

**Submission
No 225**

SUSTAINABILITY OF ENERGY SUPPLY AND RESOURCES IN NSW

Organisation: Inner West Council

Date Received: 17 September 2019



INNER WEST COUNCIL

Ms Dora Oravecz
Committee Manager
Parliament of New South Wales - Legislative Committee on Environment and Planning
By e-mail: environmentplanning@parliament.nsw.gov.au

Dear Ms Oravecz,

Sustainability of energy supply and resources in NSW

Inner West Council welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the *Inquiry into the sustainability of energy supply and resources in NSW*.

The release of Greenhouse Gases (GHG) into the atmosphere by human activities, mostly burning fossil fuels for energy, is heating the planet. By 2030 global emissions need to be cut by 45% on 2010 levels to limit global heating exceeding 1.5°C. The window of opportunity to de-carbonise before the most serious consequences of climate change are realised is rapidly closing.

Inner West Council has a strong record of achievement and commitment to environmental sustainability. In 2019, Inner West Council reaffirmed its commitment to climate action by declaring a Climate Emergency. The Climate Emergency requires radically adjusted deadlines and far reaching changes.

Inner West Council has adopted operational targets to become 100% carbon neutral and 100% renewable for electricity by 2025 and has already achieved 100% divestment from fossil fuels. Key performance indicators supporting these targets are included in the CEO performance agreement.

Electricity consumption is responsible for almost 70% of carbon emissions from the Inner West community. The *Draft Inner West Climate and Renewables Strategy* includes community targets for 2036:

- Community emissions are 75% less than in 2017
- 100% of schools have installed solar
- Inner West community solar PV capacity is 20 times greater than in 2017

An accelerated transition to renewable electricity is critical for achieving Council's 75% by 2036 reduction target. Accordingly, Inner West Council supports the Local Government NSW climate change policy which includes a renewable energy target of 40% by 2025 to support investment and market confidence in renewable energy projects.

Inner West Council has recently appointed a Renewable Energy Innovation Officer to address barriers to local renewable energy uptake in the Inner West. Over 35% of households in Australia are currently locked out of solar. According to the ABS in Australia at least 29% of households rent and 13% live in apartments. These figures are far higher in the Inner West of Sydney. Locked out energy users face barriers to solar including split incentives, shading, and financial issues. These barriers should be addressed by both state and federal government via changes to energy market rules and financial support for solar gardens, community energy projects and enabling local energy trading.

P.O. Box 14 Petersham 2049 | P (02) 9392 5000 | E council@innerwest.nsw.gov.au

Customer Service Centres | **Petersham** 2-14 Fisher Street | **Leichhardt** 7-15 Wetherill Street | **Ashfield** 260 Liverpool Road



INNER WEST COUNCIL

In addition to carbon emissions related to fossil fuels, Council is also concerned about the impact of coal mining on air quality, water security, human health, and native vegetation. Air quality is an issue for workers and residents in and adjacent to coal mining communities from mining operations and coal stockpiles. There are also significant waste streams and water issues from mining coal and from coal fired power stations including waste water, coal ash and fine particulate matter emitted during combustion.

While the transition to renewable energy presents a significant economic opportunity for NSW, some regional communities could be adversely impacted in the near to medium term if the transition is not well planned. There should be strong support for economic and other initiatives to assist regional communities and workers that may be affected by changing energy and resource markets. Inner West Council supports the establishment of a fully funded and resourced Just Transition Authority (JTA) with responsibility for planning, education and re-training of effected workers in the fossil fuel supply chain and carbon intensive energy sectors.

Should you wish to speak with a Council officer about this submission, please contact Jon Stiebel, Urban Sustainability Manager on [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely

Jan Orton

Group Manager Environment and Sustainability