

Architects Declare progress statement

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Aew are aiming to reduce our carbon emissions by 50% by 2030 and be a net zero carbon business by 2040, and since setting this goal have begun to publish an annual carbon report to be transparent about our carbon emissions and our progress along the journey to net zero.

We also want to be transparent about what we are doing to reduce our wider downstream impacts on the projects we work on. When we signed up to UK Architects Declare in September 2020, we made a specific commitment. In this statement we document our progress to date to show how we are evolving as a practice to respond to the climate and biodiversity emergencies.

The progress statement shall be reviewed annually to record our continuous improvement.

We are conscious that our projects are contributing to the climate and biodiversity emergencies, and that it shall be a difficult journey to fully embrace regenerative architecture and have a positive impact on mitigating climate breakdown, but we are fully committed to this challenge.



Signed: Andrew Rainford (Managing Director)

Date: January 2022



Raise awareness of climate and biodiversity emergencies and urgent need for action amongst Clients and supply chains

- + We schedule regular external communications to keep climate and biodiversity emergencies on client agendas, we aim to focus on communicating the benefits of fully engaging with Sustainable Outcomes, Net Zero and Environmental Assessments such as BREEAM.
- + Our internal CPD programme ensures that all staff understand the important climate and biodiversity issues and are confident to positively communicate more sustainable design outcomes with our clients on all of our projects.
- + We think it is key to raise the climate and biodiversity impacts of a proposed development at the very earliest opportunity to give clients the opportunity for including measurable sustainable outcomes within project briefs and provide the most cost effective solutions for reducing impacts. We have a team of sustainable influencers embedded across our project teams to help to lead these conversations.
- + We are beginning to introduce life cycle assessment into our interior design work and will be lobbying key suppliers to provide Environmental Product Declarations to ensure that our internal design material selections consider product specific life cycle environmental impacts.

Advocate for faster change in our industry towards regenerative design practices and a higher Governmental funding priority to support this

We aim to be an active voice, and over the past year we have:

- + lobbied our MP over the RetroFirst campaign
- + lobbied our MP over ACAN campaigns for regulating embodied carbon
- + added a public statement in support of Part Z: Embodied Carbon Emissions
- + and encouraged our staff to sign up to the Households Declare campaign.

Establish climate and biodiversity mitigation principles as the key measure of our industry's success: demonstrated through awards, prizes and listings

- + We were instrumental in introducing the 'Social Impact' award to the Insider North West Residential Property Awards in 2020.
- + Following covid related delays, we plan to take any opportunities we can going forwards to promote specific awards to celebrate success in climate and biodiversity mitigation within the industry.

Share knowledge and research to that end on an open source basis

- + We hope that by being transparent throughout our journey towards design to net zero, and fully embracing our commitments to Architects Declare, that we may help share success and failure to assist other practices with their own journeys.
- + As part of our commitment to social value and sustainability we are currently working with Class of Your Own to develop training content to help educate teenagers with an interest in a future career in construction about the principles and importance of a future of regenerative architecture.
- + We are currently working hard to make sure we have all the tools and systems in place for scalable net zero design going forwards. We are beginning to talk to our clients with the aim of launching a LETI Pioneer Project in the near future, which would enable us to share our knowledge and experience of net zero design within the LETI Pioneer community.

Evaluate all new projects against the aspiration to contribute positively to mitigating climate breakdown, and encourage our clients to adopt this approach

- + On all our new projects we aim to discuss the sustainable outcomes for the scheme with the client at the earliest opportunity, our approach to this conversation is based around positivity – ensuring we communicate the wider value benefits of more sustainable design and a narrative for the development where it could contribute positively to mitigating climate breakdown.

Upgrade existing buildings for extended use as a more carbon efficient alternative to demolition and new build whenever there is a viable choice

We have had some notable success this year with promoting refurbishment as a more carbon efficient alternative to demolition and new build, such as:

- + Atlantic Street, Altrincham – Network Spaces. 3 out of 8 proposed industrial units retained and refurbished rather than 100% new build.
- + Merseyway, Stockport – Stockport MBC. Repurposes former Next, M&S and BHS stores to regenerate town centre and provide a future-focused community and public facing services hub.
- + The Spindles, Oldham – Oldham Council. Repurposing 450,000sqft shopping centre to provide a new market, flexible offices, events space and heritage archive.

Going forwards we are introducing a range of support tools for our architects to help formalise the process of promoting more carbon efficient alternatives aligned with the LETI embodied carbon hierarchy.

Include life cycle costing, whole life carbon modelling and post occupancy evaluation as part of our basic scope of work, to reduce both embodied and operational resource use

- + We have adopted OneClickLCA software within the practice to allow us to deliver Life Cycle Assessment in house, this is supported through our appointment of a sustainability manager to lead our delivery.
- + We have so far used the LCA tool on a small number of projects and are currently working on phasing in the software to be fully integrated into our BIM systems and applying this analysis to a wider array of projects as we work towards whole life carbon and life cycle cost being part of our basic scope of work.
- + We are also in the initial phase of adopting early stage operational energy analysis software to assist with passive design and facilitating operational energy data to feedback into an iterative design process from the very earliest project stages.
- + An operational energy tool will complement OneClickLCA to show us the whole life cycle carbon impact of our projects from feasibility stage and will enable us as a practice to fully commit to the RIBA 2030 challenge.
- + Our aim is for environmental performance KPI's to inform our design process from the earliest stage and facilitate a process of continuous improvement across all our projects. Post occupancy evaluation will therefore be essential for us to use real-life data to feedback into our design performance and learn lessons for future projects. This will be something we will need to focus strongly on enabling over the coming year.

Adopt more regenerative design principles in our studios, with the aim of designing architecture and urbanism that goes beyond the standard of net zero carbon in use

- + We are looking at more sustainable design from a holistic perspective rather than focusing on net zero carbon in-use alone. We are embracing whole life cycle assessment and embodied carbon analysis. and also introducing health and wellbeing and biodiversity metrics to drive positive change and continuous improvement.
- + Our internal sustainability CPD programme, led by our sustainable influencer team and covering all RIBA sustainable outcome themes, explores how we can push the boundaries and go from mitigating negative impacts to having a regenerative, positive impact.

Collaborate with engineers, contractors and clients to further reduce construction waste

- + We already work hard to help our projects to use materials efficiently and reduce construction waste, but we are looking at our procedures to help to standardize this process to ensure consistency across all our projects as part of our works to apply the hierarchy of reducing embodied carbon.

Accelerate the shift to low embodied carbon materials in all our work

- + Our sustainability influencer team works on research and development to develop and share detailed knowledge on more low carbon materials available to help drive down the embodied carbon in our projects.
- + The OneClickLCA database of Environmental Product Declarations (EPDs) helps us to quickly compare the embodied carbon impact of alternative products and materials specified in our projects.

Minimise wasteful use of resources in architecture and urban planning, both in quantum and in detail

- + Our drive to promote reuse and refurbishment of existing buildings helps to minimise wasteful use of resources.
- + We can utilise our LCA software at a very early stage to get high-level input on building form and construction type to inform our masterplan and feasibility work.
- + All of our work to update our procedures and formalise key steps of the embodied carbon hierarchy into our workflows shall ensure that our designers are asking the relevant questions of themselves and the rest of the design teams throughout all stages of design and construction to propose efficient use of resources both in quantum and in detail.



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