

Office of Hon James Shaw

Minister for Climate Change
Minister of Statistics

Associate Minister of Finance



18-M-00003

Christine McCarthy and Daryl Cockburn
Co-presidents
Architectural Centre
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Dear Ms McCarthy and Mr Cockburn

Thank you for your letter of 9 November 2017 on behalf of the Architectural Centre providing your views on addressing climate change through the building sector.

As Minister for Climate Change, I am dedicated to delivering on our commitments to be a world leader on climate change – setting New Zealand on a pathway to a low emission, climate resilient future. Climate change challenges us to make fundamental changes to our economy and we have a moral responsibility to do that in a way that brings people and communities along with us. Transitioning the economy will mean everyone doing their part, including in the building sector which as you point out, has an important role in achieving sustainable built and urban environments.

In December 2017, Cabinet agreed to a process to introduce a Zero Carbon Bill to Parliament in 2018. This Bill will put a 2050 climate target into law and establish an Independent Climate Commission. To ensure our decisions are informed by the views of New Zealanders, we will be carrying out an engagement process in May and June this year around the content of the Bill: a 2050 greenhouse gas emissions reduction target and options for the Climate Commission. Details of this policy development work are available on the Ministry for the Environment's website page <http://www.mfe.govt.nz/climate-change/what-government-doing/new-zealands-climate-change-programme>

As part of this work, we are assessing the economic impact of a new 2050 climate target. Together with the Productivity Commission's inquiry into transitioning to a low emission economy (final report due in June 2018), this work will provide an initial sense of where the best opportunities are to reduce emissions. Following this initial work, we will consider more detailed sector-specific options around what policies will support emissions reductions. This will include options for reducing emissions in the built environment as well as sectors heavily concentrated in the built environment like transport and energy.

Local authorities, iwi and other industry bodies are doing some great work to support a sustainable built environment such as the Green Building Council with their updated independent health, efficiency and sustainability rating tool, Homestar. But to transition to a net zero economy, we need to do more. Like your organisation, I also see a greater role for buildings, in their construction, use and maintenance to address climate change.

Officials will provide further advice on what Government can do to support action in the urban and built environment to reduce emissions and strengthen our resilience to climate change, including around building standards and urban planning and design. I have asked them to consider the points you raise in your letter including your views about how legislation could be strengthened to address climate change.

I agree that understanding the impact of decisions we are making now for our future should better consider the impact for climate change. That is why I am seeking to introduce a requirement for a climate impact assessment analysis to be required of Government in our decisions. I have asked officials to provide advice to me on how this is best achieved and I intend to report back to Cabinet later in 2018.

Thank you again for your letter. I appreciate hearing your views on where the building sector can better meet the needs of New Zealanders and address climate change. I look forward to further engagement and encourage you to participate in the upcoming consultation process.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'James Shaw', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Hon James Shaw
Minister for Climate Change