



Wollongong City Council

Net Zero Wollongong Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-30

Summary



The problem

Climate change is the name given to changes in temperature and weather patterns over long periods of time. We know small changes in average temperatures caused by climate change can lead to an increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events like floods, heat waves and storms. This puts pressure on the natural systems that support us in our everyday lives.

Minimising the current and future impacts of climate change requires us to stop generating the greenhouse gases that are causing the atmosphere to warm. We call this reducing emissions.

To learn more about the impacts of climate change in the Illawarra, visit www.climatechange.environment.nsw.gov.au/illawarra

How are we responding?

In August 2019, Wollongong City Council joined a growing group of more than 2,343 jurisdictions across 40 countries to declare a climate emergency and make addressing it a priority. We also committed to climate action partnerships including the Global Covenant of Mayors and Cities Power Partnership to tackle this complex issue alongside like-minded organisations.

Our previous Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020-22, laid the foundation and set targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, called net zero, by 2030 for Wollongong City Council operations and by 2050 for the community.

This subsequent plan, the Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2023-30 (or CCMP 2023-30),

builds on that foundation and outlines a whole-of-community approach to reducing emissions, and thereby mitigating the effects of climate change in Wollongong.

Early action will make achieving our targets easier, that's why we have introduced an interim target to reduce community emissions by 50% by 2030.

Figure 2 (page 11) of the CCMP 2023-30 shows how it fits in with our broader strategic framework.

As a community, we are part of a bigger picture in our effort to reduce the impacts of climate change. Our targets align and contribute to state and federal government targets and our role is critical in helping reduce emissions nationwide.

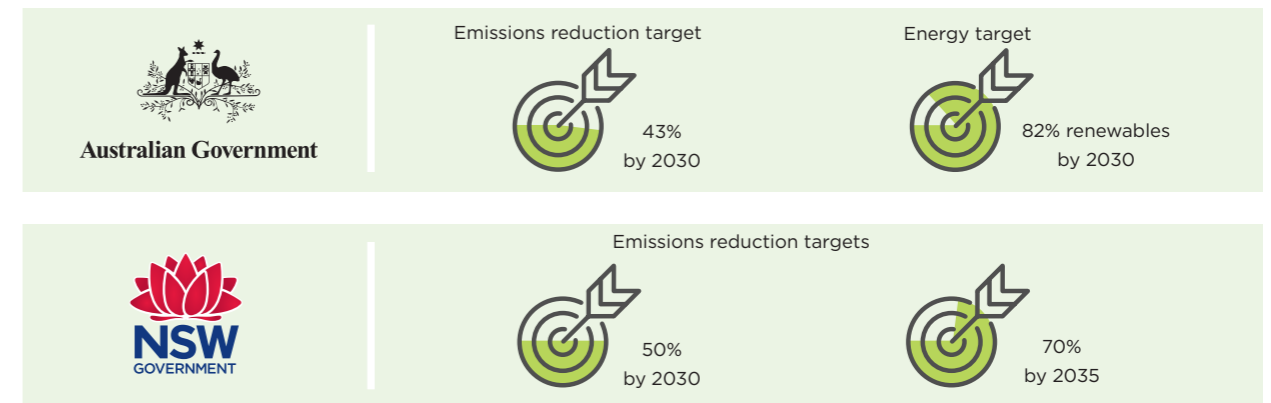


Figure 1: City of Wollongong emissions targets



A community-focused approach

To help build the Plan, we reached out to the community at the end of 2022 through a community consultation campaign to gather feedback and shape community priorities in reducing emissions. The Plan captures the response from the community and focuses on

what residents and businesses can do to reduce their emissions and how Council can help.

For more information about the community engagement process and what steps we took to develop the CCMP, see the 'How we made this plan' section on page 46 of the Plan.



Community emissions for Wollongong

We couldn't map the plan forward without knowing where we started.

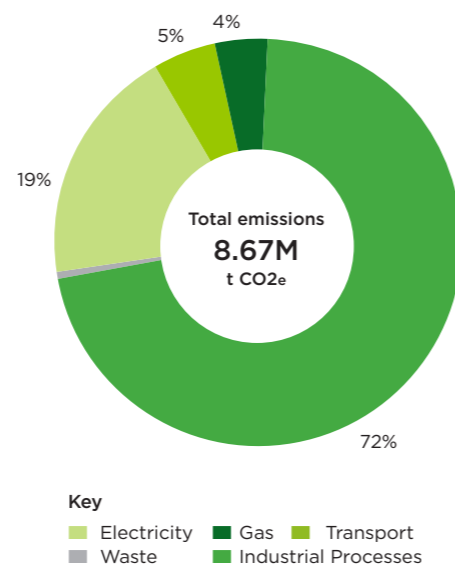
Wollongong's emissions profile is a summary of all the sources of greenhouse gas emissions in our community. We have been compiling it biennially since 2016 (our baseline) in accordance with international standards.

The emissions profile for our city is unique because of our industrial heritage. Within the Wollongong local government area are four of Australia's top emitters and naturally these emissions dominate our profile. Transitioning to a net zero Wollongong will take a concerted effort from all stakeholders.

Council contributes to state and federal-led programs aimed at reducing industrial and grid scale emissions in the region. Through this support, we will leverage and advocate opportunities to ensure our industrial partners are part of the regional net zero journey.

For more information on regional projects, see 'figure 5' on page 17 of the Plan.

Figure 2: City of Wollongong community emissions 2019/20

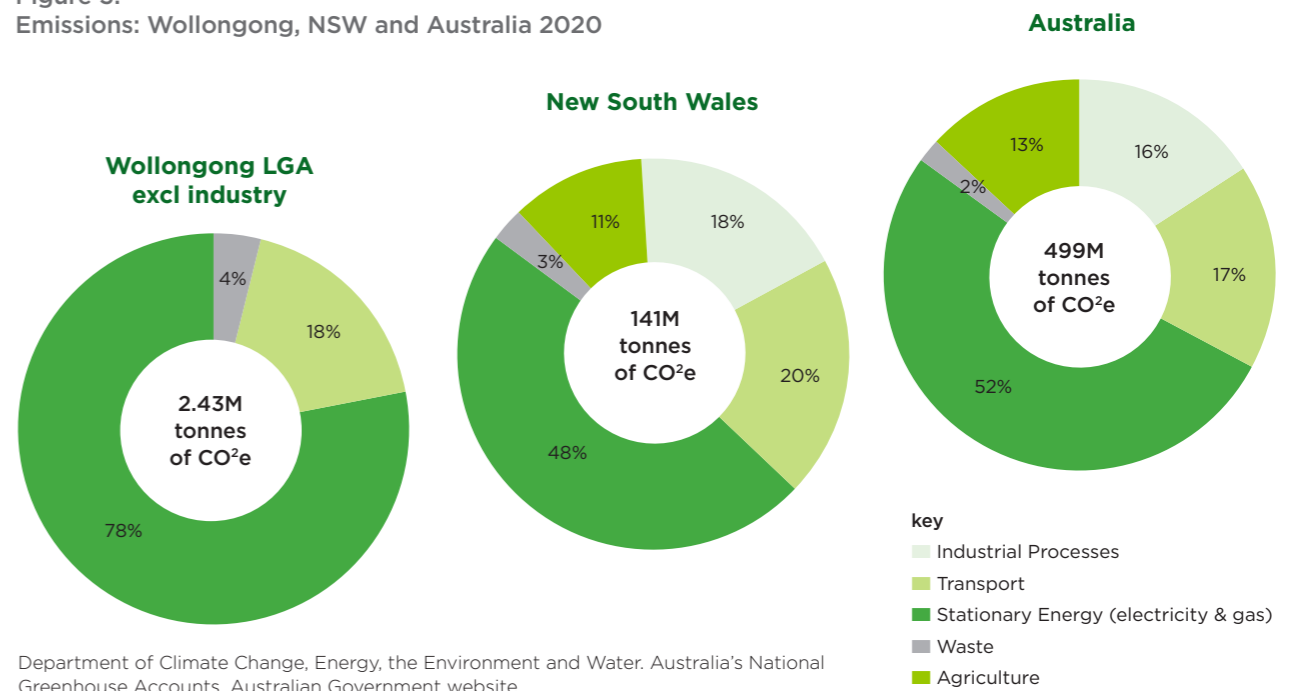


Benchmarking our profile

Without industrial emissions, Wollongong's profile looks a lot closer to the state and national profiles. Energy use and transport generate a significant proportion of total emissions, and this is where the community and local government can play a role.

This also represents a space where early action can be taken because the technology to reduce these emissions exists today and often saves households money. The actions within the Plan focus on reducing emissions in these areas.

Figure 3: Emissions: Wollongong, NSW and Australia 2020



Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water. Australia's National Greenhouse Accounts. Australian Government website



Emissions Reductions

The Plan has three key pillars, each pillar has a separate action plan for steps to help achieve our targets. Key concepts that helped us shape the action plans are:

- Target areas that will have the greatest and earliest impact on reducing emissions.
- Focus on a community-led approach and the support Council can provide.
- Encourage an equitable transition to net zero by delivering help to where it is most needed.

Communities in action



Residential households contributed to around 30% of Wollongong's stationary energy consumption in 2020. Emissions from our homes and businesses mainly come from appliances and vehicles that use petrol, gas and grid network electricity generated from fossil fuels.

This action plan responds to the feedback that residents and business owners would like to identify and prioritise ways to reduce energy consumption and transition to renewable energy to help achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Many of these actions will result in co-benefits such as reducing household bills and providing health benefits.

Actions

1. Switch to all electric homes and businesses.
2. Install rooftop solar.
3. Install battery storage.
4. Purchase renewable green power.
5. Replace gas powered cooking and heating equipment with electric alternatives.
6. Upgrade space heating and cooling systems to electric heat pump systems.
7. Upgrade hot water systems to electric heat pump systems.
8. Upgrade lighting to LED.
9. Insulate your home.
10. Upgrade to energy efficient appliances.
11. Incorporate sustainable and passive building design to buildings.
12. Reduce waste to landfill and utilise a circular economy through recycling and FOGO services.
13. Switch to low or no carbon transport.
14. Purchase an electric or low carbon vehicle.
15. Expand urban and rural gardens and tree cover.
16. Support green manufacturing by purchasing low carbon and local products.

See page 28 of the CCMP 2023-30 for the full action plan.

For more information on how you can reduce emissions and household bills, visit www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/my-community/sustainable-living/electrify-wollongong

Empowering communities



These are actions that Council will take to support the community to reduce emissions. They are aimed at delivering assistance where it is needed most.

Actions

1. Develop partnerships and advocacy opportunities to support a regional clean energy transition.
2. Provide access to the community to an emissions dashboard and education hub.
3. Provide energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions for residents with implementation barriers.
4. Facilitate where possible procurement opportunities to support the community's transition to renewable energy.
5. Review Council's planning documents and guidelines to increase sustainability principles where feasible.
6. Provide sustainable building guidelines.
7. Support local businesses to reduce emissions and benefit from a regional clean energy transition.
8. Support a community approach to electrification.
9. Support community distributed energy resources development and innovations.
10. Support uptake of electric vehicles and acceleration of public electric vehicle charging infrastructure implementation.
11. Increase public and active transport availability and options.
12. Support development of circular economy opportunities within the region.
13. Increase diversion rates and reduce waste to landfill.
14. Improve vegetation cover in urban centres.
15. Improve resilience of blue carbon ecosystems.

See page 32 of the CCMP 2023-30 for the full action plan.

Leading by example



The final action plan is for us to reduce the emissions generated by Council facilities and operations and reach our corporate net zero target by 2030. We are committed to demonstrating leadership and best practice in this space although we are only a small portion of the community's overall emissions.

These actions are broken down into four target areas based on our main sources of emissions:

1. Leadership and Governance
2. Waste
3. Buildings and Facilities
4. Transport and Fleet

See page 23 of the CCMP 2023-30 for the Wollongong City Council operational emissions profile and page 38 for the full action plan.

Our Wollongong Our Future

From the mountains to the sea...

We value and protect our environment

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

We are a connected and engaged community

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

We have affordable and accessible transport



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