

# Inspiring planning: planning for climate change - *Quickfile*

*'Climate change is the most severe problem we are facing today'.*  
Sir David King, Government's Chief Scientific Adviser 2004

*'Climate change represents a potentially catastrophic threat, but it is within our control to address it - and address it we must.'*

Securing the Future The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy HM Government 2005.

Foreword by the Prime Minister Rt. Hon. Tony Blair MP

Sensible planning and development can help reduce the impact of climate change in years to come. Town and country planning alone cannot solve the problem but it can make a difference. And no one sector can achieve the outcomes necessary:

- Central Government sets the national policy framework to guide development which reduces the need for travel and which takes climate change and contributory issues into account.
- Regional and local government has a duty to prepare spatial strategies and plans in the context of national policy, "with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development"  
*S39 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*
- Developers can design and build to minimise natural resource use and save energy.
- The voluntary sector can play a key role not only in holding other players to account but in influencing public opinion to a more environmentally sustainable lifestyle.

Only if all sectors work through each others' programmes will we be able to make the steps necessary to help meet this serious issue. One thing is certain is that the later we leave our response, the more difficult and expensive it will be for us all.

This Good Practice Note *Quickfile* collates a series of attributed references from government planning policies and other official sources. They should be read and used freely in policies and reports, and above all, acted upon. **Time is running out!**

## The Planning Response to Climate Change

"Here are five key points on how to effect the urgent action needed to address climate change.

- **Act now:** The impacts of climate change are not remote risks for sometime in the future, they are already with us and we need to respond now.
- **Make the links:** Many of the actions required in response to climate change can be justified for other reasons. For example conserving water resources is an immediate environmental and economic necessity. Consequently, on many issues planning policy-makers need not be constrained by the uncertainty associated with some future climate change impacts.
- **Spread the word:** Elected members, local authority officers, developers and the public need to be aware of the impacts of climate change and how to adapt to it and avert future climate change.
- **Make the best use of existing tools:** Environmental Appraisal (EA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) can be effective tools for ensuring climate change is addressed in planning policy.
- **Make effective use of existing instruments:** Planners have available instruments such as conditions, agreements, obligations and informatives, all of which can be used to respond to climate change."  
*The Planning Response to Climate Change Advice on Better Practice ODPM 2004 p9*

## Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

"In preparing development plans, planning authorities should seek to...address, on the basis of sound science, the causes and impacts of climate change."

*PPS 1 ODPM 2005 B27(x)*

"Regional planning bodies and local planning authorities should ensure that development plans contribute to global sustainability by addressing the causes and potential impacts of climate change - through policies which reduce energy use, reduce emissions (for example, by encouraging patterns of development which reduce the need to travel by private car, or reduce the impact of moving freight), promote the development of renewable energy resources, and take climate change impacts into account in the location and design of development."

*PPS 1 ODPM 2005 B13(ii) p6*

"Development plan policies should take account of environmental issues such as:

- mitigation of the effects of, and adaptation to, climate change through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the use of renewable energy;...
- the potential impact of the environment on proposed developments by avoiding new development in areas at risk of flooding and sea-level rise, and as far as possible, by accommodating natural hazards and the impacts of climate change..."

*PPS 1 ODPM 2005 B20 p8*



### Planning Policy Statement 3 (Draft) : Housing Provision

"The aim is that the planning system is used to its maximum effect to ensure the delivery of decent homes that are well-designed, make the best use of land, are energy efficient, make the most of new building technologies and help to deliver sustainable development."

*PPS 3 Consultation Paper ODPM July 2005 p6*

### Planning Policy Statement 6 : Planning for town centres

"The Government is seeking to reduce the need to travel, to encourage the use of public transport, walking and cycling and reduce reliance on the private car, to facilitate multi-purpose journeys... In selecting appropriate sites for allocation, local authorities should have regard to:

- i) whether the site is or will be accessible and well served by a choice of means of transport, especially public transport, walking and cycling, as well as by car; and
- ii) the impact on car use, traffic and congestion..."

*PPS 6 ODPM 2005 B2.49 p17*

### Planning Policy Statement 7 : Sustainable development in rural areas

When preparing policies for LDDs and determining planning applications for development in the countryside, local planning authorities should:...take account of the need to protect natural resources (and) provide for the sensitive exploitation of renewable energy sources..."

*PPS 7 ODPM 2004 B16 pp8-9*

### Planning Policy Statement 9 : Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

"Over time the distribution of habitats and species, and geomorphological processes and features, will be affected by climate change and such change will need to be taken into account. "

*PPS 9 ODPM 2005 Regional Spatial Strategies p4*

### Planning Policy Statement 10 : Planning for Sustainable Waste Management

"The overall objective of Government policy on waste...is to protect human health and the environment by producing less waste and by using it as a resource wherever possible."

*PPS 10 ODPM 2005 B1 p5*

### Planning Policy Statement 11 : Regional Spatial Strategies

"Other relevant (to the purpose and scope of RSS) strategies and programmes at national, regional or sub-regional level include...climate change,...energy..."

*PPS 11 ODPM 2004 B1.2 p1*

See also Annex A (PS29 & 37) of PPS11 for a topic-based list of EU, central government agency national policies, guidance, research and related material that should be taken into account when RPBs are preparing revisions to Regional Spatial Strategies.

## Planning Policy Statement 12 : Local Development Frameworks

“Climate change is a significant environmental threat, the effects of which will be increasingly felt in future years. The Government attaches great importance to acting on a precautionary basis to reduce the emissions that cause climate change and to prepare for its impacts.”

*PPS 12 ODPM 2004 Annex B BB19 p68*

“Development can impact on climate change (through emissions) and climate change could have significant consequences for: the use and design of buildings; infrastructure and urban areas; pressure on water resources and biodiversity; and the risk of inland and coastal flooding. In preparing local development documents, local planning authorities should seek first to avoid, or where this is not possible seek to reduce, the effects of development on climate change and vice versa. Local development documents should therefore include policy on:

- i. the need, where possible, to avoid major new development in areas that are likely to be at greater risk now, or over the lifetime of the development (for example, those in areas of significant erosion or flood risk, or where water resources are limited);
- ii. the physical and environmental constraints on development of land, including, for example, the level of contamination, stability/subsidence, erosion and flood risk, given that any such risks may increase with climate change;
- iii. the likely increase in pressure on resources with climate change;
- iv. the way that the distribution of nationally or regionally significant species and habitats may alter with climate change, and the effects of biodiversity and nationally or internationally designated areas;
- v. the need to consider possible adaptation options for vulnerable areas, while understanding the uncertainties inherent in projections of the impacts of climate change. In the longer term, these may include managed realignment of the coast in some locations in the face of forecast rises in sea-level; and
- vi. the need to revise strategies in the light of developing information on climate change, and its impact on flood risk in particular.”

*PPS 12 ODPM 2004 Annex B BB20 pp68-69*

## Planning Policy Guidance 13 : Transport

Development plans should aim to reduce the need for travel, especially by car, by:

- Influencing the location of different types of development relative to transport provision (and vice versa); and
- fostering forms of development which encourage walking, cycling and public transport use

*PPG 13 ODPM 1994 1.7*



## Planning Policy Guidance 20 : Coastal Planning

"Rising sea levels and recent cases of severe coastal flooding have focused attention on minimising both the risk to life and damage to property. This should be done by identifying areas likely to be at risk from flooding."

*PPG 20 ODPM 1992 B2.15*

## Planning Policy Statement 22 : Renewable Energy

"Increased development of renewable energy resources is vital to facilitating the delivery of the Government's commitments on both climate change and renewable energy."

*PPS 22 ODPM 2004 p6*

"Regional spatial strategies and local development documents should contain policies designed to promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the development of renewable energy resources."

*PPS 22 ODPM 2004 B1(ii) p7*

## Planning Policy Statement 23 : Planning and Pollution Control

"The planning system...plays an important role in determining the location of development which may give rise to pollution, either directly or from traffic generated..".

*PPS 23 ODPM 2004 B10 p4*

"The following matters...should be considered in the preparation of development plan documents and may also be material in the consideration of individual planning applications where pollution considerations arise:

...the need to limit and where possible reduce greenhouse gas emissions and take account of potential effects of climate change..".

*PPS 23 ODPM 2004 Appendix A pp11-12*

## Planning Policy Guidance 25 : Development and Flood Risk

"This guidance...sets out the importance the Government attaches to the management and reduction of flood risk in the land-use planning process, to acting on a precautionary basis and to taking account of climate change."

*PPG 25 ODPM 2001 Foreword*

"In addition, climate change is expected to increase the risk of both coastal and river flooding as a result of sea-level rise and more intense rainfall. On both a national and global scale, it is already the case that damage from flooding is greater than that from any other natural disaster. Local authorities should bear these considerations in mind in framing their planning policies and in determining applications for planning permission."

*PPG 25 ODPM 2001 B4*

"It should also be recognised that climate change is expected to increase flood risk and some existing development in more exposed locations may not be sustainable in the longer term and may need to be replaced in safer locations. Local planning authorities should consider ways in which the planning system might be used positively to help tackle the legacy of past development in unsustainable locations...".  
*PPG 25 ODPM 9*

"While there remain uncertainties, the importance of acting on a precautionary basis in relation to development and flood risk has increased in recent years by:

- The growth in knowledge of the likely impacts of climate change and their effect on flood risk over time...".

*PPG 25 ODPM 2001 B14*

"Local planning authorities should adopt a risk-based approach to proposals for development in or affecting flood risk areas. The assessment of risk should take account of...the effects of climate change...".

*PPG 25 ODPM 2001 B27*

"Flood defences for most new housing development should be designed and constructed ...taking into account the allowances for climate change contained in the Project Appraisal Guidance for flood and coastal defence cited in Appendix A.

*PPG25 ODPM 2001 B31*

## Strategic Environmental Appraisal & Climate Change

"Assessing climate change in SEA is different from assessing other effects. First, climate change is one of the most significant and complex cumulative effects: it is due to the accumulation of many actions, each of which has only a limited impact but all of which together cause serious effects. Second, in climate change there are two sets of impacts to contend with: 1. the impact/constraints set by climate change on the plan (normally part of the SEA context/baseline stage), and 2. the effect of the plan on future emissions of greenhouse gases (in the SEA prediction/assessment stage)."

*SEA and Climate Change: Guidance for Practitioners 2004 Environment Agency et al p3*

"SEA objectives and indicators should include those for climate change."

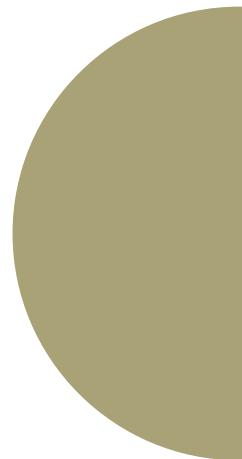
*SEA and Climate Change: Guidance for Practitioners 2004 Environment Agency et al p4*

## Other Government guidance

"The land use planning system provides the key framework for managing development and the use of land in ways which take into account the sustainable use of our natural resources; for example by promoting or encouraging the use of renewable energy in new developments and reducing the use of non-renewable resources (and emissions) by locating development where it can be accessed by means other than by private car."

*Securing the Future. The UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy*

*HM Government 2005 Chap 4 pp88-89*



“Land use planning will be vital in changing the way people travel, both now and in the future. In line with national guidance, locating development where it can be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport will allow people to make sustainable transport choices. It will also help to increase the effectiveness of other transport policies that are designed to reduce the amount of trips made by car.”

*Climate Change the UK Programme DETR 2000 B62*

“Some of the most immediate adaptation priorities fall to organizations responsible for planning and developing major infrastructure...Decisions taken over the next few years will determine how robust the UK's infrastructure is when faced with the expected changes to the climate, particularly extreme weather events.”

*Climate Change the UK Programme DETR 2000 B29 p136-137*

“ODPM, in partnership with other government departments, will be examining how to bring consideration of the use of renewables and energy efficiency in developments more within the scope of the planning system, in the context of the review of PPG22 and the Government's wider planning reforms, and in a way that does not impose undue burdens on developers.”

*'Our Energy Future - Creating a Low Carbon Economy DTI, DoT, DEFRA 2003 B4.31 p51*

### A checklist for local authorities:

- “Do your authority's development plans bring together policies that reduce the need to travel or identify sites for new renewable energy and good quality combined heat and power projects?”
- “When your authority makes planning and development decisions on infrastructure and buildings, do you consider how the climate is expected to change over its lifetime, within the context of the regional development agenda and sustainable development?”
- “Do you consider the location of the development, its resilience to more extreme weather and likely pressures on utilities such as water?”
- ‘Does your authority's development plan bring together a set of policies that locate development away from flood risk areas?’
- “Do your authority's development plans consider the need for open and green spaces to offset some of the increased warmth that can be expected with climate change?”

*Community Leadership and Climate Change: Guidance for local authorities I&DEA, LGA, SOLACE, DEFRA 2001 ps 6 & 8*

The National Planning Forum is the largest cross-sectoral forum in England focusing on town and country planning.

The NPF has a membership drawn from:

- Not for profit and voluntary organisations
- Local government
- Government departments
- Government agencies
- Government regional offices
- Private sector
- Professional institutes
- Regional development agencies

The work of the Forum includes the preparation of and agreement to good practice notes to promote better outcomes for everyone seeking to develop or change the use of land or buildings in England.

For further information please visit our website at [www.natplanforum.org.uk](http://www.natplanforum.org.uk) or contact the Secretary at [secretary@natplanforum.org.uk](mailto:secretary@natplanforum.org.uk)

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