

Jersey Citizen's Assembly on Climate Change

Submission subject areas: Green Construction, Climate Change, Life Cycle, Energy Market

Introduction

HLG Associates (**HLG**) is appreciative of the opportunity to the members of the Citizens' Assembly to present our thoughts on addressing Climate Change and the areas which we feel additional policy or Government direction would benefit the long-term challenges the Island faces.

Sustainable Construction

Sustainable Construction, often referred to as Green Construction, is achieved by assessing and balancing the social, environmental and economic impacts of a project. Areas considered during the design, construction and operational phases of a building's lifetime will vary, however several common elements are:

- Energy/water efficiency,
- Waste reduction,
- Environmental impact and
- Life-cycle assessment.

The UK Green Building Council (UKGBC) has released a framework for the construction and property industry to transition new and existing buildings to become net zero carbon. This framework sits alongside other UK strategies and policies such as the Construction Industry Strategy 2025 to provide a means of meeting the targets contained therein.

Jersey's fight against climate change would certainly benefit from clear policies on Sustainable Construction that reflect similar efforts that are being made in the UK and elsewhere. Such policies would provide targets the islands industry should strive to achieve and set a benchmark for progress to be assessed against.

Life Cycle Analysis

One particular area of Sustainable Construction that currently lacks clarity is Life Cycle Assessment (LCA) or 'cradle to grave' analysis. Incorrect or misleading statements made by suppliers or manufacturers regarding the perceived reduction in the environmental impact of a service or product are commonplace. One causal factor is that available evidence of the environmental attributes of any given service or product are often not referenced. In not providing sufficient evidence the opportunity is lost to create a full picture that allows complete examination, in context, of the claims that are to be made. Ultimately this prevents the end user from being able to fully understand how any such claims have been derived.

An opportunity therefore exists to provide a firm and clear position in future policy regarding the needs for LCA and the benefits it can provide within many sectors of the construction industry.

For an Island such as Jersey that has limited access resources, space and the facilities to recycle certain materials, the need to consider

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wider LCA obligations are required. A greater understanding of the complete picture of the potential impacts of using a product or service would lead to further opportunities to reduce the drivers of climate change. It will also provide the end user with sufficient knowledge to fully understand the impact of their choices.

Carbon Footprint

A carbon footprint is the total amount of Greenhouse Gases (GHGs) which include carbon dioxide and methane that are generated by our everyday actions. GHGs reside in the atmosphere and trap solar energy resulting in a rise in the average temperature of the earth. This rising temperature is causing climate change.

Reducing the drivers of climate change requires an understanding of an individual or businesses impacts and their impacts. There are a number of businesses in Jersey already calculate their own GHG's, but many don't.

The Eco-Active scheme is an excellent example of providing an incentive to do this, by awarding recognition. However, there is currently no requirement for GHG reporting in Jersey as there is in the United Kingdom.

Jersey would benefit in its fight to address climate change by giving businesses the tools to understand the impact their operations have on the environment, noting that any requirement for GHG reporting would need to be proportionate to the size of the business. One of the long-term benefits of GHG reporting is the application of effort by the business to address their emissions in a correct and effective manner, rather than where they perceive action should be taken.

Energy Market & Renewables

An open and transparent energy market is key to reducing the impacts of climate change and to promote the use of local renewables. There has been significant effort expended in analysing the feasibility of larger scale projects such as off-shore wind farms; however, the uptake of smaller commercial and domestic projects has been slow.

One obvious solution to improving the uptake of local renewables on what is recognised as one of the sunniest regions of the British Isles is to promote the wider use Solar PV on both domestic and commercial properties and to provide owners the opportunity to offset grid energy usage. Whilst the energy market at present allows for this, there are justifiable 'stand by' charges involved for smaller commercial projects. However, there is a lack transparency of these 'stand by' charges for larger projects which appears to be disincentivising investment.

The long-term penetration of local renewables into the Jersey energy market relies on transparency and an open energy market that is adaptive to the needs of modern society.

Ambition & Opportunity

Finally, there are many opportunities for cross sector partnerships (CSPs) which will result in better collaboration between industry, business and Government in the fight against climate change. Examples of these CSPs may include one organisation simply providing their waste as the starting material for another's, or complex arrangements where two organizations invest in infrastructure and share the benefits preventing duplication of effort and environmental impact. The challenge is discovering these opportunities, leveraging them effectively and ensuring the engagement with stakeholders from all aspects of Island life. Any policy or strategy must be inclusive, and its aims and objectives built around this central value, amongst others.

Ambitious targets are required for Jersey to meet its obligation in tackling climate change. If targets are ambiguous, unenforceable or are not achieved through rigorous analysis of a business or sectors operation, it is likely a 'business as usual' mentality will prevail. This will inevitably result in significantly longer timescales to meet the islands climate change requirements.

Real world change requires real world solutions.

Submission on behalf of HLG Associates Ltd

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