



# Sustainable Development Advice Note (March 2011)

## What is sustainable development?

- It is making sure new development such as an extension, a conversion, new homes and commercial buildings maximise energy efficiencies, minimise the use of natural resources and waste, and reduce carbon emissions to avoid compromising the needs of the future.

## What is the purpose of this advice note?

- To provide guidance on sustainable development and related climate change issues prior to the delivery of more comprehensive policies through the Local development Framework.

## Context

### *National Law and Policies*

The Climate Change Act 2008 sets legally binding targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions. It aims to:

- reduce carbon dioxide emissions by at least 26% by 2020; and
- reduce carbon dioxide emissions through domestic and international action of at least 80% by 2050.

PPS1 Supplement<sup>1</sup> and the Code for Sustainable Homes<sup>2</sup> provide the latest Government advice to help deliver sustainable development with low carbon emissions in the housing sector.

The Code for Sustainable Homes uses a sustainability rating system of 1 to 6 stars to communicate the overall performance of a new home. It aims to achieve zero carbon emissions in all new residential development by 2016. Using 2006 Building Regulations as a baseline, percentage improvements will be sought to Building Regulations Part L to reflect each step of the Code. A similar approach is being considered for non-residential development to achieve zero carbon emissions by 2019.

### *Local Policies*

The Dacorum Borough Local Plan was adopted in 2004. The policies will gradually be replaced through a new format called the Local Development Framework (LDF).

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<sup>1</sup> PPS1 Supplement – National Planning Policy Statement: Planning for Climate Change: Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1

<sup>2</sup> Code for Sustainable Homes – prepared by the Government in partnership with the Building Research Establishment (BRE) and in consultation with Construction Industry Research and Information Association

The central document is called the Core Strategy and this is expected to be adopted by the end of 2012. It will include policies that will follow the recent lead of national and regional policies in a bid to secure sustainable development with low carbon emissions.

### **What are the Council's current policy/guidance for sustainable development and lowering carbon emissions?**

Policy 1 (and Appendix 1) of the Local Plan expects development to support the principles of sustainable development. The policy requires a **sustainability statement** to be submitted with planning applications<sup>3</sup>.

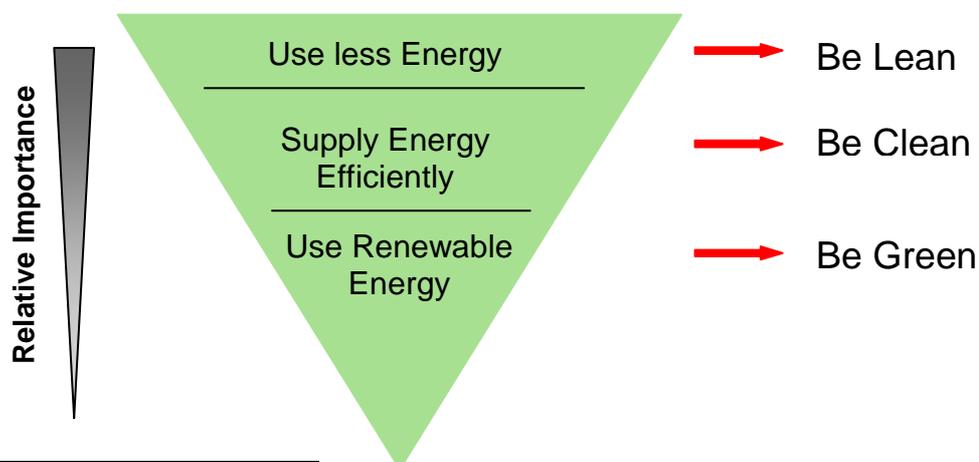
The statement is expected to demonstrate the sustainability credentials of the proposal, in terms of land use, environmental considerations, community and employment needs, and in design and access arrangements. If the statement is not deemed reasonable or is without clear justification, the applicant may be asked to reconsider the proposal.

### **What is the Council's future policy/guidance for sustainable development and lowering carbon emissions?**

From 4<sup>th</sup> April 2011, the Council will be piloting a carbon compliance, energy statement called C-Plan in conjunction with an online Sustainability Statement. **From 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2011**, all new development of 1 home or more and all new non-residential development (including development stated in the footnote below) will be expected to:

1. Continue supporting Policy 1 of the Local Plan in conjunction with the online Sustainability and Energy Statement;
2. Follow the Energy Hierarchy set out in Figure 1; and
3. Follow the principles set out in Table 1, which addresses the Council's aspirations to push the boundaries of sustainable development.

**Figure 1: Energy Hierarchy**



<sup>3</sup> Planning applications - for new development (other than householder applications), change of use, conversions and engineering or other non-development works, such as car parking and landscaping.

District Heating Opportunity Areas (DHOAs) have been identified in the Hertfordshire-wide Low and Zero Carbon Study, (2010) and are areas with a high density and generate a high heat demand. Table 1 sets out the need for DHOAs to deliver the highest carbon emission reductions in the borough. Hemel Hempstead Town Centre, Maylands Business Park and possible large-scale greenfield development are the only areas being considered for this purpose, since major redevelopment is only related to these areas.

**Table 1: Step Changes in the Code for Sustainable Homes and Additional CO<sub>2</sub> Reductions compared to Building Regulations Part L 2006**

<b>Effects to new development in different parts of the borough</b>	<b>From Oct 1<sup>st</sup> 2010</b>	<b>From 2013*</b>	<b>From 2016** or 2019</b>
<b>In the whole borough:</b> for development <5 dwellings or non-residential development <235sqm	Follow national guidance for Code Levels <sup>4</sup> and Building Regs. Part L	Follow national guidance for Code Level and Building Regs. Part L	Follow national guidance for Code Level and Building Regs. Part L
<b>Outside DHOAs<sup>5</sup>:</b> for development ≥5 dwellings or non-residential development ≥235sqm	A minimum of Code Level 3 plus 5% additional CO <sub>2</sub> reductions/ 30% reduction in the dwelling or Building Emission Rate compared to the Target Emission Rate defined by Building Regulations	A minimum of Code Level 4 plus 5% additional CO <sub>2</sub> reductions/ 49% reduction in the dwelling or Building Emission Rate compared to the Target Emission Rate defined by Building Regulations	Code Level 6 / Zero Carbon****
<b>Inside DHOAs:</b> for development ≥5 dwellings or non-residential development ≥235sqm	A minimum of Code Level 4 or 44% reduction*** in the dwelling or Building Emission Rate compared to the Target Emission Rate defined by Building Regulations	A minimum of Code Level 5 or 100% reduction*** in the dwelling or Building Emission Rate compared to the Target Emission Rate defined by Building Regulations	Code Level 6 / Zero Carbon****

<sup>4</sup> Code Levels – set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes and associated technical guidance available on the Communities and Local Government website

<sup>5</sup> District Heating Opportunity Heating Areas – identified in the Hertfordshire-wide Low and Zero Carbon Study

**Notes:**

- \* This requirement will not come into effect until successive updates to Part L of the Building Regulations become mandatory.
- \*\* Residential development is expected to reach zero carbon/Code Level 6 from 2016 and non-residential is expected to reach zero carbon by 2019.
- \*\*\* This is a reduction in the Building Emission Rate compared to the Target Emission Rate defined by the Building Regulations Part L 2006 i.e. a 44% reduction is the equivalent to Code Level 4 energy efficiencies.
- \*\*\*\* This is a reduction in the Building Emission Rate compared to the Target Emission Rate defined by the Building Regulations Part L 2006. Zero Carbon: reductions above 70% should be delivered using allowable solutions and the Carbon Offset Fund.

## Further Information

**For further information about Sustainability and Energy Statements, the Code for Sustainable Homes and how to make developments more sustainable, please visit:**

- Dacorum Borough Council - on website under: Planning and Building Control/Sustainable Development
- Building Futures - <http://www.hertslink.org/buildingfutures>
- CLG - [www.communities.gov.co.uk](http://www.communities.gov.co.uk)
- BRE – [www.bream.org](http://www.bream.org) and [www.bre.co.uk](http://www.bre.co.uk)
- Sustainability Planner/C-Plan – [www.sustainabilityplanner.co.uk/anon/dacorum\\_home.aspx](http://www.sustainabilityplanner.co.uk/anon/dacorum_home.aspx) or C-Plan
- Energy Saving Trust - [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk)
- Planning Portal - [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)