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Submission: Discussion Paper for Tasmanian Sustainability Strategy

Dear Cameron,

By way of background, the South Hobart Sustainable Community (SHSC) was formed in 2009 as a community-based organisation. Since its inception, SHSC has led a number of community projects with a strong focus on emissions reductions, including bulk purchasing of electric vehicles¹, rooftop solar photovoltaic and hot water systems, as well as building resilience in the community through initiatives such as establishing a Community Garden.

Our community has a great sense of pride in banding together on these initiatives, but recognises that a strategic statewide approach is necessary for our society to respond to the risks and contribute to stabilising the climate. On this basis, the South Hobart Sustainable Community (SHSC) Inc supports the concept of the Tasmanian Sustainability Strategy.

Two of our members attended "The Gathering" hosted by Sustainable Living Tasmania at Brighton Civic Centre in August, and heard your presentation. We have

¹ ReNew: Technology for a Sustainable Future, *Electric vehicles—Australia's first community bulk buy*, Ben Clark, No. 154 (JAN - MAR 2021), pp. 84-87 (4 pages)



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also read the “Discussion Paper” and our specific comments are structured to align with the consultation questions:

1 – Vision

What do you hope Tasmania looks like in 2050 - our society, economy, and natural environment? Help us write Tasmania’s vision for a sustainable future grounded in wellbeing, equity, and prosperity.

Tasmania is leading the world in responding to climate change and transitioning to a circular economy powered through renewable energy. Our economy serves our society, and our environment: decisions are good for nature, lift people out of poverty and share the state’s wealth.

We acknowledge the extensive community engagement by Australia Remade and Good Life Permaculture that informs the above: [Stuff of Dreams](#) and [Nine Pillars: Creating the Best Version of Us](#)

What are the most important challenges we need to overcome to achieve your vision for Tasmania in 2050? Some changes are easy to make on the journey to sustainability and others are more challenging. Tell us what challenges you consider are the most important for achieving a sustainable future for Tasmania.

1. **Circular Economy** - effective controls on reinvestment of waste levy funds into waste management and resource recovery to ensure more sustainable environmental and resource management outcomes
2. **Political will** - resisting the power of lobbyists and (some) industry groups from holding back Tasmania’s progress toward sustainability (i.e. the building industry consistently lobbies to defer improved residential building standards - three year deferral of the 7 star NATHERS energy efficiency rating provisions)
3. **Strengthened planning scheme requirements for sustainable design** - we note the State’s ability for passive solar orientation to be incorporated into planning scheme requirements. Other matters include Water Sensitive Urban Design, urban heat island effect, private open space.
4. **Integrated land-use planning** - settlement patterns within the state are reliant on private vehicle movements, imposing significant transport builds (i.e. in Hobart the Bridgewater Bridge, Sorrell Causeway duplication and Southern Expressway projects exceed \$1bn). This also has multiple significant negative outcomes that are often not fully costed (i.e. long-term health implications of sedentary lifestyle). More cohesive planning, and funding allocations, particularly for inner urban renewal and active transport are needed.

About us: The SHSC group is South Hobart residents who recognise that transitioning to a sustainable way of life is one of the key challenges of the 21st century. We want to work together and share what we learn along the way.



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5. **Truth-Telling and Treaty process** - reduce the inequality and disadvantage experienced by Tasmanian Aboriginal people.
6. **Gender equality** - support Tasmanian women and girls to reach their full potential (i.e. through implementing Tasmanian Women's Strategy 2022-2027).
7. **Adequate reservation for survival of natural biodiversity** - [Tasmania's climate projections](#) model 1.6C-2.9C of climate warming is likely by 2100, so adequate reserves are necessary to ensure our flora, fauna have a chance to migrate, adapt or evolve. We are fortunate that 50% of our land area is reserved, however these will be subject to increased risks due to a warmer, drier (and more lightning-prone) climate.

By contrast, our marine areas aren't well protected, and the east coast of Tasmania is a recognised hotspot for the changes occurring as a result of climate change. Scientists estimate these waters are warming almost four times faster than the global average and this is projected to continue. Tasmania has the unfortunate dual distinction of recording Australia's first documented marine animal extinction, the Derwent River Seastar (*Marginaster littoralis*), and the first ever marine bony fish to be listed as extinct (Smooth Handfish, *Sympterychthys unipennis*). Increased marine protected areas across a variety of marine bioregions will be essential to both prevent further extinctions, and to provide flora and fauna species with options to rebuild their populations.

2 - Goals

If we streamline the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals to around six sustainability topics or focus areas for Tasmania's sustainability goals, what would they be, or do you think we should simply align with the SDGs? The SDGs can be adapted to Tasmania's circumstances and local priorities, however, a smaller number of focused goals reflecting Tasmanians' priorities and aspirations could be more effective for motivating community-wide change.

We support adapting the SDGs to Tasmania's circumstances, and found it impossible to narrow to just six. We suggest focusing on the following eight:

4. Quality Education
5. Natural Resource Management

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- 7. Affordable and Clean Energy
- 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities
- 12. Responsible Consumption and Production
- 13. Climate Action
- 14. Life Below Water
- 15. Life on Land

In what areas of sustainability do you think Tasmania is doing well, and are there other priorities where we could do better? Not everything can be done at once - sustainability strategies require incremental change over short, medium, and longer time horizons. Your response will help us understand what you consider to be Tasmania's immediate and long-term priorities.

Where Tasmania is doing well

Having looked through Appendix A, there is a comprehensive list of strategies in place. We haven't had time to check on progress across each, but to our knowledge renewable energy is a strength that the State leads the nation (and globally) in.

Tasmanian Governments "Electric Highway" program to increase public recharging stations is a strong start, as is the 100% EV target by 2030 for departmental fleets.

After considerable inertia at state level through the last two decades, the recently legislated *Waste and Resource Recovery (WRR) Act and Regulations*, with a waste levy and grant funding, plus staffing and a Board to oversee the implementation are steps in the right direction. We also welcome the Container Refund Scheme, and phase out of problematic single use plastics in 2025.

Where Tasmania could be doing better

SDG 7 - Affordable and Clean Energy

Earlier this year our group was working toward a proposal requiring collaboration across 2 levels of government and the network provider to develop a large scale (200kW) solar PV installation that would feed excess energy into a community battery, to then help power a bank of EV fast and slow chargers and feed into the local sub-network to provide solar-power access to heavily shaded homes. It took a lot of volunteer effort to garner support across the relevant arms of government, elected representatives across 3 levels of government, and energy providers, to try and get this as a significant demonstration project in our community. Ultimately, it fell over due to loss of key personnel within the Council and the network provider. Having someone within the Tasmanian Government (i.e. RECFIT) that could help advocate for (or indeed broker) this outcome - and tackle the significant



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administrative regulatory challenges will be essential in future for us to transition at the scale required.

Project design requirements should prioritise the use of existing infrastructure or corridors, and where new developments are required, apply the 'mitigation hierarchy' to impacts. That is, proponents must demonstrably avoid, then minimize impacts, and only use environmental offsets as a genuine last resort.

SDG 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities

Improve the use of clean energy public transport with the electrification of our major land and water-based public transport systems.

- Emissions from the transport sub-sector increased by 0.22 Mt CO₂-e (14.5%) between 1990 and 2021, and accounted for 21% of Tasmania's emissions in 2021. Ref: RCFIT (Renewables, Climate and Future Industries Tasmania) 2023. *Tasmania's Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report 2023*. Department of State Growth, Hobart, Tasmania.

Could the strategy include a goal to phase-out of new fossil fuel passenger vehicle sales in the state by 2032 (although market forces may move more rapidly than that date anyway).

In 2020 our group organised Australia's first EV bulk purchase, and in 2021, we organised Tasmania's first e-bike bulk purchase, and both offers were strongly supported. Given both technologies are comparatively costly, our suburb's relatively strong household income worked in favour of this uptake.

It is now a common sight for 10-15 cargo e-bikes to be delivering children to child care and the primary school in South Hobart². Given the relatively lower purchase cost of e-bikes, we recommend the Government trial a few forms of incentive (i.e. direct subsidy to 10% of bike value, or zero interest loan similar to Energy Saver Loan Scheme) to help households purchase an e-bike, as this could be a viable alternative to a second car for many households. For instance, the suburbs of Hobart, Launceston, Burnie, Ulverstone and Devonport that are within 10km of their respective CBDs would be well within the commute range of a regular cargo bike battery.

Tied to that should also be a significant boost in funding for safer cycle infrastructure (AAA standard - all ages and abilities), to help the riders from 8 to 80 that are

² Bicycle Network - *Cargo bike childcare drop-offs are a cinch* (4 May 2021)
<https://bicyclenetwork.com.au/newsroom/2021/05/04/cargo-bike-childcare-drop-offs-are-a-cinch/>



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capable of riding to feel safe whilst doing so. As international evidence from places in Netherlands and Denmark shows, this is when the changes to rider demographics really start to be noticeable, with increased female and child participation.

We also noticed that cost was a big barrier for EV purchase, and through our bulk buy partnership with the Good Car Co, we established a sales model that has propelled their business nation-wide. Their efforts have recently attracted significant capital raising through Mike Cannon-Brookes, and they are now offering their own means-tested \$3000 subsidy to eligible low income individuals/households.

SDG 12 - Responsible Consumption and Production

The 2020 Tasmanian Organics Baseline Database indicates that food waste (*assuming an average of 60% of organic waste in residual kerbside bins is food waste) makes up around 76.7 kt, or 45%, of the overall 169.9 kt of organic waste to landfill. Most of this food waste to landfill in Tasmania is generated by the commercial sector (e.g., food retailing, hospitality, institutions), households, and the manufacturing sector (e.g., food and beverage producers). Therefore, in Tasmania, food waste is the largest contributor to the total amount of organic waste to landfill.

Whilst the Australian and Tasmanian Government goal is to halve food waste by 2030, with the technology that exists and appropriate price signals, we suggest a more ambitious target (say 75% reduction) could be met within that timeframe.

SDG 14 - Life Below Water

As noted earlier, we consider that increasing both the number and size of marine protected areas across a variety of marine bioregions will be essential to provide flora and fauna species with options to rebuild their populations. Currently the marine reserves cover 1.1% of Tasmanian state waters (excluding Macquarie Island), and out of the nine marine bioregions surrounding Tasmania only four contain no-take marine reserves. A worthwhile objective for the Sustainability strategy would be to recommence a program to establish comprehensive, adequate and representative MPAs to conserve the state's high global marine values.

Thank you for inviting our feedback. We look forward to Stage Three of the process, and reviewing the draft Sustainability Strategy.

Kind regards

South Hobart Sustainable Community Facilitators - Linda Giumelli, Aaron Leeman-Smith, Lissa Villeneuve, Jess Kneebone, Louise Gilfedder and Ben Clark.