

## Practice Guidance Note 8 Planning & Climate Change

*The POS Development Management Practice Project works with a group of local authorities to address issues in development management where there is a lack of published guidance. The group examines the range of approaches across the authorities to identify good practice, and this is drawn together as a practice guidance note.*

### Introduction

1. Many authorities have developed expertise and strategies for Climate Change. PPS1 Climate Change supplement and much other relevant guidance is available on the web. The purpose of this guidance note is not to duplicate that expertise and guidance. It is intended to assist those authorities not in the vanguard of climate change planning policies to develop their thinking and to act as a check list for them. Those embarking on such work will find the Woking Borough Council web site a useful starting point for best practice ideas.
2. The note first considers Renewable Energy and then Sustainable Building Design

### Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

3. National Energy policy drives the Renewable Energy (RE) & Low Carbon agenda. However the recognition that decentralised renewable and low carbon energy produces much greater potential efficiencies in energy production than traditional energy generation, has localised the issue and placed the planning system and local authorities at the heart of RE strategy. Combined Heat & Power schemes can be particularly efficient if designed in from the outset on major developments.
4. The DTI Energy Review in 2006 stated;  
*‘New renewable projects may not always appear to convey any particular local benefit, but they provide crucial national benefits. Individual renewable projects are part of a growing proportion of low carbon generation that provides benefits shared by all communities both through reduced emissions and more diverse supplies of energy, which helps the reliability of our supplies.’...‘This factor is a material consideration to which all participants in the planning system should give significant weight when considering renewable proposals . . .’*
4. Local RE targets for new developments are likely to reflect local circumstances and priorities. PPS 22 states that:
  - *RE development can be accommodated anywhere if viable and where the environmental, economic and social effects can be addressed satisfactorily*
  - *RSS and LDFs should ‘promote and encourage, rather than restrict renewables*

- *Criteria-based planning policies are needed that do not make assumptions about technical feasibility*
  - *A clear justification will be required for policies that rule out or constrain renewable energy development*
5. Local Development Frameworks can:
- *Ensure spatial planning provides takes the important opportunity to integrate renewable energy with the wider development framework*
  - *Develop policies which address both stand-alone RE schemes and the integration of RE in new development*
  - *Consider use of local targets for on-site RE (RSS tends to provide an overarching framework for this)*
  - *Supplementary planning documents can show how RE technologies and passive solar design can be incorporated at the local level*
6. Many authorities including Merton, Woking and the Greater London Authority require 10 or 20% of energy to be provided from renewable resources on site for developments over a defined threshold. On larger developments (>5000sq m in Woking) combined heat and power are required. Such percentages have to be justified according to PPS1 Climate Change Supplement.
7. Authorities with worked up renewable energy policies require an energy statement to be submitted with the application. This can be as part of the D & A or EIA statements. In Woking's case the energy statement requirement involves:
- A calculation of the baseline energy consumption based on building regulation minimum standards
  - Measures proposed to achieve "best practice" (minimum 25% above part L Building Regulations)
  - Actual predicted energy consumption
  - Amount of renewable energy to be generated above 10%
  - Measures to generate renewable energy including viability (solar hot water, solar electricity, biomass boilers, wind turbines, heat pumps)
  - Consideration of whether remaining energy demand can be met by Combined Heat and Power generation

### **Sustainable Buildings**

8. Buildings use half of all our energy consumption. From May 2008 all new homes must comply with the Code for Sustainable Homes requirement. By 2016 new homes will be required to be zero carbon at level 6 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Building regulation requirements will rise and the Government intends to introduce similar codes for new commercial buildings.

9. Is the planning system being used as an interim measure until mandatory codes or building regulations reach appropriate zero carbon levels? The majority of buildings in 2016 will not have been built to these standards. PPS1 does not address older buildings although the biggest energy savings are to be made on older buildings. By 2020 most commentators assume the lowest cost insulation measures will have been introduced for older buildings. However the Sustainable Development Commission has suggested that in growth areas carbon offsetting by reducing emissions from existing housing stock should be achieved by cross subsidy from new development. The concept of “Balanced trading” may be proposed. EAGA estimates that for each new home 3 existing homes could have grant aided code insulation. S106 or Community Infrastructure Levy energy efficiency measures may be also be suggested in future.

10. LDF housing and employment allocations can make a major contribution to energy efficiency and sustainable construction through such measures as –

- Early commitment to applying the Code for Sustainable Homes
- Use of micro-gas turbines
- Passive solar design
- Neighbourhood district heating / CHP

10. The influence of planning on passive solar design if built in from the earliest brief or pre application stages can have a major influence through siting, site layout, landscape and planting, and built form. Passive solar design benefits are summarised in the following chart

<b>Energy index (kWh/m2) (100-150 m2)</b>	<b>Detached house</b>	<b>CO2 (kg/sq m)</b>
<b>100-115</b>	<b>‘Normal’ case</b>	<b>30-35</b>
<b>85-100</b>	<b>Most windows to south</b>	<b>25-30</b>
<b>50-60</b>	<b>Low-emissivity doubled glazing with vents</b>	<b>15-18</b>
<b>35-40</b>	<b>Extra wall and floor insulation</b>	<b>11-12</b>
<b>&lt;30</b>	<b>Mechanical vents and heat recovery</b>	<b>&lt;9</b>

11. PPS1 Supplement states:

*In determining planning applications take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption inc cooling + solar gain, and be*

*planned so as to minimise CO2 emissions thro all aspects of development form, & together with density, and mix support decentralised RE or low carbon energy (42)*

12. The supplement also encourages:

- *Tackling climate change as a key priority for the planning system*
- *Supporting decentralised energy supply*
- *Not duplicating other controls*
- *Not challenging RE need or distribution or precluding it through local landscape policies*
- *Criteria + sites for RE should be set out in LDFs*

13. PPS1 supplement also encourages local planning authorities to:

- *Expect a proportion of energy supply for development from decentralised RE or low carbon sources in LDFs –but to justify the particular targets (26)*
- *Sets out criteria to take into account in selecting sites for development / criteria (24)*
- *Suggests sustainable local needs rural development can include sites only accessible by car (25)*
- *Consider levels of building sustainability which exceed national levels in DPDs (not SPD) (33)*

14. In determining planning applications local authorities are encouraged by PPS1 supplement (para 42) to:

- *Comply with DPD requirements for decentralised energy supply and sustainable buildings*
- *Take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing, and landscaping to minimise energy consumption and CO2 emissions*
- *Use D+A or EIA statements if possible to include energy statements for development*
- *Provide open space to give accessible shelter + shade (flood storage, biodiversity)*
- *Give priority to SUDS + sustainable waste management.*
- *Create/secure sustainable transport opportunities*
- *But conditions + obligations are expected to meet PPS objectives, not to overlap building regulations or code controls.*

15. Best practice suggests that staff need expert training to understand and interpret their role. At least one staff member being asked to develop expertise in this area, and to share their knowledge with others once planners have received appropriate training, also characterises those authorities making best progress on the climate change agenda. The Woking Borough Council web site is commended as a good starting point for those seeking further information and ideas on planning and climate change with links to further information.

### **The project**

*The Development Management Practice Project is sponsored by the Planning Officers Society, and is run on its behalf by POS Enterprises and Trevor Roberts Associates. The local authorities involved in the project as of July 2008 are Arun, Ashford, Barnsley, Bournemouth, Broadland, Caradon, Christchurch, Dacorum, Hampshire, Lichfield, Portsmouth, Redcar & Cleveland, Richmond, South Somerset, Suffolk, Swindon, and Wycombe. The project is running for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year, from May 2008 to April 2009. Finalised guidance is published on the POS web site and circulated direct to Society members.*