

## LOCAL PLAN SUB COMMITTEE - 8 AUGUST 2019

### PART I – NOT DELEGATED

#### 11. LOCAL PLAN: TOPIC PAPER: ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION (DCES)

##### 1 Summary

- 1.1 This topic paper sets out the issues which the new Local Plan will need to address in relation to adapting to climate change and sustainable construction and proposes policy wording to be contained within the new Local Plan.

##### 2 Details

- 2.1 Mitigating and adapting to climate change are key priorities of the Council and intrinsic to the whole of the Local Plan.
- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) emphasises that using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and mitigating and adapting to climate change are key elements to achieving sustainable development.
- 2.3 Managing the impacts of climate change has strong links to other Local Plan objectives including the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and biodiversity, promoting and enhancing Green Infrastructure and the management of flood risk and provision of sustainable drainage systems.<sup>1</sup>
- 2.4 In addition to requiring all new developments to produce 20% less carbon dioxide emissions than Building Regulations Part L requirements (2013)<sup>2</sup> it is also important to ensure that development is constructed in the most sustainable way to reduce impacts on the environment and considers the inclusion of measures to reduce energy and water consumption, to reduce waste and to use sustainable building materials.
- 2.5 With regard to the conservation of water the NPPF advises that local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards. Under the Building Regulations, all new homes are required to meet water efficiency standards of 125 litres/person/day. However, the national planning policy guidance highlights that where there is a clear local need, local planning authorities can specify requirements for new dwellings to meet the tighter Building Control Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day.
- 2.6 The Environment Agency has produced figures on water use per person across local authorities in Hertfordshire. In 2014/15 the household water use in Hertfordshire was approximately 148.28 l/h/d (litres per head per day or 'per capita consumption (PCC)'). For Three Rivers, this was estimated to be 159.37l/h/d which was one of the highest within the County compared to other Districts.

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<sup>1</sup> Policies for the natural environment and biodiversity, promoting and enhancing Green Infrastructure and the management of flood risk, and provision of sustainable drainage systems will be considered in future reports to the Local Plan Sub Committee.

<sup>2</sup> Carbon Dioxide Emissions and On-Site Renewable Energy Policy was considered by the Local Plan Sub Committee at its meeting on 4 July 2019.

- 2.7 The impact of the higher than average water consumption levels in the District is exacerbated by the fact that Three Rivers is located in the driest region in the country.
- 2.8 Taking account of the above, it is considered reasonable that the Local Plan contains a policy requiring new housing development to meet the optional requirement of 110 litres/person/per day.
- 2.9 With regards to reducing energy consumption the Local Plan should include policies to require development proposals to consider how measures have been taken to minimise overheating and to reduce energy consumption such as reducing the reliance on air conditioning.
- 2.10 The Building and Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) provides market recognition for low environmental impact non-residential buildings. It addresses a wide range of environmental issues and enables developers and designers to prove the environmental credentials of their buildings. Standards for buildings range from pass to excellent.
- 2.11 For major non-residential developments, it is recommended that proposals should aim to achieve BREEAM<sup>3</sup> 'Excellent' Standard unless this is demonstrated to be unviable.
- 2.12 The Draft Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Design and Construction Policy (Appendix 1) also includes a requirement for all new residential development to submit a Sustainability Statement demonstrating how sustainable design and construction methods have been used, and measures to enable the development to mitigate and adapt to climate change over its lifetime.

### **3 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications**

- 3.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

### **4 Financial, Legal, Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications**

- 4.1 None specific.

### **5 Recommendation**

- 5.1 That the Local Plan Sub Committee note the contents of this report and recommend to the Policy and Resources Committee the Draft Adapting to Climate Change And Sustainable Construction Policy as set out in Appendix 1.

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#### **Background Papers**

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

BREEAM

**APPENDIX - Draft Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Construction Policy**

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<sup>3</sup> BREEAM is the Building Research Establishment (BRE) Environmental Assessment Method which sets benchmarks for standard categories of development (such as offices, retail development, education buildings) and can be applied to new developments.

# APPENDIX 1

## DRAFT ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION POLICY

### Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Construction

In addition to reducing carbon emissions under Policy ENV1, sustainable construction requires the creation of adaptable buildings which are resilient to the effects of climate change and which also minimise the use of natural resources.

Climate change could have potentially major impacts on Three Rivers through a greater intensity and frequency of extreme weather events such as flooding, storms, drought, heat waves or extended cold periods.

It is therefore important that development incorporates measures to minimise and mitigate the effects of these consequences.

Ensuring that development is constructed in the most sustainable way to reduce impacts on the environment also requires consideration for the inclusion of measures to reduce energy and water consumption, to reduce waste and to use sustainable building materials.

<b>Policy xx Adapting to Climate Change and Sustainable Construction</b>	
(1)	All major developments are required to submit a Sustainability Statement demonstrating how sustainable design and construction methods have been used, and measures to enable the development to mitigate and adapt to climate change over its lifetime.
	<b>Adapting to Climate Change</b>
(2)	To help manage the impacts of climate change, new development should build in greater resilience to climate change and extreme weather events through the design of sites and buildings, including where appropriate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Managing flood risk and promoting sustainable drainage systems (Policy xx);</li><li>b) Promoting and enhancing the Green Infrastructure network across the District (Policy xx), and integrating this as part of the design process;</li><li>c) Protecting the natural environment, and conserving and enhancing biodiversity (Policy xx);</li><li>d) Considering the layout of new development, building orientation, shading, construction materials and ventilation systems to address sunlight and daylight, passive solar gain and reduce risks of overheating and reliance on air conditioning systems.</li></ul>
	<b>Sustainable Design and Construction</b>

- (3) New development should be designed and constructed to:
- a) Make efficient use of mineral resources and incorporate a proportion of recycled materials and/or secondary aggregates;
  - b) Minimise waste and reuse material resulting from excavation and demolition activity;
  - c) Conserve water in accordance with the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day or subsequent updated tighter standards, and reduce flood risk;
  - d) Be flexible and adaptable to the needs of future occupier;
  - e) Incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity value.
- (4) Major non-residential development should aim to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' Standard, unless this is demonstrated to be unviable.

### ***Reasoned Justification***

Mitigating and adapting to climate change are intrinsic to the whole of Local Plan and are key priorities for the Council.

The NPPF emphasises that using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and mitigating and adapting to climate change are key elements of achieving sustainable development. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.

To address this all development should take into account opportunities to mitigate and manage the effects of climate change and to use resources efficiently. While opportunities may be more limited for minor developments, improvements should still be sought in the design and construction of these schemes where possible.

For major developments where there is generally more scope to achieve significant improvements, a Sustainability Statement is required as part of an application to demonstrate how sustainable design and construction measures are included to mitigate and adapt to climate change and reduce the use of natural resources over the intended lifetime of a development.

### **Adapting to Climate Change**

Managing the impacts of climate change has strong links to other Local Plan policies and objectives including around the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment and biodiversity (Policy xx), promoting and enhancing Green Infrastructure (Policy xx) and the management of flood risk and provision of sustainable drainage systems (Policy xx).

In addition, projected increases in future temperatures must be taken into account to ensure that developments provide for a suitable standard of amenity and quality of life for future occupiers. As a consequence, development proposals need to consider how measures have been taken to minimise overheating and to reduce reliance on air conditioning and details should be included within submitted Sustainability Statements.

### Sustainable Design and Construction

Ensuring that development is constructed in the most sustainable way requires consideration to be given to reducing the use of natural resources including through minimising waste, using sustainable building materials and reducing water consumption; and making sure that development is flexible and adaptable to respond to future needs, manages flood risk and supports enhancements to biodiversity.

With regard to the conservation of water, the NPPF advises that local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards. Under the Building Regulations, all new homes are required to meet water efficiency standards of 125 litres/person/day. However the NPPG highlights that where there is a clear local need, Local Planning Authorities can specify requirements for new dwellings to meet the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres/person/day.

Three Rivers is within a 'water stressed' area. However, household water consumption in the District is significantly higher than in the rest of Hertfordshire or nationally. As a result, there is a need to make sure that development improves the way we use water with a water efficiency standard for new development above the basic national standard. However, achieving greater efficiency standards than this baseline requirement is highly encouraged. Non-residential development should also apply measures to reduce water consumption.

The Building and Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) provides market recognition for low environmental impact non-residential buildings. It addresses a wide range of environmental issues and enables developers and designers to prove the environmental credentials of their buildings. Standards for buildings range from pass to excellent.

For major non-residential developments, proposals should aim to achieve BREEAM 'Excellent' Standard unless this is demonstrated to be unviable. The Sustainability Statement should include a BREEAM pre-assessment or design stage assessment, and planning conditions will require submission of a post-construction certificate to demonstrate achievement.