



19 January 2021

The Hon Rob Stokes MP
Minister for Planning and Public Spaces
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

The Hon Matt Kean MP
Minister for Energy and Environment
GPO Box 5341
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Ministers Stokes and Kean

Re: Local government engagement to inform the Design and Place SEPP and revisions to BASIX

The Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (SSROC) and member councils welcome the NSW Government's intent and direction for a new Design and Place SEPP. SSROC supports the government's vision to ensure growth in our centres and suburbs is sustainable and resilient, improving responses to community needs during extreme weather events and the changing climate. SSROC and our member councils would be keen to play a constructive role in its development.

SSROC is an association of eleven councils. SSROC provides a forum for the exchange of ideas between our member councils, and an interface between governments, other councils and key bodies on issues of common interest. Together, our member councils cover a population of over 1.7 million, or one third of the population of Sydney.

SSROC understands that the intent of the new SEPP is to provide less prescriptive measures, and instead focus on principles and guidelines to encourage innovation and better design solutions. While allowing room for innovation and place-based planning is important, setting sound and improved minimum standards for will also be critical to achieve higher quality building design and thermal performance outcomes.

Recent Local Government research led by Waverley Council and funded by DPIE, indicates that as the climate warms, residential energy demand for cooling in summer is predicted to increase by over 300% depending on the building type. Therefore some dwellings approved for construction today under current requirements, may be unsuitable for occupation by 2070.*


SSROC is aware of WSROC's correspondence regarding the development of the Design and Place SEPP and concurs with their recommendations including the following:

- That BASIX be reviewed and updated including use of the most current climate data to help mitigate urban heat islands and adapt to a changing climate.
- That the Development of the Design and Place SEPP is informed by local government knowledge and experience together with a strong motivation to improve urban planning outcomes.
- That BASIX, NaTHERs, or any other modelling tool eligible for use under the Design and Place SEPP
 - is grounded on future climate projections (eg 2030 & 2070) to ensure all residential development approved today is safe for our future, hotter climates
 - reviews settings for residential gas, to help meet the NSW Government's Net Zero Plan
- That a transparent Monitoring & Evaluation protocol is established to ensure assessment tools are reviewed every three years in line with National Construction Code (NCC) updates
- That any revenue from State Environmental Planning Policies is utilised for regular tool (eg BASIX) maintenance and enhancement to respond to policy and environmental variations

Local Councils are closely involved in the communities that they serve and understand the nature of particular places within areas. They are best placed to assess the appropriateness of guiding principles and minimum standards for a range of different place scenarios. SSROC therefore seeks a commitment from the NSW Government to establish a genuine partnership with Local Councils to inform the design of the Design and Place SEPP and further improve BASIX.

I would welcome the opportunity to discuss these issues in more detail and look forward to opportunities for further collaboration and engagement to ensure our planning system delivers a clear, healthier, more resilient and improved approach for all our communities and citizens.

Yours sincerely



Cr John Faker
Mayor of Burwood Council
President, Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils

**Report entitled Future Proofing Residential Development to Climate Change WSP 2021
 Waverley Council have advised that they will be providing this report once finalised.*