



Horsham
District
Council

Horsham District Local Plan Examination

Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 3: Climate Change and Water

Issue 1

November 2024

Contents

Issue 1: Whether the approach to climate change and energy use, sustainable design and construction is justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?	3
Question 1: Is Strategic Policy 6: Climate change sound?	3
Q1.a) Is this policy consistent with national policy, justified and effective particularly when read alongside Building Regulations?	4
Q1.b) Does the justification accurately reference “net zero carbon”?.....	4
Q1.c) Is criterion 2 d) effective?.....	4
Q1.d) Is the reference to “sustainable transport infrastructure” effective and consistent with other policies in the Plan?	5
Q1.e) Does this policy appropriately deal with the demolition of buildings?	5
Question 2: Is Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use sound?	6
Q2.a) Is the cascade set out in criterion 1 justified and effective?	6
Q2.b) Is the order of preference set out in criterion 2 c) justified and effective? Should any other “means” be identified and are the “means” identified justified and effective?	7
Q2.c) Is the reference to energy from waste in the justification text justified?	7
Question 3: Is Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction sound?.....	7
Q3.a) Is this policy consistent with national policy, justified and effective particularly when read alongside Building Regulations?	8
Q3.b) Is it consistent with national policy and legislation with regard to its approach to heritage assets?9	
Q3.c) Is it consistent with Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality?	9

Issue 1: Whether the approach to climate change and energy use, sustainable design and construction is justified, effective, consistent with national policy and positively prepared?

Question 1: Is Strategic Policy 6: Climate change sound?

1. The **NPPF (paragraph 152)** is clear that the planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate. It should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
2. Local Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change (**NPPF paragraph 153**), taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.
3. In accordance with this, and specifically with **paragraph 153** of the **NPPF**, Strategic Policy 6 seeks to ensure that the impacts of climate change are fully considered from the onset of early design. It is the overarching policy in the suite of climate change policies contained within the Plan and it sets out criteria in relation to both the mitigation, and adaptation, of climate change, and is clear that where this criterion is met proposals will be supported. This policy is therefore considered to be **positively prepared** and **consistent with national policy**.
4. In June 2023, the Council declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency, based on the **International Panel on Climate Change's AR6 Synthesis Report of March 2023**. This declaration provides a clear steer for the Council to ensure that it actively contributes to achieving a net zero carbon. The policy has therefore been prepared in line with the **Horsham District Council Climate Action Strategy (SS05)**, which outlines the recommended pathway to become a net zero and climate resilient District by 2050.
5. The policy is informed by the **District Wide Carbon Reduction Study and Carbon Audit of the Local Plan (CC02)**, which reports the existing energy use, carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions and low and zero carbon energy generation in Horsham District. It addresses some of the anticipated changes that may arise from planned new development, along with broader national trends, and presents a variety of options for responding to these, through planning policy. Consultant's AECOM were also commissioned to provide expert guidance and advice on the formulation of the wording of our suite of climate change policies. The Centre for Sustainable Energy also provided the Council with informal advice during plan preparation. Strategic Policy 6 is therefore considered to be **justified**.
6. The **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (HDC05)**, adopted November 2015 also contains a suite of climate change policies which form the base of the revised policies contained within the Plan. The **Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2022/23¹, Chapter 5: Policy Indicators** contains information on the extent to which the planning policies set out in the **HDPF (HDC05)** are being achieved. **Paragraph 5.74** of the AMR states that carbon emissions have significantly reduced since 2005 to 2021 indicating that the approach taken by the Council is already broadly being achieved. Strategic Policy 6 is therefore considered to be **effective**.

¹ <https://www.horsham.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy/authority-monitoring-report>

[Q1.a\) Is this policy consistent with national policy, justified and effective particularly when read alongside Building Regulations?](#)

7. The Council recognises that progress towards achieving net zero is being progressed through Building Regulation requirements. Notwithstanding this point, there is still a wider legal requirement placed upon the Council to take account of climate change. The Council has also declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency. The Council has committed to the development and implementation of a range of measures that work towards a zero carbon target, to achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050, and for its own operations to be carbon neutral by 2030.
8. **The Planning and Energy Act 2008** enables local planning authorities to set requirements for energy use and energy efficiency in their local plans. The Act states that a local development plan can include policies imposing reasonable requirements for:
 - A proportion of energy used in development in their area to be energy from renewable sources in the locality of the development;
 - A proportion of energy used in their area to be low carbon energy from sources in the locality of the development;
 - Development in their area to comply with energy efficiency standards that exceed the requirements of building regulations.
9. The Act is also clear that policies included within the development plan must not be inconsistent with relevant national policies for England – and as set out in **paragraph 1** above, the NPPF is clear that plan policies should support the transition to a low carbon future, and adapt and mitigate to its effects.
10. The policy approach therefore does not solely rely on building control, but considers the issue comprehensively, rather than reliance on one single aspect or approach to reduce carbon emissions. – for example, **critterion 1.e**) of the policy considers the impact of design that reduces reliance on transport, which is the highest cause of carbon emissions in the District. Where building regulations are relevant to the policy and approach seeks to ensure that development is capable of being zero carbon in the future. This is considered to be particularly important given the high financial costs and disruption involved in retrofitting buildings to reduce their carbon emissions.

[Q1.b\) Does the justification accurately reference “net zero carbon”?](#)

11. The **Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019** commits the UK to carbon emission reduction target of 100% by 2050 compared with a 1990 baseline. This is commonly referred to as “net zero carbon”. Therefore, as a means of clarification, the Council’s **Schedule of Suggested Modifications (SD14), Ref HM012** proposes an amendment to the text of **paragraph 5.3** of the Plan to include reference to the term “net zero carbon”. The **Glossary** of the Plan has also been updated in document **SD14, Ref HM114** to include a reference to “Net Zero Carbon”.
12. **Paragraph 5.9** of the policies supportive text provides a link to the **Horsham District Council Climate Action Strategy (SS06)** which supports the District’s sustainable transition to net zero and climate resilience. At present, the paragraph misquotes the term “net zero carbon”, therefore a modification (**SM08** in **Suggested Modifications to the Regulation 19 Local Plan: Response to MIQs November 2024**) to the text is proposed.

[Q1.c\) Is criterion 2 d\) effective?](#)

13. The **NPPF (paragraph 153)** states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the risk of overheating from rising temperatures. In accordance, criterion 2.d) of Strategic Policy 6 details the measure of moderating external temperatures through the use of green walls and roofs, tree planting or other nature-based solutions and landscaping for shade and drainage design.
14. **Criterion 4** of the policy requires that a Sustainability Statement is submitted with an application, demonstrating how the development has taken measures to mitigate and adapt to the effects of

climate change, taking into account the policy criteria. **Paragraph 5.6** of the Plan explains that a Sustainability Statement should include information proportionate to the scale of the development proposed.

15. Furthermore, the **Horsham District Council Green Infrastructure Strategy (EN03)** provides clear guidance on the Council's approach to green infrastructure, including that detailed within criterion 2.d). **EN03** provides planning guidance to help inform development proposals and supports the preparation and implementation of the Plan.
16. The incorporation of green infrastructure in buildings is now common in the UK and should be considered in all development. The Council has experience of nature-based urban cooling, in the form of the green wall at Piries Place car park (DC/17/2511) which is located in Horsham town. The balance between hard and soft landscaping within a development proposal requires careful consideration, but once achieved it contributes to climate change adaptation and minimises overheating.

[Q1.d\) Is the reference to "sustainable transport infrastructure" effective and consistent with other policies in the Plan?](#)

17. The **District Wide Carbon Reduction Study and Carbon Audit of the Local Plan (CC02)** identifies transport as the single largest source of carbon emissions in the District. The Council does not have direct control of the District's transport carbon emission, therefore **criterion 1.e)** seeks to ensure the provision of sustainable transport infrastructure. Providing access to sustainable and active transport modes reduces the need for reliance and use of private vehicular transport, therefore reducing transport related carbon emissions which is crucial to reaching zero carbon by 2050 as concluded within **CC02, paragraph 7.14**.
18. Criterion 1.e) is consistent with the principles of **Strategic Policy 24: Sustainable Transport, Strategic Policy HA1: Strategic Site Development Principles**, and each of the strategic allocation policies (**Strategic Policy HA2, Strategic Policy HA3 and Strategic Policy HA4**).
19. However, the Council recognises that the wording could be clearer. To improve consistency, a modification (**SM10 in Suggested Modifications to the Regulation 19 Local Plan: Response to MIQs November 2024**) has been suggested.

[Q1.e\) Does this policy appropriately deal with the demolition of buildings?](#)

20. As the overarching climate change policy of the Plan, **criterion 1.f)** seeks to retain and reuse existing buildings, components or materials, including on-site where possible. Demolition of buildings is further covered in **Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction, criterion 1.d** which states that development is expected to minimise construction and demolition waste. **Paragraph 1.6** of the Plan is clear that all policies relate to each other, and the document should be read as a whole. Repetition of criteria is therefore not required.
21. The wording included within **paragraph 5.12** was added to the supportive text of the policy following recommendation from consultants AECOM, as detailed within **Chapter 5: Policy Options, sub-heading Draft Policies Under Consideration** of document **CC02**. AECOM were commissioned to undertake the **District Wide Carbon Reduction Study and Carbon Audit of the Local Plan (CC02)**, as well as provide guidance and advice on the formulation of the wording of our suite of climate change policies.
22. Noting that paragraph 5.12 refers to demolition, a modification to the text is proposed (**SM09 in Suggested Modifications to the Regulation 19 Local Plan: Response to MIQs November 2024**) to provide clarification to the applicant on the expectation of the Council in terms of how the on-site embedded carbon has been retained.

Question 2: Is Strategic Policy 7: Appropriate Energy Use sound?

23. In order to help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat **Paragraph 155** of the **NPPF** identifies that plans should provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, maximizing the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension. Plans should consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help to secure development and identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential head customers and suppliers.
24. In accordance with **paragraph 15 (NPPF)**, Strategic Policy 7 seeks to ensure that proposals consider the most appropriate energy use as a means of improving efficiency into their design. Without this mitigation, there is potential for future development to have a significant impact on the consumption of energy and resources, which in turn will contribute to climate change, including global heating. The policy is therefore considered to be **justified**.
25. The policy sets out criteria to ensure that development contributes to clean, efficient energy and incorporates zero and low carbon heating in accordance with a hierarchy. Criteria in relation to renewable energy schemes is also included, as is the requirement for an Energy Statement. The policy is clear that where the criterion is met a proposal will be supported. The policy is therefore considered to be **consistent with national policy** and **positively prepared**.
26. Strategic Policy 7 carries forward and builds upon much of the criteria contained within **Strategic Policy 36: Appropriate Energy Use** of the **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDC05)**, adopted 2015. As stated within **paragraph 6** of this statement, the **HDPF (HDC05)** is subject to an Annual Monitoring Report; **AMR 2022/23, paragraph 5.74** states that carbon emissions have significantly reduced since 2005 to 2021 indicating that the approach taken by the Council to date is already broadly being achieved. Strategic Policy 7 is therefore considered to be **effective**.

Q2.a) Is the cascade set out in criterion 1 justified and effective?

27. Criterion 1 of the policy sets out an energy hierarchy which details a cascade to ensure that development contributes to clean, efficient energy. In short, the order of the cascade is based on ease of application; energy efficiency of buildings (Be Lean) being the easiest tier to achieve by design, followed by efficiency of energy supply (Be Clean). Use of renewable energy sources (Be Green) requires the source(s) to be accessible, so this tier would be dependent on local availability. The monitoring of energy performance (Be Seen) would naturally follow on from the other tiers.
28. Of the cascade listed within the Plan; Be Lean, Be Clean and Be Green, this hierarchy is a continuation of the approach set out in **Strategic Policy 36** of the **HDPF (HDC05)**. This cascade followed the recommendation of the **West Sussex Sustainable Energy Study, 2009²** which formed part of the evidence base and formulation of policy of the **HDPF (HDC05)**. The study advised (**Section 4.2, Energy Hierarchy**) that defining a hierarchical approach to the application of technologies can be a useful way to make the most appropriate choice. An energy hierarchy is a simple conceptual tool which can be used as an organising and justifying principle in energy policy development. Following a hierarchy ensures that the lowest-carbon outcomes are achieved in a given context.
29. The fourth cascade of the energy hierarchy 'Be Seen' strengthens the hierarchy from that of the **HDPF (HDC05)** by ensuring that applications are clear as to how this process has been approached. It also provides the Council with a mechanism to request information and to therefore better monitor the effectiveness of the policy.

² https://www.horsham.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/88438/west_sussex_sustainable_energy_study.pdf

[Q2.b\) Is the order of preference set out in criterion 2 c\) justified and effective? Should any other “means” be identified and are the “means” identified justified and effective?](#)

30. Criterion 2.c) sets out the hierarchical approach for the use of optimum means of low or zero-carbon heat supply. The **District Wide Carbon Reduction Study and Carbon Audit of the Local Plan (CC02)** incorporates a renewable energy assessment which has informed the content of the policy, it is therefore considered to be **justified**.
31. Of the technologies considered preferable in the policy, the Council propose a modification to the zero and low carbon heating hierarchy (**SM11 in Suggested Modifications to the Regulation 19 Local Plan: Response to MIQs November 2024**), with the removal of the first cascade “Use of waste heat sources”. The use of waste heat sources is no longer considered to be an efficient combustion of residual waste and should not be regarded as a viable low carbon energy source, as well as additional concerns related to air quality impacts if waste streams are disposed of through combustion. This technology is therefore no longer considered suitable for widespread adoption and has been removed from the cascade in order for the policy to be **effective**.
32. In order to meet the net zero target, it will be crucial to phase out the use of gas. **Paragraph 4.18 of CC02** states that there are two main options for achieving this, based on currently available technology; 1) reduce the total demand for heat, and 2) switch to using electric heating systems such as direct electric heating or heat pumps. Of these, heat pumps are the preferred option due to the lower running costs and smaller impact on the electrical grid.
33. In relation to the formulation of the policy, it was considered to be too prescriptive to list all possible ‘means’ of zero and low carbon heat supply. Therefore, **criterion 2. b)** encourages the maximum use of on-site renewable energy generation, criterion 2. c) lists the most favourable options based on the Plan’s evidence base (**CC02**), and **criterion 4** allows for stand-alone renewable energy schemes to be supported. The cascade listed within criterion 2. c) is therefore considered to be justified and effective when read alongside the other criteria of Strategic Policy 7.
34. With regards to other ‘means’, the **Future Homes Standard** requires that no new build property include the installation of an individual gas boiler as of 2025. In addition, there are plans to phase out natural gas boilers entirely by 2035. To include gas fired boilers in the cascade would be unsustainable, given that there will be a need to retrofit buildings with a renewable heating system before the end of their design life. Furthermore, and as stated within **paragraph 32** of this paper, in order to meet the net zero target by 2050, it will be crucial to phase out the use of gas.

[Q2.c\) Is the reference to energy from waste in the justification text justified?](#)

35. The Council’s **Schedule of Suggested Modifications (SD14)** has proposed removal of the text “energy from waste” from **paragraph 5.16** to reflect that the inefficient combustion of residual waste should not be regarded as a viable low carbon energy source.

Question 3: Is Strategic Policy 8: Sustainable Design and Construction sound?

36. The **NPPF (paragraph 152)** is clear that the planning system should help to shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, and encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings. In accordance, Strategic Policy 8 seeks to ensure that new development is designed and constructed in such a way that it helps the District achieve zero net carbon emissions by 2050, in line with the national commitment set by **The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019**. It is therefore considered to be **consistent with national policy**.
37. **Paragraph 154. b)** of the **NPPF** states that new development should be planned for in ways that help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Strategic Policy 8 sets out the criteria required to enable flexibility in design, allowing buildings to be easily

adapted, to reflect changing lifestyle needs, and to mitigate against and / or adapt to the impacts of climate change. The policy is clear that in these circumstances development will be supported. This strategic policy is therefore considered to be **positively prepared**, and appropriate for helping the District achieve net zero carbon by 2050.

38. The suite of climate change policies, including Strategic Policy 8, have been informed by the **District Wide Carbon Reduction Study and Carbon Audit of the Local Plan (CC02)**. As detailed within **paragraph 5** of this statement, **CC02** reports the existing energy use, carbon dioxide (CO²) emissions and low and zero carbon energy generation in Horsham District. It addresses some of the anticipated changes that may arise from planned new development, along with broader national trends, and presents a variety of options for responding to these, through planning policy. In addition, and as stated within **paragraph 22** of this paper, consultants AECOM, who drafted **CC02**, and the Centre for Sustainable Energy, also provided guidance and advice on the formulation of the wording of our suite of climate change policies. Strategic Policy 8 is therefore considered to be **justified**.
39. As with the other climate change policies contained within the Plan; Strategic Policy 8 builds upon the principles and criteria of the equivalent **Sustainable Construction policy (Policy 37)** contained within the **Horsham District Planning Framework (HDPF) (HDC05)**. New criteria has been incorporated to strengthen the policy including, but not limited to, retrofitting existing development, including historic buildings.
40. As detailed within **paragraph 6** of this paper, the **Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2022/23, Chapter 5: Policy Indicators** contains information on the extent to which the planning policies set out within the **HDPF (HDC05)** are being achieved. **Paragraph 5.74**, of the AMR states that carbon emissions have significantly reduced since 2005 to 2021 indicating that the approach taken by the Council is already has helped to contribute to this position. Strategic Policy 6 is therefore considered to be **effective**.

[Q3.a\) Is this policy consistent with national policy, justified and effective particularly when read alongside Building Regulations?](#)

41. As outlined within our response to Q3, Strategic Policy 8 is considered to be **consistent with national policy**, specifically in relation to **paragraph's 152 and 154.b** of the **NPPF**; **justified** due to the policy being informed by our evidence base document **CC02**, and the guidance and advice of consultants AECOM and the Centre for Sustainable Energy, in the formulation of the policy wording; and **effective** given that principles of the policy are already broadly being achieved, as described within paragraph 38 of this paper and indicated by **paragraph 5.74** of the **Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2022/23**.
42. In accordance with **Planning Practice Guidance: Climate Change**, which provides advice on how the challenges of climate change can be addressed through the Local Plan, this strategic policy promotes low carbon design approaches to reduce energy consumption in buildings with criteria which covers a range of measures to integrate sustainable design, including construction and operation, from the design stage onwards.
43. **Part L of Building Regulations (2021 Edition)** is the key mechanism that prescribes standards for the conservation of fuel and power in new and existing buildings in the UK, based on metrics such as the estimated level of energy demands and CO₂ emissions. **Criterion 1.a)** of this policy seeks that new homes deliver, as a minimum, carbon emission reduction as set out in the 2021 Edition (or any future update) of the 2010 Building Regulations (Part L).
44. The 2021 Edition of Part L, now incorporates the 2023 amendments regarding district heat networks and community heating, which is considered to be addressed within the wording of the policy, particularly with the inclusion of the phrase which references "or any future update", as this encompasses any future amendments to Building Regulations (Part L).
45. The Council seeks a reduction in regulated CO₂ emissions in line the 2021 Edition (or any future update) of the 2010 Building Regulations, as a minimum. However, as stated within **paragraph 5.24**

of the Plan, in light of the Government's agenda on climate change, and the key objectives of the Plan, it is the expectation of the Council that this is exceeded where practicable to maximise the delivery of net zero development over the lifetime of the Plan.

[Q3.b\) Is it consistent with national policy and legislation with regard to its approach to heritage assets?](#)

46. The **NPPF (paragraph's 189 – 208)** describes the policy approach to conserving and enhancing the historic environment and how it should be applied. This includes an appreciation that achieving sustainable development includes protection for and enhancement of the historic environment in the context of achieving the three overarching objectives, economic, social, and environmental.
47. **Planning Practice Guidance: Climate Change** advises that where energy efficiency improvements require planning permission that advice should be co-ordinated to ensure consistency between energy, design and heritage matters. In line with the PPG, **paragraph's 5.28** of the policy provides advice in relation to retrofitting existing heritage assets (listed buildings or properties within a Conservation Area) in the form of other relevant planning policies and guidance documents produced by Historic England.
48. **The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (as amended)** and the **Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act 2013** are the key legislations applicable to the historic environment located within Horsham District. Strategic Policy 8 is consistent with national legislation, with regard to the duties of the Council. Most notably, **Section 66** which relates to listed buildings and the desirability of preserving the building and its setting, and **Section 72** which relates to conservation areas and the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

[Q3.c\) Is it consistent with Strategic Policy 9: Water Neutrality?](#)

49. **Strategic Policy 8** is concerned with the overall sustainability of buildings as a whole. The policy does not however address the specific requirements of water efficiency standards which are covered in Policy 9, given the specific impact of water neutrality. It is recognised that **paragraph 5.29** outlines where other policies in the plan. A modification (**SM12 in Suggested Modifications to the Regulation 19 Local Plan: Response to MIQs November 2024**) to clarify that this also includes policy 9, and to set out that where there is any conflict between standards in relation to water neutrality, those standards take apply.