Overview

Living in Brisbane 2026 is Council’s shared vision for Brisbane. Key targets in the vision are to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 50% and that Brisbane City Council will be carbon neutral by 2026. Adding 50% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2026 directly relates to improved building and urban design performance. Brisbane’s built environment is responsible for 25% of the City’s greenhouse gas emissions. Consequently, how Brisbane’s built environment is designed and constructed will have a key role in achieving this vision.

In CS1 Corporate Sustainability Policy, Council adopted a set of principles to guide organisational decision-making. One of the key focus areas identified in CS1 is sustainable places and urban form. CS2 Sustainable Built Environment Policy expands on the sustainable places and urban form focus area and demonstrates Council’s commitment to driving sustainable development.

Applicability

The policy applies to:
- all development classes, including commercial, residential and industrial developments
- the designed landscape and infrastructure
- the designed and constructed form including fixtures and fittings
- Council’s own buildings and facilities.

The policy does not apply to (though it seeks to influence):
- the behaviour of people working or living in the built environment
- the associated plant, vehicles and easily removed furniture and appliances.

Development in the built environment will be considered at the individual site, street, neighbourhood, city and region scale.

Definitions

Built Environment – The built environment refers to the constructed and modified surroundings that provide the primary setting for human activity, ranging from large-scale civic surroundings to personal places. The built environment includes buildings and infrastructure such as roads, pipes and cabling, and drainage channels. It also includes parks, gardens and green spaces that have been designed, created or enhanced for people’s use.
Sustainability – Sustainability is a principle to influence our decisions to maintain and enhance our quality of life now and in the future. It requires an integrated consideration of environmental, economic, and community factors.

Sustainable Development – Sustainable development meets the needs of current generations without compromising the potential of future generations to meet their own needs. In the broad context, ‘development’ refers to social and economic progress. For the purpose of this policy, ‘development’ refers specifically to design and construction projects in the built environment, such as land-use developments, buildings and infrastructure.

Outcomes

This policy will create a built environment that:

- Will be internationally recognised for its contemporary, environmentally friendly subtropical urban form.
- Facilitates healthy indoor environments.
- Encourages productivity at work and comfort at home.
- Preserves our unique built heritage for future generations.
- Will be designed and constructed in a way that promotes eco-efficiencies, such as minimising energy and water use and improving resource life cycles (reuse and recycling).
- Plans, designs and constructs our surrounds to enhance urban form and positively contribute to the sustainable management of air quality, vegetation, land, energy and water.
- Manages, protects and enhances our natural ecosystems and green space network through sensitive design of the built environment.
- Encourages green transport (public transport, bikeways and walkways) and an active lifestyle for residents and visitors.
- Ensures that Brisbane is a world class city for sustainable buildings and urban form.
Policy

Brisbane City Council will be a global leader in driving sustainability in the built environment, through its own activities, regulation, incentives and advocacy.

Council will undertake appropriate actions to implement this policy, including:

1. Advocacy
Council will:
- Advocate an integrated approach to sustainable development that includes economic, environmental and social aspects.
- Advocate continual improvement to sustainable built environment standards with key State and Federal authorities involved in environmental, building and planning legislation.
- Work in partnership with the Brisbane community, industry groups, research institutions, and regional and national organisations to drive sustainability in the built environment through education, behaviour change and communication programs.

2. Council Activities
Council will:
- Demonstrate leadership in its own decisions, practices, policies and behaviours relating to the built environment.
- Achieve recognised leading best practice sustainability ratings for all new large (greater than 5,000m²) buildings, facilities and public places.
- Site, design and construct new smaller buildings, facilities and public places (less than 5,000m²) in accordance with sustainable development principles.
- Continually improve the sustainability performance of existing buildings, workshops and infrastructure.
- Include sustainability provisions in agreements relating to the disposal of Council property to facilitate the beneficial use and reuse of resources.
- Ensure the sustainability performance of buildings or facilities that Council purchases or leases over 5000m² achieves leading best practice sustainability ratings.
- Ensure owners/managers upgrade the sustainability performance of any buildings Council leases.
- Ensure community leases and affordable housing programs are managed using the principles of sustainable development.

3. Incentives
Council will use innovative, effective and efficient incentive programs to encourage and reward sustainable development, which may include:
- financial grants, rebates and concessions
- research and development grants
- professional advice and assistance
- development assessment incentives
- marketing incentives
4. Regulation
Council will:

- Promote and encourage sustainable development through the assessment and approval of development applications under Brisbane City Plan.
- Improve sustainable development standards when undertaking development and review of Planning Scheme Policies and Codes in Brisbane City Plan.
- Improve sustainability standards when undertaking development and review of Local Laws and industry licensing standards.
- Implement best practice sustainable urban form through its strategic planning initiatives.
- Provide regular sustainable building and sustainable development training and support for staff involved in development assessment processes.
- Undertake compliance activities to ensure Brisbane City Plan standards are met across Brisbane.

5. Procedures and Guidelines
Council will develop:

- programs and procedures to implement this policy, through the normal budget and program planning cycles
- indicators, objectives and targets to review the performance of this policy.

Authority

Adopted by Full Council 20 March 2007

Policy Owner
Manager, Natural Environment, Water & Sustainability, City Planning & Sustainability Division.
Manager, City Planning & Economic Development, City Planning & Sustainability Division.

Further Assistance
Program Delivery Manager - Energy & Carbon, Natural Environment, Water & Sustainability
Principal Program Officer, Urban Design, City Planning & Economic Development
Related Information

Our Shared Vision - Living in Brisbane 2026
Brisbane City Council Corporate plan 2012/13 - 2016/17
Brisbane City Plan
WMC001 Water Cycle Management Policy
CS1 Corporate Sustainability Policy
SP102 - Procurement Policy
CS5 – Corporate Carbon Neutral Policy
EM001 – Environmental Policy
Brisbane City Council Principles for Sustainable Development
AM001 Management of Council’s Physical Assets Policy

Review Date

November 2015