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## **SUSTAINABLY AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

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Most of our houses are neither 'sustainable' nor 'affordable' for large numbers of New Zealanders. One role of Homestar is to define environmental sustainability. But what does 'affordability' really mean and how can Homestar help measure it?

In the housing market, many builders compete for mainstream market share using the flawed metric of 'price per square metre'. Achieving the lowest build cost per square metre usually means optimising the building process in order to satisfy minimum code requirements, in the cheapest possible manner. This is often done to satisfy a demand for 'affordable' housing. In this context, affordability is restricted to initial purchase price of the house, but ignores the true total cost of home ownership.

True, sustainable affordability must consider not only the purchase price of a property, but also how much it will cost to own and operate and maintain, how costly it will be to commute to work and interact with the community, and how the house will impact the health of the occupants.

This presentation will look at tools available to measure the true cost and affordability of our homes, and if long term affordability has to necessarily come at a prohibitive initial cost.

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