

Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency

Policy CS 15

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Residential Development

New residential development will meet the following minimum standards of construction:

- Minor development - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3
- Major development⁽⁷³⁾ - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4
- From 2013: All development - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4
- From 2016: All development - Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6

Non-Residential Development

New non-residential development will meet the following minimum standards of construction:

- Minor development - BREEAM Very Good
- Major development - BREEAM Excellent
- From 2013: All development - BREEAM Excellent

Renewable energy

Major development shall achieve the following minimum reductions in total CO₂ emissions (regulated and unregulated energy use) from renewable energy or low/zero carbon energy generation on site or in the locality of the development as long as a direct physical connection is used, unless it can be demonstrated that such provision is not technically or economically viable.

The percentage reductions in CO₂ emissions should be based on the estimated CO₂ emissions of the development after the installation of energy efficiency measures related to either the Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM or equivalent method has been applied.

Residential Development:

- A 10% reduction in CO₂ emissions;
- from 2014: A 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions;
- from 2016: Zero Carbon⁽⁷⁴⁾.

Non-Residential Development:

- A 10% reduction in CO₂ emissions;
- from 2014: A 20% reduction in CO₂ emissions;
- from 2019: Zero Carbon⁽⁷⁵⁾.

73 For dwellings: where 10 or more are to be constructed, or if the site is more than 0.5 hectares. For all other uses: where the floorspace will be 1000sq metres or greater. Floorspace is defined as the sum of the floor area within the building measured to the external wall faces at each level.

74 Requirements for zero carbon in line with stated Government aspirations, which may be subject to change.

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5 Core Policies

Explanation of Policy

5.96 Carbon reduction is a key issue for West Berkshire. Sustainable construction and renewable energy generation can help in achieving emissions reduction. Cost implications of installing CO₂ emissions reduction measures from the start of the development are less than if they were retro-fitted afterwards. In addition, the benefits derived by the end user in relation to reduced heating and fuel bills will be enhanced.

5.97 West Berkshire District is one of the highest electricity users in the south east, and is in the upper quartile of local authorities for CO₂ emissions within the region⁽⁷⁶⁾. Fuel poverty levels in West Berkshire are also high, compared to other authorities⁽⁷⁷⁾. This is clear evidence and justification that West Berkshire needs to do more to meet national targets in relation to CO₂ emissions reduction.

Code for Sustainable Homes / BREEAM

5.98 The Code for Sustainable Homes⁽⁷⁸⁾ is the Government's national sustainability standard for new homes. In addition BREEAM⁽⁷⁹⁾ (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method) is a well established national assessment tool for non-residential buildings.

Renewable Energy Generation

5.99 Progress on the implementation of decentralised renewable energy will need to be investigated through a future Local Plan Document, which will highlight the potential in West Berkshire for commercial scale renewable energy. In order to reduce local carbon emissions and meet national targets, a policy approach that supports and reflects the significant challenge ahead needs to be adopted. Any renewable energy schemes should be efficient.

Existing Housing Stock

5.100 Measures to increase the adoption of retro-fitting energy efficiency measures for the existing housing stock may be explored in subsequent Local Plan Documents.

Changes to national targets

5.101 This policy may be revised and updated periodically, for example to reflect changing national guidance or changing circumstances.

Thresholds

5.102 The Council will carefully scrutinise proposals which appear to fall artificially below any thresholds which may indicate a possible attempt to avoid implementing the relevant measures described above.

Delivery and Monitoring

This policy will be delivered through the development management process.

The amount of renewable energy generation and developments meeting the policy criteria will be reported in the AMR.

76 [Department for Energy and Climate Change, Sub-national Energy Consumption Statistics](#) Available at www.decc.gov.uk

77 [Communities and Local Government, Places Analysis Tool](#), available at www.communities.gov.uk

78 [Code for Sustainable Homes](#) available at www.gov.uk

79 Definition of [BREEAM](#) at <http://www.breeam.org>