

---

# **Core Strategy Issues and Options**

**Sustainability & Climate Change  
Section  
March 2009**



## 8. Sustainability and Climate Change

- 8.1. There is now a large, and increasing, body of evidence to suggest that climate change is a very real risk and that we must take steps to adapt to and to reduce our impact on climate change. All stages of development, from design through to decommissioning of buildings must now consider the impacts of climate change and how to withstand them as well as preventing the situation from worsening in the future. By following the principles behind sustainable development, and implementing these through planning policies, we will be able to reduce the impact that development has on our environment.

### Context

- 8.2. PPS1 requires development plans to address the causes and potential impacts of climate change. The policies should reduce energy use and emissions, promote use of renewable energy and also consider climate change impacts when locating and designing development. The PPS1 Supplement sets out the importance of sustainable development, reducing emissions, supplying energy from renewable sources, and the need to mitigate against and adapt to climate change. Planning authorities are expected to take a positive stance on inclusion of renewables and sustainable construction and buildings in developments. They can also require higher than minimum national standards for development, supported by legislation in The Planning and Energy Act 2008. PPS22 enables LPAs to develop policies (where viable) requiring:
- % of development's energy to be supplied from on-site renewables; and
  - % of a development's energy to be from a decentralised low/zero carbon energy source
- 8.3. The RSS sets requirements for energy efficiency, water use and waste management. There is also a target for energy generation from renewable or Low or Zero Carbon technologies where feasible, and thresholds above which the target must be applied.
- 8.4. The current Local Plan (Alteration No. 2, adopted June 2006) contains objectives relating to:
- Protection of water quality and resources;
  - Flood protection;
  - Efficient use of resources and promotion of alternative energy; and
  - Sustainable waste management
- 8.5. Local community priorities established through Sustainable Community Strategies and the Babergh District Council Strategic Plan, such as a greener, cleaner Babergh, have the following linkages to the sustainability and climate change section of the Core Strategy as shown in the table below.

Transforming Suffolk 2008-2028 (Suffolk LSP)	Western Suffolk LSP	Babergh East LSP	BDC Strategic Plan
<p><b>A prosperous and vibrant economy</b></p> <p>- transport and infrastructure to support sustainable economic growth</p>	<p><b>Enable and develop a prosperous and sustainable economy</b></p> <p>Encourage sustainable tourism</p> <p>Develop and maintain a safe, strong and sustainable community</p>	<p><b>Address poor access to jobs and training for local people</b></p>	<p><b>A greener, cleaner Babergh</b></p> <p>-balance between protecting environment and supporting development, better traffic management, air quality, road infrastructure and effective public transport</p>
<p><b>The greenest County</b></p> <p>- reduce Suffolk's carbon footprint and adapt to the changing climate and geography</p>	<p>Protect our natural and built environment and local biodiversity and ensure sustainable development</p>		<p><b>A greener, cleaner Babergh</b></p> <p>-smaller carbon footprint, clean environment, less waste sent to landfill</p>

8.6. Much of the energy used currently is provided through the combustion of fossil fuels, for example through power stations or directly from a car engine. The combustion process is responsible for CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases being released into the earth's atmosphere. These gases retain the sun's heat, so increasing concentrations of them in the atmosphere leads to rising temperatures felt on the earth's surface. Climate change will result in more frequent occurrences of extreme weather; hot dry summers, and mild wet winters. There is also a risk of droughts, high winds and tornadoes, ground stability issues and increased risk of flooding.



8.7. The climate is already changing, and we need to ensure that development is robust and flexible enough to deal with future conditions as well as having minimal adverse effects on future climate change. As one of the primary causes of climate change is the emission of greenhouse gases, an effective way of reducing the effects of development is to reduce associated emissions. There is a twofold process for this:

- 1) Reducing the demand for energy
- 2) Increase the supply of energy through sources with low associated emissions.

**Question SUS1:** Do you agree that the most important issues (of equal importance) relating to climate change and sustainability are

- a) ensuring future development is robust enough to withstand the effects of climate change; and
- b) the need to ensure future development has minimal adverse effect on climate change in the future?

- 8.8. Future development must have low energy demand, and this needs to be considered at all stages of the development process. Methods for doing this include:
- choice of location to reduce need to travel;
  - choice of site appropriate to end use and users;
  - design of the building;
  - integration of energy efficient fittings and renewable energy;
  - sustainable construction;
  - sustainable use including education of users; and
  - consideration of decommissioning of buildings and potential redevelopment of building/sites

**Question SUS2:** Do you think there is a need for a design guide to provide in depth advice on ways in which sustainability can be integrated into design for Babergh?

8.9. Water is a precious resource and expected to become scarcer with high development pressures and longer hotter summers so it is vital that water efficiency is an integral consideration in development. Emissions associated with moving and heating water can be high, so reducing use and waste will minimise these. There are also high emissions related to the movement, collection and disposal of waste. Babergh has a good record of dealing with waste but this must be improved further.

8.10. There are other aspects of sustainable development that are not specifically mentioned here. These are discussed in other parts of the Core Strategy or they are issues that planning policy cannot directly influence.

**Question SUS3:** Are there any other issues you feel need additional details setting out in the Core Strategy?

8.11. The overall aim for Babergh is to achieve prudent, sustainable and efficient use, reuse and disposal of resources. Because “sustainability” covers such a broad topic, it is not felt that we should be considering each issue separately for

monitoring and assessment purposes- instead we should use pre-determined assessment methods such as the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and the Building Research Establishment's Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) (see topic paper for further details).

**Question SUS4:** Do you agree that we should use CSH/BREEAM for monitoring and target setting purposes?

8.12. Although sustainable development is a key consideration in development decisions, it must also be balanced with the other priorities: i.e. meeting housing demand, job growth targets and infrastructure provision. There may be conflict between some of these, for example delivering houses at CSH level 6 may be more expensive and may hinder the overall delivery.

**Question SUS5** Do you have any comments on where you feel the sustainability agenda fits into the overall planning agenda?

### **Residential Development**

8.13. National minimum standards for development are set in Building Regulations, and the policy statement "Building a Greener Future" sets out a staged increasing target.

**Question SUS6** What level of the CSH do you think would be most appropriate for Babergh?

- 1) National minimum (level 3 by 2010, level 4 by 2013, level 6 by 2016)?
- 2) Level 3 by 2010, Level 4 by 2012, Level 6 by 2015?
- 3) Another option above national standards?

Please explain your answer

**Question SUS7** The Code for Sustainable Homes applies to all new build dwellings. Do you think that the adopted level (from Qu SUS 5) should be applied to:

- 1) All new build, conversions, redevelopments and extensions in excess of 1 room?
- 2) All development 1 dwelling and above?
- 3) All development 3 dwellings and above?
- 4) Another level- please give details and reasons

## Non-Residential Development

**Question SUS8** Currently there are no statutory requirements to develop above the minimum standard for non-residential buildings. Do you think we should require development to achieve:

- 1) National minimum standards (Building regulations)?
- 2) BREEAM Good?
- 3) BREEAM Very Good?
- 4) BREEAM Excellent?
- 5) Another standard- please explain.

**Question SUS9** What threshold do you feel is appropriate to apply the level set out in question SUS 5:

- 1) All development (new build, conversion & significant extensions (1 room or more)?
- 2) Development over 0.1ha or 100 sq m?
- 3) Development over 1 ha or 1000 sq m?
- 5) Another threshold- please explain.

## Renewable Energy (for all end uses)

**Question SUS10** What level of renewable energy provision should developments be required to comply with?

- 1) No requirement
- 2) National or regional requirement\* (please state)
- 3) Another level- please explain.

\* Table shows the % electricity and overall energy to be generated from renewable sources

		National	Regional	Potential higher
2010	Electricity	10%	10%	10%
	Total Energy	n/a	n/a	n/a
2015	Electricity	n/a	n/a	17%
	Total Energy	n/a	n/a	15%
2020	Electricity	20%	20%	25%
	Total Energy	15%	17%	20%

All levels also require 5.75% of all fuels to be from biofuels

**Question SUS11** Of the requirement in Question SUS7, what proportion should come from decentralised sources?

- 1) No requirement
- 2) At least 25% decentralised
- 3) Another threshold- please explain.

**Question SUS12** What threshold should be applied to the developments?

- 1) All
- 2) Above 1 dwelling or 100 sq m non-residential floorspace
- 3) Other threshold