MP LETTER - ACAN PART L RESPONSE - PLEASE SEND THIS VIA EMAIL
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EMAIL SUBJECT: URGENT – CONSULTATION DEADLINE 7TH FEBRUARY 2020

[YOUR ADDRESS IF WRITING TO YOUR MP]

RE: URGENT – CONSULTATION DEADLINE 7TH FEBRUARY 2020

Dear Sir or Madam, [insert name if known]

I [work with / support] Architects Climate Action Network (ACAN), a group of architects and associated professionals working to address the Climate Emergency.

I am writing to you for your assistance in pushing for stronger building regulations in order to address the current Climate and Ecological emergency.

The Government is currently consulting on Part L of the Building Regulations (closing 7th February 2020). The proposed regulations fail to address the Climate Emergency and represent a dangerous step backwards from the current, already inadequate, regulations.

The Issue

The Government has made legal commitments to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. However, the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has given a deadline of 2030 to halve global emissions at the very latest.

Buildings and construction account for nearly 40% of energy-related carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. Without changing the way we construct and renovate buildings we cannot meet these targets and we will fail to address the Climate Emergency.

We can do this by ensuring new buildings use less energy than those built today.

The Regulations

The Building Regulations set standards for how buildings are constructed in the UK. Part L relates to Conservation of Fuel and Power and determines how buildings use energy. This consultation is important because it affects how buildings will use energy in the coming years.

The energy we use to heat our homes and hot water and for electricity is known as 'In-use Energy'. Under the proposed Part L, in-use energy would be measured differently which would mean homes could be less well insulated than homes built now, and therefore less energy efficient. Better-insulated homes are also much cheaper to heat so help address fuel poverty.

Further, a huge amount of energy is used to build a building, known as 'Embodied Energy'. The embodied carbon of constructing an average UK house is equivalent to driving around the earth over 10 times. Every material from cement to timber must be quarried or felled, processed in a factory, transported to site and assembled. None of this energy is accounted for in the current or proposed regulations. The Climate Emergency is now so we must count the energy we use to make buildings today. The new Part L should therefore include Embodied Energy.

Local Authorities

65% of UK Councils have declared a Climate Emergency including [name of Council or MP you are writing to if they have declared. List of declared councils can be found at https://www.climateemergency.uk/blog/list-of-councils/] and some cities are targeting net zero by 2030, 20 years earlier than the government.

These Councils recognise that this is an emergency but the proposed Part L would limit the ability of Local Authorities to set higher targets than the government, meaning 2050 would be the target everywhere. As the UN IPCC states, 2050 is too late. Local Authorities must be given the autonomy to set earlier targets should they wish to.

Your Support

I hope you agree that the new Part L must be much stronger in building energy efficient new homes if we have any chance of targeting the Climate and Ecological Emergency. I would appreciate if you could help to challenge Part L in its current form.

Could you please write to the Secretary of State for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy requesting that they review the draft regulations so that the UK can meet their carbon emissions targets?

In addition, if you could please use your voice in parliament in debates and parliamentary questions to highlight this issue, it would be much appreciated.

In 2020, ACAN will continue to take action to address the twin crises of climate and ecological breakdown, please do not hesitate to contact ACAN if you wish to support this cause or have any questions.

You can find further information at the links below.

Thank you for your time and support.

Yours,
[YOUR NAME]
[Architect (if applicable)]
ACAN contact: mail@architectscan.org

Further Information

Architects Climate Action Network (ACAN) is a group of volunteer architects who understand buildings and are working to address the Climate Emergency. ACAN has prepared its own response to this consultation, which can be accessed at www.architectscan.org/part-L
You can contact ACAN for more information on mail@architectscan.org
Keep up to date with ACAN on twitter at @ArchitectsCAN

The London Energy Transformation Initiate (LETI) have prepared detailed information and guidance which can be accessed at: https://www.leti.london/part-l

Consultation on Part L and the Future Homes Standard can be found at:
https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/the-future-homes-standard-changes-to-part-l-and-part-f-of-the-building-regulations-for-new-dwellings