only national voluntary comprehensive sustainability rating system for buildings and communities - Green Star.

The GBCA has more than 750 member organisations, including government departments, which work together to support the Council and its activities. The GBCA is also a founding member of the World Green Building Council (WorldGBC), which was established to provide a federated 'union' of national green building councils with a common goal to support the sustainable transformation of the global property industry; there are now 97 such councils worldwide.

Green Star rating tools

Green Star is a voluntary tool that encourages, recognises and rewards best practice and innovation. The first Green Star rating tool was released in 2003 in response to market demand for a rating tool that would evaluate the environmental design and construction of buildings as well as establishing a common language for green buildings.

There are currently 10 Green Star rating tools which address a range of building types. Over 600 projects have now achieved Green Star certification across Australia, with a further 480 projects registered. The Green Star rating system is designed to take an holistic approach within each class and building sector, addressing nine categories in total: Management, Indoor Environment Quality (IEQ), Energy, Transport, Water, Materials, Land Use and Ecology, Emissions and Innovation. With over 600 projects delivered and certified, Green Star has a proven track record when it comes to implementation of efficient, healthy and productive green buildings.

Green Star-certified projects within Tasmania include:

- 2 Salamanca Square (4 Star Green Star)
 - Hydro Tasmania Cambridge (5 Star)
 - 137 Harrington/100 Melville (4 Star)
 - 199 Collins Street (4 Star)
 - Kingston High School (5 Star)
 - University of Tasmania Medical Sciences 2 (5 Star)
 - University of Tasmania Institute for Marine & Antarctic Sciences (5 Star)
- and there are many other Green Star registered projects around the state.

Reducing emissions from the built environment

The GBCA was recently invited by the Tasmanian Climate Change Office (TCCO) to provide a brief presentation and contribute to the consultation roundtable on the 'Reducing emissions from the built environment' section of the *Issues Paper*. This consultation provided a forum for some robust discussion around the priorities and opportunities for cutting emissions from the Tasmanian built environment, which the GBCA believes will provide some important feedback for the Tasmanian Government to consider. The GBCA would like to thank the Tasmanian Government for this privilege and we encourage all departmental officers and elected officials to continue to look upon the GBCA as the primary resource for sustainability in the built environment.

The GBCA supports the ‘future directions’ outlined as potential actions for reducing emissions from the built environment. We would welcome the opportunity to assist the Tasmanian Government to develop some of these actions further and we encourage the Tasmanian Government to consider how the Green Star rating tools can assist in achieving these objectives. In particular, the GBCA believes that the Green Star – Communities rating tool could help to achieve *Possible Action 4.4.1*, which aims to:

- Develop sustainability principles to inform land use and planning strategies at the state, regional and local levels. This would include promotion of emissions reduction through increased co-location of housing, transport, employment, education and recreation, and would take into account projected demographic change and population movements.

Green Star – Communities

In 2009, the GBCA commenced work, in consultation with industry and all levels of government, on the development of a rating tool for sustainable development projects on a community scale; examining issues of economic, social and environmental importance.

The first step in developing the Green Star – Communities rating tool was to develop a national framework consisting of five best practice principles:

- Enhance liveability
- Create opportunities for economic prosperity
- Foster environmental responsibility
- Embrace design excellence
- Demonstrate visionary leadership and strong governance.

Stage 2 of the project involved establishing best practice benchmarks and metrics for assessing and certifying sustainable communities. A set of 38 credits was then developed and tested on a number of projects across Australia. The Green Star – Communities PILOT rating tool was launched in June 2012 and we have accepted expressions of interest from a number of projects interested in taking part in the pilot phase. A copy of the Green Star – Communities National Framework and a guide to the credits can be found on the GBCA website: <http://www.gbca.org.au/green-star/green-star-communities/>

The GBCA believes that Green Star – Communities can assist the Tasmanian Government achieve emission reductions through *Possible Action 4.4.1* in two ways.

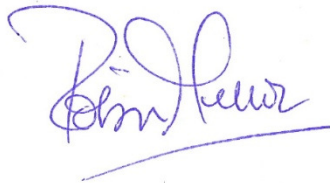
Firstly, the Green Star – Communities framework and the credits within the rating tool can be used to help set targets and assist in measuring progress against outcomes. The Green Star – Communities framework, with its five overarching principles, can assist in setting practical, high-level planning direction, while the credits in the rating tool provide guidance and measurable best practice benchmarks. These principles align with the objective of *Possible Action 4.4.1* and promote reduction of emissions, whilst also providing housing and employment that is close to public transport, education, recreational facilities and a range of public services.

Secondly, the Tasmanian Government could reference Green Star – Communities in its planning protocols and encourage use of the rating tool for development projects throughout the state. We can provide further information on the range of financial and non-financial incentives which might be offered in order to encourage best practice outcomes. Referencing Green Star – Communities can help to enable ‘joined-up’ thinking and provide consistency and coherence between state, regional and local sustainability frameworks, plans and strategies. This can also facilitate greater alignment with infrastructure and transport strategies at federal and local levels by providing a common language and a set of best practice benchmarks.

The GBCA congratulates the Tasmanian Government’s ongoing to commitment to achieving their low carbon objectives, through initiatives to reduce emissions from the built environment and showing leadership by cutting Tasmanian Government emissions.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or Daniel Hartin, Manager Advocacy – State & Territories, via email at daniel.hartin@gbca.org.au or by phone on 02 8239 6234, should you require any further information or to arrange further consultation.

Yours sincerely,



Robin Mellon
Chief Operating Officer
robin.mellon@gbca.org.au