

MEDIA RELEASE

Caroline Le Couteur MLA, Planning Spokesperson ACT Greens

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Building climate change into planning legislation

ACT Greens have tabled a bill seeking to address the lack of concrete measures to address climate change in the ACT Planning Strategy.

The ACT Greens Planning spokesperson, Caroline Le Couteur MLA, has today tabled the *Planning and Development (Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets) Amendment Bill 2012* as an exposure draft for public consultation.

“This is about making sure that the 40% emissions reduction target does not become another ‘aspiration’ that we never achieve,” Ms Le Couteur said.

“Planning and development decisions in the ACT must reflect the target and our climate change policies if we are to have any hope of making the change to a low carbon city.

“Planning is all about looking at future challenges, and if we build the houses and offices right from the start, we will reap the benefits of reduced energy costs and emissions.

“If we are going to address greenhouse gas emissions in a cost efficient way, then we must make sure that developments are consistent with our reduction targets and don’t need retro-fitting down the line.

The Greens Bill requires:

- larger scale development plans which cover the layout of suburbs to be compatible with the greenhouse gas reduction targets. These plans affect issues such as transport planning and building orientation.
- climate change impact assessment to be undertaken for larger scale *impact track* development applications. (does not cover individual building approvals)
- ACTPLA to revise the Territory Plan by December 2013 to ensure that it is compatible with the greenhouse gas targets. The Territory Plan would also need to be revised every 5 years after that with the same aim.
- ACTPLA to report annually on greenhouse gas emissions expected from approved developments

“This Bill will not effect current housing developments. In the short term we should be outlining a timetable for a 7 star EER requirement, but over time we expect incremental increases towards carbon neutrality,” said Ms Le Couteur.

The ACT Greens are calling for public submissions by 20 April on the exposure draft of the *Planning and Development (Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets) Amendment Bill 2012*.

The exposure draft of the bill, and explanatory material is available at:

http://www.legislation.act.gov.au/ed/db_44031/default.asp