



WHAT THE LOCAL PLAN SETS OUT TO DO

- The Council is committed to reducing demand for fossil fuels to help tackle climate change and to contribute towards the National target of cutting carbon dioxide emissions by 80% by 2050.
- Locally, the policy requirement is for at least 10% of predicted energy supply required by all new major development to come from on site renewable or low carbon energy sources, rising to 20% for major development in the following areas: Town Centre, Town Centre Fringe, Central Park, North Western Urban Fringe, Eastern Urban Fringe and Durham Tees Valley Airport.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

There has been a reduction of CO2 emissions per head in the Borough over the last four years, and an annual reduction of 10.5% was achieved in 2010. Planning can help sustain this reduction by ensuring different types of renewable energy can come forward in the Borough, to help meet the anticipated 10% increase in electricity and 13% increase in heat demand associated with new development.

Renewable Energy: A number of wind turbine schemes have been approved or implemented in the Borough during the last year. Six wind turbines at Moor House Farm, north of Darlington were granted planning permission in January 2012, providing an example of a larger scale scheme. The turbines have potential to generate up to 15 MW installed capacity of renewable electricity at any given time, potentially supplying up to 8300 households via the electricity grid. Development is expected to start on site within the coming months.

Smaller scale wind turbine schemes also play an important part in the generation of renewable energy. A single wind turbine at Acorn Dairy near Archdeacon Newton was granted planning permission in December 2011 and this is an example of such schemes. The turbine is expected to produce in excess of 1,350,000kWh of electricity per annum based on an average wind speed of 5.5m/s. Work is expected to start on site within the coming months and once implemented, the turbine will supply the energy needs of the farm and dairy business which produces organic milk. This is part of a longer term plan in reducing the carbon footprint of the business.

The combined heat and power plant at the Memorial Hospital in Darlington will help meet the energy needs of the hospital. This will improve energy efficiency and is another example of renewable energy generation in the Borough.

Sustainable Design: Tees Valley Housing's Woodland View development of 106 properties at Beaumont Hill in Darlington has been awarded 'Sustainable Larger Housing Project of the Year' at the Sustainable Housing Awards 2012. The scheme which consists of two, three and four bedroom family homes has been supported by the Homes and Communities Agency to deliver energy efficient eco homes. Homes have been built to at least Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and six homes to Level 5 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, bringing further cost savings for the occupier and helping reduce CO2 emissions.





WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Whilst the schemes highlighted above are positive, the costs of including renewable energy in proposed schemes makes viability difficult. In light of this, the Council is being flexible in the way in which renewable energy targets can be achieved. A new Supplementary Planning Document; 'Planning Obligations' will set out details to enable the effective delivery of renewable energy schemes as a part of new development. Where this is not possible on or off site, developers will be able to make a payment towards a new Carbon Management Fund. Contributions will be used to improve the energy efficiency of existing homes that are in fuel poverty.

MOVING THINGS FORWARD: KEY ACTIONS

- Adopt the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document in January 2013 to enable developers to readily calculate the off-site financial contribution towards carbon reduction schemes that will be sought, where it is not possible to meet the requirement for 10% renewable energy on site.
- Put in place systems to set up a ring fenced Carbon Management Fund for off-site financial contributions from developers as a source of funding to be targeted at improving energy efficiency of older housing areas.
- Prepare detailed policy guidance within the Local Plan Making and Growing Places Development Plan document on the percentage requirement for on site provision of renewable or low carbon sources for each major new development site within the following strategic locations; Town Centre, Town Centre Fringe, Central Park, North Western Urban Fringe, Eastern Urban Fringe and Durham Tees Valley Airport.
- Continue to monitor the development of new renewable energy schemes on larger developments. Small scale domestic schemes, whilst an important contributor to reducing carbon emissions, cannot be monitored, as they do not require planning permission.
- Provide comment on proposals for strategic wind farm schemes which fall outside the boundary of the Borough through collaboration with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities.

Contact Us: You can access more information on planning policy in Darlington at:

www.darlington.gov.uk/planningpolicy

If you are particularly interested in statistics and data for Darlington borough, you can view these at:

<http://lis.darlington.gov.uk/>

Alternatively, contact the Planning Policy Team on **01325 388644** or email planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

This document is available in different formats on request.