

Low Carbon Built Environment Knowledge Hub

Workshop 2 results

31 January 2017 @ University of South Australia

Attendees	
Megan Antcliff – SA Government	Dr Stephen Berry – University of SA
Kevin Lowe – Campbelltown Council	Prof Abbas Elmualim – University of SA
Dr Nicholas Holyoak – Flinders University	Dr Peter Graham – Swinburne University
Dr Stephen White – CSIRO	Amanda Lawrence – APO
Prof Wasim Saman – University of SA	Michelle Zwagerman – Project Manager
Apologies	
Andrew Bridge – Renewal SA	Leigh Dalwood – AECOM
Michelle Irvine – SA Water	Prof Michael Taylor – University of SA
Prof John Boland – University of SA	

Workshop context

The Low Carbon Built Environment Knowledge Hub is a CRC LCL project that aims to improve access to quality research and resources to help inform policy makers, practitioners and researchers about best practice for sustainable built environments.

The project is currently in its specification-gathering phase and is seeking input from key stakeholders.

Workshop purpose

The purpose of this workshop was to identify and agree, across government, industry and academia, for the specification of the Knowledge Hub on Low Carbon Living in the Built Environment.

The specific focus of this workshop was to answer the questions:

1. Who makes or influences policy decision making?
2. What evidence do they use (or would like to use)?
3. Where is the priority for evidence?

Workshop results

The following is the consolidation of the feedback provided at the Workshop #2 held on 31st January at the University of South Australia.

I have consolidated participant's contributions under the following headings:

- Decision-making processes
- Actors in the process
- Evidence used
- Priorities for evidence

Key findings

There were a few key insights from the workshop.

- Actors:
- Consultants engaged to assist with policy design play a key role in sourcing evidence used in policy decision making.
 - The formal and informal networks also play an important role when a policy adviser is looking for information.
- Evidence:
- Existing policy places restrictions on design options for policy amendments, and thereby restricts the evidence applicable for use.
 - Other types of research, ranging from peer's opinions to internal reports, play a far greater role than peer-reviewed research as direct evidence in the policy process.

Limitations of the workshop

Government representation: The workshop benefited from representation from both local council and state government. However, there was no representative from federal government. Also, the workshop was restricted in its time which did not enable further exploration of some key points made. Both these limitations will be addressed by interviewing government stakeholders.

Industry representation: There were no representatives from industry at the workshop. Their views on their role in government policy decision making is vital to complete the picture. It also meant that we were not able to explore industry design decision making. Both these missing pieces of the puzzle are being filled by interviewing industry stakeholders.

Next steps

The information gathered from this workshop will be included into the Specifications for the Knowledge Hub project.

Further clarification will be sought through interviews with stakeholders.

Further workshops are planned in Sydney and Canberra.

1. Decision-making processes

The workshop focused on two examples of policy-making decision processes:

- a. State government's process for a Minister-initiated amendment of the development plan
- b. Local council's process on revising their Environmental Management Plan.

a. State government’s process to amend the development plan

The South Australian government’s website details the process for making amendments to the state’s development plans:

<https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/planning-and-property/development-plans/amendments-to-development-plans/development-plan-amendment-practitioners-guide>

The Minister-initiated Development Plan Amendment processes are shown in Diagram 1.

Development Plan Amendment (DPA) processes for Minister-initiated DPAs

All Minister-initiated DPAs	<p>Initiation Minute issued by the Minister (includes whether Process A, B or C will be followed)</p> <p>Research/investigations conducted for the Minister regarding the subject matter identified in the Initiation Minute</p> <p>(The process then varies, depending on whether Process A, B or C is adopted)</p>		
	Process A	Process B	Process C
	Draft DPA document prepared for agency consultation (maximum of 6 weeks allowed for agency submissions)	DPA document prepared	DPA document prepared
	DPA finalised following agency consultation	*Conduct concurrent agency and public consultation (at least 8 weeks allowed for written submissions; submissions are made to the Development Policy Advisory Committee)	*Conduct concurrent agency and public consultation (at least 4 weeks allowed for written submissions; submissions are made to the Development Policy Advisory Committee)
	*Conduct public consultation (at least 8 weeks allowed for written submissions; submissions are made to the Development Policy Advisory Committee)		
All Minister-initiated DPAs	<p>Public Meeting conducted (by Development Policy Advisory Committee)</p> <p>DPAC Report After the public meeting DPAC prepares a Report on the consultation and submits the Report to the Minister</p> <p>Ministerial consideration Minister considers for final approval. The DPA may be approved; altered and approved; refused; or divided into parts, with some approved and others refused or altered</p> <p>ERD Committee Review Parliament’s ERDC Committee reviews the amendment process</p>		

*Interim operation – can be requested at any time but cannot come into effect before the DPA is placed on public exhibition

Diagram 1: Development Plan Amendment (DPA) processes for Minister-initiated DPAs

Source:https://www.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/6857/Development_plan_amendment_processes_for_minister_initiated_DPs.pdf#page=1&zoom=auto,-200,842

b. Local council's process to decide on using the State's Environmental Management Plan.

The process used by the City of Campbelltown council to develop their Environmental Management Plan 2020 (revised in 2016) was:

“The preparation of the EMP 2020 included extensive consultation with the local community and key stakeholders, and a review of the existing plan, collation of data and trends, and the development of a discussion paper and subsequent draft EMP.”
(Environmental Management Plan 2010 – revised 2016, 206 pg. 1)¹

As part of the review process, council also used a ‘pick n mix’ approach from the South Australian government’s Policy library².

Reviews of council plans occur most often after council elections.

2. Actors in the process

a. Using the State Government’s DPA processes as an example, but not exclusively, the following actors were identified as being involved in policy-making decisions:

Actor	Type	Role
Minister	Gov	Making the DPA request
Minister’s departmental advisers	Gov	To undertake initial analysis and in framing the request.
Other government agency departments	Gov	Assessing impact of request to their respective areas of responsibility.
Other government institutions eg COAG	Gov	Enable input from various governmental actors.
Associations, Charities, Think tanks, Lobby groups, Activist groups	NGO	Act as intermediaries, representing the interests of their members, providing views on impact of policy changes.
Individuals	Public	Provide feedback via submissions or attending public consultations
New technologies from various organisations	Industry	Influence policy amendment design options
Regulators	Gov	In providing feedback on implementing existing policy
Consultants	Industry	Engaged to provide advise on policy amendment design
Expert panels including university people.	Industry, NGO, Academia	Advise via analysis and reports on policy amendment design.
Media	Public	Communicate information to the public.
Builders, architects, etc	Industry	Affected by policy amendments.

¹<http://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/Environmental%20Management%20Plan%202020%20REVISED%202016%20-%20approved%20by%20Council%20on%206%20December%202016.PDF>

² https://www.sa.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0014/13055/SA_Planning_Policy_Library_version_6.pdf

b. Using the local council process as an example, but not exclusively, the following actors were identified as being involved in policy-making decisions:

Actor	Type	Role
Councillors	Gov	Request the policy revisions
Council advisors	Gov	Draft the policy amendments.
Sustainability Coordinator	Gov	Provide specialist advise to policy amendments
Online Community Panel ³	Public	Provide feedback and input to policy design
Community	Public	Are affected by the policy – exhibit behaviour change
State Minister	Gov	State Government amendments may initiate a local government change.
Consultants	Industry	Engaged to provide advice on policy design
Certifiers	Industry	Provide feedback on policy impact
Personal networks	Public	Informal networks with variety of actors to provide advice.
Council networks ie. ICLIE, ACELG	NGO	Formal network with other local governments to share information.
Peers	Gov	Informal networks with other local governments to provide ad hoc advice.
Council collaborations ie. ERA	Gov	Formal collaboration with other local governments to provide recommendations.
Committees	Gov	Review and advise on policy amendments
Developers, Municipal engineers	Industry / Gov	Comply to plans and provide feedback on policy impact
Other peak body groups ie. Planning Institute of Australia (PIA)	Industry	Represent members
Research and universities	Academia	Provide evidence to be used in policy design, when requested

The types of actors identified, and their level of influence, were:

Type	Level	Timing of influence	Aspect
Government (Gov)	Strong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requestors of policy amendment - Shared knowledge on policy design through both formal and informal network - Acceptors of policy design recommendations. 	Focus on economic impact
Industry	Strong-Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involved in policy design and review feedback 	Focus on practicality / feasibility of implementation
NGOs	Medium-Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Possibly, at policy design stage through informal network. - Provide policy review feedback 	-
Academia	Medium-Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide advice in policy design (when requested) 	-
Public	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide policy review feedback 	-

³ <http://www.campbelltown.sa.gov.au/communitypanel>

3. Evidence used

a. The State Government's DPA processes involve the following evidence:

Evidence	Type	Examples
Governmental regulations	Policy	National Construction Code
University research	Peer-reviewed research	Journal articles
Other research	Grey literature	Consultant's report, Expert panels
Commentary, Expert opinion	Opinions	Ad hoc discussions from informal networks, academic consultation, private consultation
Media	News	Tabloid, social
Regulatory Impact Statement	Policy	Including cost / benefits analysis, impact on other industries, competitive analysis, economic impact analysis
International standards	Policy	
Case studies	Case study	Community solar project
Economic data	Data sets	ABS
Government reports	Reports	State, Federal or International

b. The local council process involved the following evidence:

Evidence	Type	Examples
Other governmental plans	Policy	Eg. SA Government's Policy Library
Consultant's reports	Grey literature	
Case studies and pilot projects	Case study	Lochiel Park
Council reports	Internal report	
ICLEI Briefing Sheets	Policy brief	Building Urban Resilience in Small Island Cities, Towns & Provinces
Peer's advise	Opinion	

Comments were also made of the tendency to 'cherry pick' evidence and the proliferation of plagiarism in writing un-reviewed reports.

The types of evidence identified were:

Type	Level of influence	Timing of influence
Existing policy	Strong	Initial terms of reference for policy amendments
Case studies	Strong	Initial terms of reference for policy amendments, policy design
Peer-reviewed research	Medium-Low	Policy design and evaluation
Other types of research - Grey literature - Internal reports - Policy brief	Strong-Medium	Policy design, review and evaluation
Data sets	Medium	Indirectly via both peer-reviewed and other types
Commentary - Opinion - News	Strong	Policy design and review

4. Priorities for evidence

Workshop participants offered the following top priorities for provision of evidence:

- **CRC for Low Carbon Living** - Continuing the legacy

Demonstrating the impact of the CRC is important. Therefore, the most impactful research work needs to be clearly accessible to policy decision makers (bottom-up focus).

Each Research Node needs to be able to broker their research strengths to match the political drivers of their jurisdictions (top-down focus).

- **Local issues** – SA's Energy security

The number one priority for South Australia, now, is energy security. Though this is not something that the CRC for Low Carbon Living can contribute to directly, energy efficiency initiatives will obviously have an indirect impact on the security of electricity supply.

- **Upcoming policy amendments** - Building regulations, NCC 2019, proposals due 1 Sept 2017

There are opportunities to contribute to the planned building regulations update NCC 2019 by:

- Looking at assurances of residential stock abiding to regulations, so looking at different ways of verifications.
- Looking at trajectories.
- Making the evidence accessible.

- **Evidence-gaps** - Analytics

It is important to be able to make comparisons and correlations when analysing the built environment. Having 'indexes' would assist with the ability to measure and assess.

- **Making information more accessible**

Various comments were made that all relate back to making the evidence more accessible:

- Easily discoverable.
- Translating the evidence to ensure that it is accessible (understandable) to policy decision makers.
- Understanding the different drivers that affect policy design, ie economic, feasibility.
- A focus on integrated energy, transport, waste and water (ETWW) information.
- The ability to have a wider visibility across sectors. This means seeing information on a topic ranging from practitioners (case studies) to political drivers (advocacy drivers).