

ORA Office of Regional Architecture

Sustainability Action Plan

Version 2.0 | October 2026

We at ORA acknowledge the Nyoongar people as the Traditional Custodians of the Boodja on which we work, and celebrate their continuing connection to the land, waters, and communities of this Country. We honour their rich culture and pay respect to Elders past, present, and emerging.

regionalarchitect.com.au

1. Introduction

At ORA we recognise the importance and urgency of addressing the global ecological crisis, especially by working to reduce the threat of climate change and biodiversity loss. This crisis is felt locally in the Wheatbelt, Great Southern and South West regions of Western Australia, and will continue to affect future generations.

The buildings and construction sector is one of the most significant sectors of global resource consumption and pollution, and we, as architects, have a crucial role in bringing about change in the sector.

This plan sets out our commitment to sustainability as a practice: a guide and compass for our daily activities, and a call to our clients, collaborators and community to move towards a regenerative future. It covers how we run the practice and the projects we design.

2. Our commitment

Vision

A world where architectural design operates within planetary boundaries, creating spaces that are carbon neutral and environmentally responsible, and that inspire people to align their daily actions with the well-being of the planet.

Mission

To design and deliver buildings that work in harmony with their environment and stand the test of time, embodying carbon neutrality, health and sustainability through thoughtful material choices and enduring design, and to bring regeneration into every project.

Values

Fairness, honesty, accountability and integrity in every aspect of our business. We build trust with clients, builders, suppliers and consultants, and lead through advocacy, education and practice in support of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals.

37%

of global energy and process-related CO2 emissions come from the buildings and construction sector.

UNEP, Global Status Report for Buildings and Construction 2023

Where we are today

2024

ORA achieved carbon neutral practice operations, measured with Practice Capital.

7.61 tCO2e

Core-practice footprint for FY2025/26, our baseline (11.63 t in full, with project consultants).

14 tCO2e

offset for FY2024/25 and FY2025/26 core-practice emissions (Carbon Neutral Pty Ltd).

100%

renewable electricity at our Joondanna office: rooftop solar and accredited GreenPower, no gas.

Since the Brookton office closed on 30 June 2026, ORA has worked from home offices in Joondanna and Brookton. From FY2025/26 Practice Capital uses a more detailed Australian method, so earlier results (6.17 t in FY2024/25) are not directly comparable. Business services, software and regional travel are now our main controllable sources. The offset certificate was issued on 16 October 2026; the 4.03 t from project consultants is reported in full but not offset.



What Net Positive means for ORA

Our long-term aspiration is a regenerative, Net Positive outcome: leaving people, places and the environment better off than before. This is ambitious and not always achievable today, so we treat it as a direction we report against each year, not a claim. For ORA, Net Positive is evidenced by three outcomes.

1

Practice operations

Our operational emissions are measured, reduced year on year, and any residual is offset through certified schemes, so the practice is carbon neutral every year.

2

Projects

Each project improves on the site it started with: retaining existing buildings, trees and natural features, increasing endemic planting, and outperforming our operational and embodied carbon baselines.

3

People and community

We share what we learn, support local trades and regional communities, and build the sustainability capability of our team and our clients.

3. Our goals

Each goal has a metric, a baseline and dated targets, so progress can be measured and reported every year in our Annual Sustainability Report.

GOAL	METRIC	BASELINE	2030 TARGET	LONGER TERM
G1 **Carbon neutral practice operations**	tCO2e/yr, core practice (excl. project consultants engaged through ORA) and full footprint; per $1m fee revenue; per FTE	FY2025/26: core practice 7.61 tCO2e; full footprint 11.63 tCO2e. Earlier years used a different method and are not comparable.	**Core-practice emissions offset every year. Vehicle travel emissions 50% below FY2025/26 (2.27 t).**	Core-practice emissions falling in total and per $ revenue; home offices counted from FY2026/27.
G2 **Project operational carbon**	EUI (kWh/m²/yr) and kgCO2e/m²/yr; NatHERS stars for residential	NCC 2022 minimum compliance: Section J deemed-to-satisfy reference building (commercial); 7-star NatHERS (housing). Method confirmed by March 2027 (action 6).	**All projects all-electric and net zero ready. Housing: on-site PV at least equal to modelled annual use. Commercial: energy use 40% below baseline.**	Net zero operational in use: housing by 2035; commercial and community by 2040, excluding process loads such as refrigeration, with clients encouraged to buy renewable electricity.
G3 **Project embodied carbon**	Upfront carbon A1–A5, kgCO2e/m² GFA	Narembeen Administration Office refurbishment: 209 kgCO2e/m² (A1–A5, design stage, ORA case study, revised 2026). Bruce Rock Supermarket (new build, completed 2023): 630 kgCO2e/m² (A1–A5 as built, NABERS method, ORA case study 2026).	**40% below baseline, in line with WorldGBC: about 380 kgCO2e/m² for a new non-residential building like Bruce Rock. Residential: under 400 kgCO2e/m².**	Net zero embodied carbon by 2050: reduce first, then certified offsets for the residual that today's cement, steel and aluminium cannot avoid.
G4 **Endemic landscapes**	Endemic planting as % of planted area (m²)	To be set from FY2026/27 projects	**50% of planted area in landscape projects.**	Landscapes reviewed at 1, 3 and 5 years after completion.
G5 **Sustainability in every project**	% of projects with a sustainability brief at Preliminaries	To be set FY2026/27	**100% of projects.**	Post-occupancy review offered on every completed project.



Bruce Rock Supermarket, an embodied carbon baseline for G3. Photo: Natalie Davy Photography

4. The ORA design philosophy

All ORA projects follow five design principles. The detailed practices behind them (Appendices B and C) form the ORA Sustainable Design Framework.

01
Retain and reuse

Work with existing buildings, trees and natural features rather than clearing them. It brings meaning to the project and lifts the quality of site and building.

02
Build small and efficient

Compact forms, efficient layouts and spaces that serve more than one use.

03
Passive first, all-electric

Orientation, envelope and natural ventilation before mechanical systems. No gas.

04
Local and low-carbon

Local materials and trades, timber and recycled materials, and design for disassembly.

05
Regenerative landscape

Endemic planting, stormwater management and biophilic design.



Passive first: high-level windows bring daylight deep into the Bruce Rock Supermarket trading floor. Photo: Natalie Davy Photography.

Sustainability at each project stage

1 · Preliminaries and brief	2 · Concept design	3 · Design development	4 · Contract documentation	5 · Construction	6 · Completion and use
Discuss sustainability with the client. Set project targets for G2–G4. Identify what to retain. Invite NABERS or Green Star certification for projects over $5m.	Passive design strategy. Compare options for embodied carbon on projects over $1m.	Energy assessment (NatHERS or Section J modelling) aiming above the NCC minimum. Materials from the Sustainable Materials Selections Schedule. Embodied carbon estimate.	NATSPEC sustainability clauses: low-carbon products, low-VOC finishes, waste management. Final embodied carbon calculation.	As contract administrator, check that substitutions do not increase carbon or reduce performance. Request contractor waste data.	Project sustainability evaluation. Invite the client to a 12-month post-occupancy energy review. Landscape reviews at 1, 3 and 5 years.
Record: sustainability section in the Constraints and Opportunities Report / Client Return Brief	**Record:** concept report with targets and retained elements	**Record:** NatHERS / J-report; embodied carbon estimate	**Record:** specification; result in the Project Sustainability Register	**Record:** substitution records; waste data	**Record:** project evaluation; POE results in the Register

ORA Sustainable Outcomes

Every project is assessed against eight outcomes, adapted from the RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide (2019) and tracked as items 7.1–7.8 in the ORA Sustainability Metrics Manager.

7.1 — SDG 7, 13
Net zero operational carbon

EUI (kWh/m²/yr), kgCO2e/m²/yr and NatHERS stars; % of projects all-electric with PV or PV-ready (G2).

7.2 — SDG 12, 13
Net zero embodied carbon

Upfront embodied carbon A1–A5 in kgCO2e/m² (G3).

7.3 — SDG 6
Sustainable water cycle

Rainwater harvesting capacity specified (litres/year); % of projects reusing rainwater.

7.4 — SDG 9, 11
Sustainable connectivity and transport

% of projects with end-of-trip facilities, bike storage or EV charging.

7.5 — SDG 15
Sustainable land use and ecology

Endemic planting (m² and % of planted area); trees and features retained (G4).

7.6 — SDG 3
Good health and well-being

% of projects with low-VOC finishes, natural ventilation and daylight to habitable rooms.

7.7 — SDG 11
Sustainable communities and social value

Number and % of community projects each year; % with community consultation.

7.8 — SDG 8, 12
Sustainable economy

% of contract value to local and regional trades and suppliers, where data is available.

Design commitments

- We discuss sustainability with every client at the start of, during and at the end of each project, in terms that matter to them: risk and resilience for local governments, running costs for homeowners, return on investment for commercial clients.
- We estimate operational energy against the NCC energy-efficiency requirements and aim to exceed them.
- We calculate embodied carbon for all projects over $1m and at least 50% of projects under $1m.
- We invite clients to take part in post-occupancy energy evaluation.
- We invite clients to pursue certification such as NABERS or Green Star for projects over $5m.
- We advocate restoration and regenerative approaches in every landscape project.
- We consider all 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals in project-based actions (Appendix A).



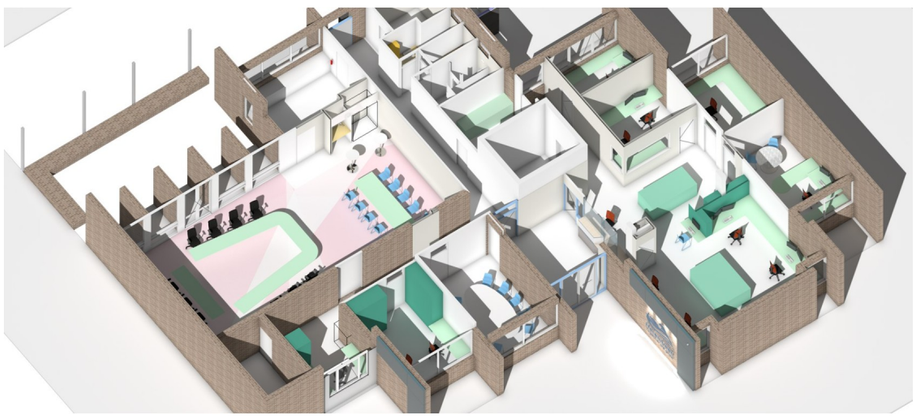
Kondinin Football Pavilion, Shire of Kondinin: a community building for the town and its clubs. Photo: Megan Rex, ORA

5. Incremental targets

Year-by-year milestones towards the 2030 goals. Practice emissions and travel are measured against FY2025/26; project goals against the baselines on page 4.

Goal	FY2026/27	FY2027/28	FY2028/29	FY2029/30
G1 Operations	Core practice offset; travel plan and trip log	Core practice offset; travel −20%	Core practice offset; travel −35%	**Core practice offset; travel −50%**
G2 Operational carbon	All new projects all-electric and net zero ready; baselines set	Housing: PV ≥ 50% of annual use. Commercial: −20% energy vs baseline	Housing: PV ≥ 75%. Commercial: −30%	**Housing: PV ≥ 100% (net zero by design). Commercial: −40%**
G3 Embodied carbon	Method and baseline set; calculated on all projects over $1m	−15% vs baseline	−25%	**−40%**
G4 Landscape	Baseline recorded	30% endemic	40% endemic	**50% endemic**
G5 Every project	100% of new projects with a sustainability brief	100%	100%	**100%**

Interim targets are reviewed each year at the annual review and updated as projects are measured.



Narembeen Administration Office refurbishment. The refurbishment keeps the existing brick walls. Upfront carbon 209 kgCO2e/m² (design stage), ORA's refurbishment reference for G3. Render: ORA.

Post-occupancy information we will collect

1. 12 months of electricity and water use, and PV generation where installed.
2. Occupant comfort and satisfaction, through a short client and user survey.
3. Landscape outcomes at 1, 3 and 5 years after Practical Completion: survival rate and endemic cover.
4. Lessons learned, recorded in the project evaluation and shared at a team meeting.

Our framework

This plan sits within the ORA Net Positive Program Sustainability Implementation Framework, developed with Practice Capital in 2024, which maps our policies to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the UN Global Compact's ten principles.

Its structure follows the AIA guide Creating a Sustainability Action Plan. Our project outcomes draw on the RIBA Sustainable Outcomes Guide (2019) and the Architects Declare Practice Guide (2021).

6. Governance and reporting

Roles

Director (Sustainability Leader)	Accountable for the SAP. Collates practice data for the annual assessment, maintains the Register, chairs the annual review and publishes the Annual Sustainability Report.
Project Architect	Sets and records project targets, completes the calculations at each stage and the project evaluation at completion.
Practice Advisor	Peer review of project targets and of the annual report.
All staff	Raise sustainability at weekly team meetings; record travel and CPD.
Practice Capital (external)	Independent annual carbon footprint assessment and advice on the framework.

The ORA Sustainability Register

Held on the ORA Operations SharePoint (Sustainable Practice folder), in two parts:

Practice KPIs

The Sustainability Metrics Manager: people, office, procurement, community and design, each item rated Conformant, Non-conformant, To be advised, Not applicable, Observation or Follow-up.

Project Sustainability Register

One row per project: stage, GFA, targets, NatHERS stars or EUI, embodied carbon, retained elements, endemic planting and post-occupancy status. Set up by March 2027.

Reporting cycle

Weekly
Sustainability item at the team meeting for current projects.

Each project stage
Targets and results updated in the Project Sustainability Register.

July
Practice data for the financial year just ended collated and sent to Practice Capital for the annual footprint assessment.

August to October
Director prepares the Annual Sustainability Report, with results against each goal, and publishes it on our website; residual core-practice emissions offset.

Annually
Director and Practice Advisor review data, goals and targets; minor updates to this plan.

Every three years
Full revision of this plan (next: 2029).



7. Training and education

- Each registered architect completes at least two sustainability-related CPD activities a year and applies the learning to project decisions.
- At least one internal sustainability training or CPD session a year.
- At least one sustainability CPD or round table a year for the wider peer group (can be combined with the internal session).
- Graduates receive sustainability mentoring on their registration pathway.
- All staff complete cultural competency training, in line with our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Every project ends with a sustainability evaluation shared with the team.

Sustainability skills by role

Director
Carbon accounting and reporting; embodied carbon (LCA) method; NCC Section J and NatHERS; client advocacy.

Registered Architect
Passive design; reading energy assessments; low-carbon material selection; NATSPEC sustainability clauses.

Graduate
Embodied carbon calculation; Register data entry; endemic planting research.

8. Outreach and advocacy

- Raise sustainability with every client at each stage, supported by updated ORA Client Guides.
- Publish our Annual Sustainability Report and this plan on our website, and be open about what we did and did not achieve.
- Publish research and case studies, such as our embodied carbon case studies, through the year.
- Engage Wheatbelt and Great Southern local governments on their sustainability goals and partner to meet them.
- Take part in round tables and sustainability organisations to share and learn.

9. Operations and outlook

- **Energy:** home offices on renewable electricity where possible; staff encouraged to choose GreenPower.
- **Travel:** combine site visits, use video meetings and remote inspection where suitable, and cycle short trips. We encourage low-emission and electric vehicles when staff replace their cars.
- **Remote work:** reduces commuting and enables regional employment.
- **Consumables:** an essentially digital office; sustainable procurement policy to be developed.
- **People:** interns and graduates paid under the Architects Award and Fair Work Act; flexible work for parents and carers.
- **Reconciliation:** implement our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

10. Action plan 2026–2029

Who does what, by when, and how we will know. Progress is reported in each Annual Sustainability Report.

#	Action	Owner	Due	Evidence / KPI
1	Adopt the FY2025/26 inventory (core practice 7.61 t, full 11.63 t) and publish Practice Capital's public disclosure; set the per-revenue and per-FTE indicators. 14 tCO2e core-practice offset surrendered 16 Oct 2026	Director	**Dec 2026**	Disclosure on website; offset certificate
2	Publish Case Study 2 (Bruce Rock) and adopt the ORA embodied carbon workbook as the standard method; NABERS calculator indicative rating	Director	**Dec 2026**	Case study published; baselines in the Register
3	Prepare and publish the Annual Sustainability Report after each financial year	Director	**Aug–Oct each year**	Report on website
4	Set up the Project Sustainability Register; update Metrics Manager statuses	Director	**Mar 2027**	Register in use
5	Preliminaries / Constraints and Opportunities template: sustainability section and right-sizing check (comparable buildings, catchment, Shire population trend)	Director	**Mar 2027**	G5 = 100%
6	Confirm G2 baselines and energy modelling method (Section J reference building; 7-star NatHERS)	Director	**Mar 2027**	Method note in the Register
7	Embodied carbon calculation for the Kondinin Football Pavilion	Director	**Mar 2027**	Result in the Register
8	Sustainable procurement policy and NATSPEC clauses: low-carbon concrete, weights and EPDs with shop drawings, natural refrigerants, minimal aluminium	Director	**Jun 2027**	Policy adopted; clauses in the master specification
9	Residential embodied carbon case study (Farr House or Bennett House) to set a residential G3 baseline	Director	**Jun 2027**	Residential baseline set
10	Travel reduction plan: site visit planning and remote inspection	Director	**Jun 2027**	Travel tCO2e trend
11	Update ORA Client Guides with sustainability information	Director / Practice Advisor	**Jun 2027**	Guides issued
12	Survey Wheatbelt and Great Southern local governments on their sustainability positions	Director	**Dec 2027**	Survey results
13	Internal sustainability CPD session	Director	**Annually**	CPD record
14	Finalise and implement the Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan	Director / Practice Advisor	**Per Reconciliation Australia timeline**	RAP endorsed
15	Full revision of this plan	Director	**2029**	SAP version 3.0

UN Sustainable Development Goals: our commitments

PB project-based (design) · **PO** practice operations · **CE** community engagement and education

1. No poverty

1.1 Engage in social projects, such as social housing and co-op projects, with empowering, low-running-cost designs. (PB) (CE)

1.2 Avoid projects that widen the poverty gap or dehumanise poorer populations. (CE)

1.3 Source materials responsibly to avoid exploiting local populations. (PB)

2. Zero hunger

2.1 Engage in urban farming, food and farming education and regenerative landscapes. (CE)

2.2 Engage in ecological projects that improve resilience and adaptation to climate change. (CE)

2.3 Source materials responsibly to avoid harming local food production. (PB)

3. Good health and well-being

3.1 Meet the NCC and pursue higher standards, such as biophilic design. (PB)

3.2 Healthy indoor environments: low-VOC, non-toxic materials and plenty of fresh air. (PB)

3.3 Beneficial contact with nature while reducing disease risk, such as mosquito-borne illness. (PB)

3.4 Design for active bodies and minds, and road safety. (PB)

3.5 Design for social interaction across generations. (PB)

4. Quality education

4.1 Engage in affordable, inclusive education projects, including rural ones. (PB)

4.2 Formal (CPD) and informal sustainability education for staff, stakeholders and the public. (CE)

4.3 Design education facilities that foster learning of mind and body. (PB)

5. Gender equality

5.1 Support all genders in professional development and parenting through flexible work. (PO)

5.2 Support under-represented genders in the profession. (PO)

5.3 Design spaces that serve people of all genders, including LGBTIQ+ users. (PB)

6. Clean water and sanitation

6.1 Avoid products that contaminate or overuse local water. (PB)

6.2 Low or zero water use in remote sanitary facilities. (PB) (CE)

6.3 Design for rainwater collection or groundwater recharge. (PB)

6.4 Consider freshwater contamination, including from on-site wastewater systems. (PB)

6.5 Avoid projects that harm freshwater resources. (PB) (CE)

7. Affordable and clean energy

7.1 Embrace decentralised generation and storage. (PB)

7.2 Reduce and eliminate carbon-based energy where possible. (PB) (PO)

7.3 Support renewables through investment or GreenPower. (PO)

7.4 Reduce carbon emissions from travel. (PO)

7.5 Reduce operational and embodied carbon (Appendices B and C). (PB)

8. Decent work and economic growth

8.1 Materials with reputable supply chains, free of exploitation and modern slavery. (PB)

8.2 Specify and procure to support local trades, apprentices and trainees, especially on remote projects. (PB)

8.3 Use remote working to enable employment at a distance. (PO)

8.4 Pay interns and graduates under the Architects Award and Fair Work Act. (PO)

9. Industry, innovation and infrastructure

9.1 Research ways of building with less waste and lower carbon. (CE)

9.2 Prioritise local trades and materials; choose available, recyclable materials. (PB)

9.3 Embrace timber, especially local and recycled. (PB) (CE)

10. Reduced inequalities

10.1 Design for inclusion across income, age, gender, disability, religion and ethnicity. (PB)

10.2 Engage in projects that address inequality. (CE)

11. Sustainable cities and communities

11.1 Design for people, walking, cycling and public transport rather than cars. (PB)

11.2 Inclusive, safe, mixed-use places rich in vegetation and biodiversity. (PB)

11.3 Design for local economic development. (PB)

11.4 Research co-op housing. (CE)

12. Responsible consumption and production

12.1 Reduce operational and embodied carbon (Appendices B and C). (PB)

12.2 Avoid extravagant projects that promote waste and inequality. (PB) (PO)

13. Climate action

13.1 Design for climate impacts such as extreme weather and biodiversity loss. (PB)

13.2 Measure, reduce and offset practice emissions (G1). (PO)

14. Life below water

14.1 Non-toxic materials that do not pollute waterways; fewer plastics and micro-plastics. (PB)

14.2 Raise awareness of waterway pollution; protect wetlands and ecosystems. (CE)

15. Life on land

15.1 Landscape in every project where possible, to enhance local ecosystems (G4). (PB)

15.2 Materials that do not degrade forests, grasslands or other ecosystems. (PB)

16. Peace, justice and strong institutions

16.1 Contribute to informed discussion of built environment policy. (CE)

16.2 Help communities express their values through buildings and public space. (PB)

16.3 Manage procurement and construction to discourage theft, corruption and bribery. (PB)

17. Partnerships for the goals

17.1 Partner with local governments to promote the SDGs on each project. (PB) (CE)

17.2 Attract clients who share our ethos. (CE)

B. Design practices to reduce operational carbon

1. Remove gas; use efficient electric appliances such as heat pumps, heat-pump or solar hot water and induction cooktops.
2. Efficient envelope: compact form, correct orientation, insulation, efficient glazing, cool materials, green roofs.
3. Efficient HVAC: energy recovery, efficient air conditioning, passive and displacement heating and cooling.
4. Efficient lighting, appliances and controls; energy monitoring, display and automation.
5. Renewable energy: on-site PV, battery storage and certified renewable power.
6. Energy-efficiency certification: NatHERS, NABERS, Green Star.
7. Transport: end-of-trip facilities, bike and e-bike storage, EV charging paired with on-site renewables, locations close to where people live.
8. Food and waste: kitchen and washing-up facilities, waste separation and composting integrated with the landscape.
9. Water: reduce scheme water use (high-carbon where desalinated); collect and use rainwater on site.
10. Educate building users on energy conservation.
11. Offset remaining emissions through recognised schemes.

C. Design practices to reduce embodied carbon

1. Prioritise retaining and reusing existing buildings, structure and fabric.
2. Build small and efficient: efficient layouts, multi-use spaces, efficient height, façade-to-floor ratio and structural grids.
3. Simple forms and standard material sizes to reduce waste and offcuts.
4. Omit unnecessary components, such as suspended ceilings below slabs or unneeded paving.
5. Low- or negative-carbon materials: timber, recycled and local materials from ethical, reputable sources.
6. Design for durability, low maintenance, future adaptation, disassembly and a circular economy.
7. Design buildings people will love, so they are kept and cared for.
8. Design for local trade capability; procure to cut transport, such as prefabrication for remote sites.
9. Use life cycle assessment and building certification.
10. Avoid materials from degraded landscapes or deforestation.
11. Protect heritage and existing buildings.
12. Integrate buildings with regenerative landscapes; avoid groundwater use that harms local ecosystems.
13. Offset remaining emissions through recognised schemes.



Farr House renovation: skylights and a garden window bring daylight deep inside. Photo: Natalie Davy Photography

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