

Andrew Longmire - Rucker

1. How serious a threat are global warming and climate disruption?

Warming due to human activities is a probable cause of changes already evident in the climate, including increasingly intense storms, heavy rainfall events, heatwaves, droughts and other extremes. These changes disrupt both human and natural systems, and have massive environmental, social and financial costs.

Changes to rainfall patterns, desertification and seawater incursion in croplands linked to climate change have the potential to seriously disrupt agricultural systems. This would cause hardship and dislocation on scales not before considered.

This is a climate emergency. We must act now, reducing our emissions to zero and beyond in the current decade to prevent catastrophe.

2. Do you support the following Darebin Council initiatives? Please comment briefly on each.

I strongly support the climate action plan 2007-2009 but feel the plan should be updated to reflect the rapid development of energy efficiency technologies. Reliance on gas to fire cogeneration in Darebin's recreation facilities is an improvement on the status quo, but is not as positive a move as it could be because it relies on fossil fuel – alternatives should be sought. Greater emphasis on local energy generation would also improve the plan.

a. *Darebin Community Climate Action Change Plan 2009-2015* including the aim of carbon neutrality for Darebin municipality by 2020?

Carbon neutrality is an excellent objective that can be supported by local government, and the 2020 timeframe is appropriate to the urgency for action on climate. There are some excellent initiatives in the plan, such as serious, well-planned efficiency measures, but faster implementation would better prepare council, businesses and citizens to make the necessary emissions cuts. Community initiatives that support carbon neutrality in Darebin, such as medium-scale solar, should also be actively supported. Carbon neutrality must include reliable auditing of the carbon sinks used to 'offset' residual emissions.

b. *Darebin Climate Change and Peak Oil Adaptation Plan 2009?*

According to the International Energy Agency, peak oil production probably happened in 2006. Strong fluctuations and continually rising liquid fuel costs will be a problem for council to manage. The recommendations of the Climate Change and Peak Oil Adaptation Plan deserve full implementation; indeed, in some places these could be strengthened – for example, annual targets for decreasing fuel consumption could be lifted. Our community deserves to be insulated from fuel costs as far as possible, and this can be done by improving 'walkability', cycling infrastructure, influencing public transport improvement and by steering clear of new road construction.

c. Membership of the *Northern Alliance for Greenhouse Action?*

<http://www.naga.org.au/>

Darebin's absence from NAGA is shameful and stains the willing coalition of northern local government areas to take action and advocate on climate. By excluding ourselves from NAGA, Darebin foregoes the opportunity to move forward and collaborate with other councils and to lead state and federal governments by example. Citizens and council should have access to NAGA to amplify their ideas and energy beyond the local area. NAGA is also a key asset to the implementation of the Darebin Community Climate Change Plan 2009-2015.

3. What action have you taken to influence climate change and/or sustainability policies at the local, state or federal level?

I volunteered for Beyond Zero Emissions for two years before commencing work for them. I participate in community actions with Quit Coal. I regularly present myself in person or otherwise to Martin Ferguson or his staff, to advocate for his acceptance of large-scale zero-emissions energy sources, or to make direct complaints about his allegiance to fossil fuels. I look forward to Mr. Ferguson's departure from politics, and have let him know I will work toward this. I also communicate with state politicians on climate. I am a founding member of Community Energy Darebin (CED).

4. What action would you take on climate change and/or sustainability policies if [re]elected to council?

- Resume Darebin's membership of NAGA
- Support CED's push for a financially self-sustaining solar array, sized around 100kW, to be established on a roof in Darebin and later replicated. This scheme would allow all community members, regardless of their income or home ownership, to invest in a scheme that will make a material difference to carbon emissions.
- Work toward climate-safe purchasing council-wide.
- Revise planning procedures to embed favourable treatment of very high standards of energy efficiency and sustainable, climate-safe sourcing of building materials.
- Investigate municipal and other waste streams as energy sources and for nutrient recapture.

5. We are also interested in your community campaigning in areas other than climate change and sustainability. What other community groups or campaigns have you been active in and what was your role? [No need to repeat any already mentioned in question 3.]

My family and I take pride in the neighbourhood we live in and are keen contributors to the Merri Community Group. We also get our hands dirty planting trees with the Merri Stationeers. I actively campaign against the duplication of Merri Parade, as I have against the roads lobby generally. I made a comprehensive submission to the City of Melbourne's City of Melbourne Bicycle Plan 2012-16.