PUBLIC DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

MERRI-BEK CITY COUNCIL

ORGANISATION CERTIFICATION
FY2022–23

Australian Government

Climate Active
Public Disclosure Statement

An Australian Government Initiative

NAME OF CERTIFIED ENTITY	Merri-bek City Council
REPORTING PERIOD	Financial year 1 July 2022 – 30 June 2023 arrears report
DECLARATION	*To the best of my knowledge, the information provided in this public disclosure statement is true and correct and meets the requirements of the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard.*  Robyn Mitchell Unit Manager Sustainable Built Environment 10 February 2024

Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Version August 2023.

1.CERTIFICATION SUMMARY

TOTAL EMISSIONS OFFSET	7,388 tCO_2-e
OFFSETS USED	100% VERS
RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY	98.19%
CARBON ACCOUNT	Prepared by: Merri-bek City Council
TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT	30/1/2023 Pangolin Associates Next technical assessment due: FY 2024-2025

Contents

2. CARBON NEUTRAL INFORMATION

Description of certification

Merri-bek City Council (Council) changed its name from Moreland City Council in 2022. Council has been certified carbon neutral for its organisational corporate emissions since 2012, and works hard to continually reduce emissions. This ambition is demonstrated by Council's Zero Carbon Merri-bek – Climate Emergency 2040 Framework, adopted in 2018. The Framework combines three previous strategies, the Zero Carbon Evolution Strategy (2014) (ZCE), the ZCE – Refresh to 2020, and the Corporate Carbon Reduction Strategy.

Council is seeking carbon neutral certification for its operations for the financial year 2022/23, with the baseline year 2011/12. To be certified carbon neutral, Merri-bek City Council must measure and offset all remaining emissions.

Council's carbon neutral certification includes the following Council entities and activities:

- Administration buildings
- Community facilities
- Childcare centres
- Theatre and art galleries
- Kindergartens
- Libraries
- Parks
- Leisure/recreation centres
- Public (street) lighting
- Unmetered electricity supplies
- Vehicle fleet
- Contractor fleet, including waste collection

Organisation description

Merri-bek City Council covers the inner and mid-northern suburbs of Melbourne. It lies between 4 and 14km north of central Melbourne and covers a diverse range of communities. Council covers the suburbs of Brunswick, Brunswick East, Brunswick West, Pascoe Vale, Pascoe Vale South, Coburg, Coburg North, Hadfield, Fawkner, Glenroy, Oak Park and Gowanbrae, as well as small sections of Fitzroy North and Tullamarine.

Centrally located on the northern doorstep of Melbourne's CBD, Merri-bek is undergoing a sustained period of urban regeneration. Merri-bek has housing choices ranging from restored heritage cottages, modern family homes, stylish inner-urban apartments to recycled industrial buildings.

Merri-bek's current population of 181,223 (as of 2023) is forecast to grow to 235,200 by 2036.

Key features of Merri-bek's regional context:

- Proximity to Melbourne's Central Business District (CBD)
- Good transport links to the CBD, ports, airport and industrial areas

Merri-bek City Council (ABN 46 202 010 737) provides services to the community within its geographic area. Council provides these services through its buildings and facilities (which include six aquatic centres), vehicle fleet, provision of public lighting, as well as in-house and contracted waste collection services. These services are the primary business activities that result in carbon emissions.

Council currently has over 300 buildings within its portfolio, including civic centres, aquatic and sports leisure centres, community centres, pavilions, maternal/childcare centres, kindergartens, libraries and depots, as well as other facilities including public lighting and parks and reserves. The majority of these buildings/facilities are owned and operated by Council; however, some are leased by third parties. Council also leases some third-party buildings/facilities to provide various community services.

This inventory has been prepared based on the Climate Active Carbon Neutral Standard for Organisations. The standard is aligned with the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 (NGER Act), as well as the Greenhouse Gas Protocol's Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard.

This submission considers the following greenhouse gases:

- carbon dioxide
- methane
- nitrous dioxide
- synthetic gases (HCFC-22, HFC-32, HFC-410a, HFC-134a)

3.EMISSIONS BOUNDARY

Inside the emissions boundary

All emission sources listed in the emissions boundary are part of the carbon neutral claim.

Quantified emissions have been assessed as relevant and are quantified in the carbon inventory. This may include emissions that are not identified as arising due to the operations of the certified entity, however are **optionally included**.

Non-quantified emissions have been assessed as relevant and are captured within the emissions boundary, but are not measured (quantified) in the carbon inventory. All material emissions are accounted for through an uplift factor. Further detail is available at Appendix C.

Outside the emissions boundary

Excluded emissions are those that have been assessed as not relevant to an organisation's operations and are outside of its emissions boundary or are outside of the scope of the certification. These emissions are not part of the carbon neutral claim. Further detail is available at Appendix D.

Inside emissions boundary

Quantified

- Council fleet fuel (diesel, unleaded, LPG)
- Stationary energy (gas, oils, greases)
- Contractor fuels (diesel, unleaded, LPG)
- Water (both for irrigation and sent to wastewater treatment)
- Construction materials (asphalt)
- Refrigerants
- Electricity (facilities, street lighting and unmetered supplies)
- Waste (office)
- Accommodation and facilities (business travel)
- Business travel (air transport, taxis and hire cars)
- Office equipment & supplies (paper)
- ICT equipment and services
- Arborist services
- Cleaning equipment and services

Non-quantified

- Some outdoor events
- Leased sites where Council does not pay the energy bills

Excluded

- Community emissions and other emission sources outside of Council's operational control

4.EMISSIONS REDUCTIONS

Emissions reduction strategy

Merri-bek City Council has always been a leader in environmental initiatives, including action on climate change. Council's three previous strategies, the Climate Action Plan, Carbon Management Strategy and Corporate Carbon Reduction Strategy, were combined into the Zero Carbon Merri-bek – Climate Emergency 2040 Framework in 2018 (link).

The Merri-bek Zero Carbon – 2040 Framework provides a pathway for Council to maintain its commitment of corporate carbon neutrality and for Council to aim for a zero-carbon municipality by 2040. The Framework defines priorities for driving emissions reductions across three target areas: energy transition, sustainable transport and waste and consumption. The Framework informs 5-yearly action plans which set medium-term targets and map out priority projects and programs (including advocacy). The initial Zero Carbon Climate Emergency Action Plan (2020 – 2025) (link) has been adopted by Merri-bek City Council.

In 2021 Council increased the ambition of its community and corporate carbon targets. The updated target for the Merri-bek community is to achieve 75% emissions reduction by 2030 (against 2011/12 baseline), net zero by 2035 and drawdown ('negative emissions') by 2040. For Council (corporate/operational) emissions we have a highly ambitious target range of between 80% and 100% reduction by 2030 (precluding offsets, against 2011/12 baseline) (https://zerocarbonmerri-bek.org.au/about/). Council achieved a 70% reduction in carbon emissions by 2020/21, however achieving the remaining reductions will be very challenging.

To meet its corporate carbon target, Council plans a number of initiatives:

- **Electrification of small sites**: Following an audit of all gas-consuming equipment across Council buildings in 2022/23, Council has developed a multi-year plan to electrify its sites. Ideally works will be integrated into Council's Capital Works Plan or opportunities that arise (e.g., if a gas boiler fails and needs to be replaced). Even if such opportunities do not arise, however, Council will proactively replace gas equipment with electric. In the first instance the plan focusses on smaller sites which are more straightforward, however an electrification feasibility study has also been carried out on Brunswick Town Hall.

- **Electrification of aquatic centres**: Council is conscious that its four heated aquatic centres account for 80% of its gas consumption. One aquatic centre (Fawkner Leisure Centre) is currently undergoing electrification through refurbishment. Council plans to carry out a feasibility study and prepare a detail design for electrification of a second aquatic centre in 2024.

- **Electrification of fleet**: In accordance with Council's Light Vehicle Policy, Council will continue to prioritise the purchase of electric vehicles (EVs) where these meet operational requirements. Electric utes and sedan models with increased range will be added to the fleet where they meet functional requirements. Chargers have been installed at Council's depot to support the future purchase of electric tipper trucks. Council's open space maintenance team also plan to purchase an electric ride-on mower in 2023/24. Council currently manages a fleet of 30 electric vehicles.

- **Solar photovoltaic (PV)**: Council will continue to install solar PV systems on its buildings. A strategic review of Council-owned and operated buildings found that a further 1.3 MW solar could be installed. Alongside this, Council continues to operate its Solar on Leased program, whereby Council pays for the up-front cost of installing solar on leased buildings, with tenants repaying this cost from the savings made on electricity invoices.

Emissions reduction actions

Council implemented the following initiatives in 2022/23 to reduce its corporate carbon emissions:

- **Electrification of Fawkner Leisure Centre**: This aquatic centre is currently heated by gas but closed in April 2023 for refurbishment and redevelopment. As part of the works, gas boilers will be replaced by air-source electric heat pumps both for pool-heating and domestic hot water. This will be the first aquatic centre in Victoria to become all-electric through refurbishment. The site is due to reopen in summer 2024/25.

- **Gas audit**: A gas audit of all gas-consuming equipment across Council buildings was carried out in 2022/23. Following on from this audit, 6 Council sites will be moved off gas in 2023/24. These include a maternal and child health centre, several senior citizens centres, a neighbourhood houses and a community hall.

5.EMISSIONS SUMMARY

Emissions over time

The table below shows annual carbon emissions for all years from baseline (2011-12) to the present (2022-23).

Emissions since base year			
		Total tCO_2-e (without uplift)	Total tCO2-e (with uplift)
Base year:	2011–12	21,253	N/A
Year 1:	2012–13	19,481	N/A
Year 2:	2013–14	20,485	N/A
Year 3:	2014–15	19,770	N/A
Year 4:	2015–16	17,869	N/A
Year 5:	2016–17	15,503	N/A
Year 6:	2017–18	15,282	N/A
Year 7:	2018–19	16,327	N/A
Year 8:	2019–20	6,562	N/A
Year 9:	2020–21	6,302	N/A
Year 10:	2021–22	6,597	N/A
Year 11:	2022–23	7,388	N/A

Significant changes in emissions

Greenhouse gas emissions were 10% higher in 2022/23 compared to 2021/22. Key factors which influenced this change include:

- The published emission factor for diesel oil increased by 18%. Although total consumption of diesel (across contractor and Council fleet) dropped 2%, emissions from diesel increased by 16%. This resulted in a total increase of 610 tCO_2e.
- Climate Active reporting guidelines around electricity were changed, meaning that exports of solar electricity no longer offset emissions associated with electricity not backed by LGCs. This resulted in an increase of 156 tCO_2e.
- Natural gas consumption dropped by 6%, reducing emissions by 105 tCO_2e. This drop was in part due to the closure of Fawkner Leisure Centre for refurbishment.

Emission source name	Previous year activity (kL)	Current year activity (kL)	Previous year emissions (t CO_2-e)	Current year emissions (t CO_2-e)	Detailed reason for change
Contractor fuels (diesel oil)	600	580	1,710	1,965	18% increase in the published emission factor
Council fleet (diesel oil)	703	698	2,008	2,364	18% increase in the published emission factor

Use of Climate Active carbon neutral products, services, buildings or precincts

Certified brand name	Product/Service/Building/Precinct used
Winc®	Carbon neutral A4 copy paper

Emissions summary

The electricity summary is available in the Appendix B. Electricity emissions were calculated using a market-based approach.

Emission category	Sum of scope 1 (tCO_2-e)	Sum of scope 2 (tCO_2-e)	Sum of scope 3 (tCO_2-e)	Sum of total emissions (t CO_2-e)
Transport (Land and Sea)	1,996.35	0.00	499.98	2,496.34
Contractor fuels	1,611.09	0.00	396.66	2007.75
Stationary Energy (gaseous fuels)	1,651.85	0.00	128.22	1,780.08
Construction Materials and Services	0.00	0.00	448.65	448.65
Water	0.00	0.00	301.28	301.28
Electricity	0.00	131.13	25.17	156.30
Cleaning and Chemicals	0.00	0.00	69.56	69.56
Arborist services	0.00	0.00	42.97	42.97
Refrigerants	42.08	0.00	0.00	42.08
ICT services and equipment	0.00	0.00	22.43	22.43
Waste	0.00	0.00	11.05	11.05
Transport (Air)	0.00	0.00	2.59	2.59
Stationary Energy (liquid fuels)	1.05	0.00	1.46	2.51
Office equipment and supplies	0.00	0.00	2.44	2.44
Accommodation and facilities	0.00	0.00	1.50	1.50
Climate Active carbon neutral products and services	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total emissions	**5,302.43**	**131.13**	**1,953.96**	**7,387.51**

Uplift factors

An uplift factor is an upwards adjustment to the total carbon inventory to account for relevant emissions that cannot be reasonably quantified or estimated. This conservative accounting approach helps ensure the integrity of the carbon neutral claim.

Reason for uplift factor	tCO_2-e
N/A	
Total of all uplift factors	0
Total emissions footprint to offset *(total emissions from summary table + total of all uplift factors)*	**7,387.51**

6. CARBON OFFSETS

Offsets retirement approach

This certification has taken an in-arrears offsetting approach. The total emissions to offset is 7,388 t CO_2-e. The total number of eligible offsets used in this report is 7,388. Of the total eligible offsets used, 476 were previously banked and 6,912 were newly purchased and retired. 188 are remaining and have been banked for future use.

Co-benefits

Council has purchased some of its offsets from the Prony Wind Power project in New Caledonia. This project is expected to generate an average of 40GWh annually, providing an alternative to fossil fuels. In addition, the project provides 26 jobs to stabilise incomes and boost the local economy, as well as technological know-how for the wind energy sector in New Caledonia. The project will mitigate 36,000 tCO2e annually.

The bulk of the offsets retired for this report are from a 200 MW wind project in Tamil Nadu, India. This project produces over 635 GWh renewable energy each year. The project has provided permanent and temporary employment opportunities for an estimated 1,500 local people in both technical and non-technical areas during construction, commissioning and maintenance phases. The project proponent has provided health camps, distributed furniture and sports kits to the community. They have also improved toilet and drinking water facilities at local government schools.

Eligible offsets retirement summary

Offsets retired for Climate Active carbon neutral certification											
Project description	**Type of offset units**	**Registry**	**Date retired**	**Serial number (and hyperlink to registry transaction record)**	**Vintage**	**Stapled quantity**	**Eligible quantity retired (tCO_2-e)**	**Eligible quantity used for previous reporting periods**	**Eligible quantity banked for future reporting periods**	**Eligible quantity used for this reporting period**	**Percentage of total (%)**
Prony and Kafeate wind-farms, New Caledonia	VER	GSR	11 Oct 2022	GS1-1-NC-GS566-12-2019-22752-8068-9330	2019		1,263	787	0	476	6%
200 MW Wind Power Project in Tamil Nadu by Orange Sironj	VER	GSR	25 Feb 2024	GS1-1-IN-GS6290-12-2021-23974-400710-407809	2021		7,100	0	188	6,912	94%
									Total eligible offsets retired and used for this report	7,388	
									Total eligible offsets retired this report and banked for use in future reports	188	

Type of offset units	Eligible quantity (used for this reporting period)	Percentage of total
Verified Emissions Reductions (VERs)	7,388	100%

7. RENEWABLE ENERGY CERTIFICATE (REC) SUMMARY

Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) summary

The following RECs have been surrendered to reduce electricity emissions under the market-based reporting method.

1. Large-scale Generation certificates (LGCs)*	6,440

* LGCs in this table only include those surrendered voluntarily (including through PPA arrangements), and does not include those surrendered in relation to the LRET, GreenPower, and jurisdictional renewables.

Project supported by LGC purchase	Project location	Eligible unit type	Registry	Surrender date	Accreditation code	Certificate serial number	Generation year	Fuel source	Quantity (MWh)
Crowlands Windfarm	VIC, Australia	LGC	REC Registry	30 Mar 2023	WD00VC32	222861-224685	2021	Wind	1,825
Crowlands Windfarm	VIC, Australia	LGC	REC Registry	30 Mar 2023	WD00VC32	24767-26303	2022	Wind	1,537
Crowlands Windfarm	VIC, Australia	LGC	REC Registry	To be surrendered in 2024	WD00VC32	7382-8926	2023	Wind	1,545
Crowlands Windfarm	VIC, Australia	LGC	REC Registry	To be surrendered in 2024	WD00VC32	24153-25685	2023	Wind	1,533
Total LGCs surrendered this report and used in this report									**6,440**

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

N/A

APPENDIX B: ELECTRICITY SUMMARY

There are two international best-practice methods for calculating electricity emissions – the location-based method and the market-based method. Reporting electricity emissions under both methods is called dual reporting.

Dual reporting of electricity emissions is useful, as it provides different perspectives of the emissions associated with a business's electricity usage.

Location-based method:

The location-based method provides a picture of a business's electricity emissions in the context of its location, and the emissions intensity of the electricity grid it relies on. It reflects the average emissions intensity of the electricity grid in the location (State) in which energy consumption occurs. The location-based method does not allow for any claims of renewable electricity from grid-imported electricity usage.

Market-based method:

The market-based method provides a picture of a business's electricity emissions in the context of its renewable energy investments. It reflects the emissions intensity of different electricity products, markets and investments. It uses a residual mix factor (RMF) to allow for unique claims on the zero emissions attribute of renewables without double-counting.

For this certification, electricity emissions have been set by using the **market-based approach**.

Market Based Approach Summary

Market Based Approach	Activity Data (kWh)	Emissions (kg CO2-e)	Renewable Percentage of total
Behind the meter consumption of electricity generated	907,015	0	10%
Total non-grid electricity	**907,015**	**0**	**10%**
LGC Purchased and retired (kWh) (including PPAs)	6,440,000	0	71%
Large Scale Renewable Energy Target (applied to grid electricity only)	1,528,926	0	17%
Residual Electricity	163,660	156,296	0%
Total renewable electricity (grid + non grid)	**8,875,941**	**0**	**98%**
Total grid electricity	**8,132,587**	**156,296**	**88%**
Total electricity (grid + non grid)	**9,039,602**	**156,296**	**98%**
Percentage of residual electricity consumption under operational control	95%		
Residual electricity consumption under operational control	**155,477**	**148,481**	
Scope 2	137,305	131,126	
Scope 3 (includes T&D emissions from consumption under operational control)	18,173	17,355	
Residual electricity consumption not under operational control	**8,183**	**7,815**	
Scope 3	8,183	7,815	

Total renewables (grid and non-grid)	**98.19%**
Mandatory	**16.91%**
Voluntary	**71.24%**
Behind the meter	**10.03%**
Residual scope 2 emissions (t CO2-e)	**131.13**
Residual scope 3 emissions (t CO2-e)	**25.17**
Scope 2 emissions liability (adjusted for already offset carbon neutral electricity) (t CO2-e)	**131.13**
Scope 3 emissions liability (adjusted for already offset carbon neutral electricity) (t CO2-e)	**25.17**
Total emissions liability (t CO2-e)	**156.30**

Figures may not sum due to rounding. Renewable percentage can be above 100%

Location Based Approach Summary

Location Based Approach	Activity Data (kWh) total	Under operational control			Not under operational control	
Percentage of grid electricity consumption under operational control	**95%**	**(kWh)**	**Scope 2 Emissions (kg CO2-e)**	**Scope 3 Emissions (kg CO2-e)**	**(kWh)**	**Scope 3 Emissions (kg CO2-e)**
VIC	8,132,587	7,725,957	6,567,064	540,817	406,629	374,099
Grid electricity (scope 2 and 3)	**8,132,587**	**7,725,957**	**6,567,064**	**540,817**	**406,629**	**374,099**
VIC	907,015	907,015	0	0		
Non-grid electricity (behind the meter)	**907,015**	**907,015**	**0**	**0**		
Total electricity (grid + non grid)	**9,039,602**					

Residual scope 2 emissions (t CO2-e)	**6,567.06**
Residual scope 3 emissions (t CO2-e)	**914.92**
Scope 2 emissions liability (adjusted for already offset carbon neutral electricity) (t CO2-e)	**6,567.06**
Scope 3 emissions liability (adjusted for already offset carbon neutral electricity) (t CO2-e)	**914.92**
Total emissions liability (t CO2-e)	**7,481.98**

APPENDIX C: INSIDE EMISSIONS BOUNDARY

Non-quantified emission sources

The following emissions sources have been assessed as relevant, are captured within the emissions boundary, but are not measured (quantified) in the carbon inventory. They have been non-quantified due to one of the following reasons:

1. **Immaterial** <1% for individual items and no more than 5% collectively
2. **Cost effective** Quantification is not cost effective relative to the size of the emission but uplift applied.
3. **Data unavailable** Data is unavailable but uplift applied. A data management plan must be put in place to provide data within 5 years.
4. **Maintenance** Initial emissions non-quantified but repairs and replacements quantified.

Relevant non-quantified emission sources	Justification reason
Some outdoor events	Immaterial
Leased sites where Council does not pay the energy bills	Immaterial

Data management plan for non-quantified sources

There are no non-quantified sources in the emission boundary that require a data management plan.

APPENDIX D: OUTSIDE EMISSIONS BOUNDARY

Excluded emission sources

The below emission sources have been assessed as not relevant to this organisation's operations and are outside of its emissions boundary. These emissions are not part of the carbon neutral claim. Emission sources considered for relevance must be included within the certification boundary if they meet two of the five relevance criteria. Those which only meet one condition of the relevance test can be excluded from the certification boundary.

Emissions tested for relevance are detailed below against each of the following criteria:

1. **Size** The emissions from a particular source are likely to be large relative to the organisation's electricity, stationary energy and fuel emissions.

2. **Influence** The responsible entity has the potential to influence the reduction of emissions from a particular source.

3. **Risk** The emissions from a particular source contribute to the organisation's greenhouse gas risk exposure.

4. **Stakeholders** Key stakeholders deem the emissions from a particular source are relevant.

5. **Outsourcing** The emissions are from outsourced activities previously undertaken within the organisation's boundary, or from outsourced activities typically undertaken within the boundary for comparable organisations.

Excluded emissions sources summary

Emission sources tested for relevance	Size	Influence	Risk	Stakeholders	Outsourcing	Justification
Community waste	Y	N	N	N	N	**Influence:** Council does not manage waste disposal sites and does not exert significant control over the generation of community waste. **Risk:** There are no relevant laws or regulations that apply to limit emissions specifically from this source. **Stakeholders:** Key stakeholders are unlikely to consider this a source of emissions Council can control. **Outsourcing:** We have not previously included this source within our emissions boundary and comparable organisations do not typically include this source within their boundary.
Community energy	Y	N	N	N	N	**Influence:** Council does not exert significant control over the consumption of energy by the community. **Risk:** There are no relevant laws or regulations that apply to limit emissions specifically from this source. **Stakeholders:** Key stakeholders are unlikely to consider this a source of emissions our business can control. **Outsourcing:** We have not previously included this source within our emissions boundary and comparable organisations do not typically include this source within their boundary.

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