

DADA response to Darebin Council: Environmentally Sustainable Development of buildings and subdivisions

1. Both the state government road map and the council submission are missing policy and strategy around the most basic principle of sustainability, that of reuse.
2. It is well documented that building and development creates massive amounts of waste. According to this article; <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/earth-and-planetary-sciences/construction-waste>, construction waste is estimated to be as much as 30% of the total weight of building materials and this calculation does not include the waste of the building materials cleared from the site before beginning the build.
3. In Darebin, time and time again we see construction sites cleared to ground zero and great truck loads and skip loads of material taken to landfill. Furthermore we see perfectly livable houses reduced to rubble in order to make way for 3, 4, or more dwellings on a site. These older houses once used to be the stock of affordable first homes and rentals in Darebin many of them 3 bedroom.
4. We believe that Darebin Council could lead in the area of environmentally sustainable development by introducing restrictions on the mass of construction waste going to landfill. Developers should be accountable for the amounts of construction waste sent to landfill, including any waste from clearing the site. Government policy that does not address the greatest source of waste from development is only tinkering around the edges.
5. DADA has argued in many submissions to council and state government that the best infill development is that which leaves the older original housing stock at the front of the sight and builds new dwelling to the rear. This reduces landfill, reuses the built fabric, preserves the streetscape, protects vegetation to mitigate heat island effects and provides much needed separate affordable family housing.
6. Older building stock can be retrofitted for improved energy efficiency under the guidelines suggested in the roadmap and should be included in the strategies for environmental sustainability.
7. DADA has also campaigned to protect against the loss of vegetation due to development in Darebin. Loss of vegetation and the heat island effect caused by development is missing from the state government road map and from the council response.
8. While the council tree protection policy goes some way to mitigate the loss of significant trees in Darebin it does not go far enough in protection of vegetation or development mitigation. The value of a 70 year old tree cannot be replaced by tube stock on a new development.
9. The protection of vegetation, not just significant vegetation, needs to be included in environmentally sustainable planning policy.
10. DADA would support Option 2, page 408 if council consider and include changes around the key issues outlined above. We see it as an opportunity to try and convince the state government that better environmentally sustainable development outcomes can be achieved in the roadmap.

Submitted by Maria Poletti, on behalf of Darebin Appropriate Development Association, 22/02/2021