

Local Development Framework

Bolton's Core Strategy Background
Document – BD6B

Cleaner Greener Bolton (Sustainable Design
and Construction) December 2009

Shaping the future of Bolton

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Background Document is one of sixteen produced by Bolton Council to support the autumn 2009 publication version of the Bolton Core Strategy.
- 1.2 In total, there are four Background Documents that cover different aspects of the Cleaner Greener Theme, BD6A – BD6D.
- 1.3 This Background Document covers the strategic Cleaner Greener theme policies and also policies from the spatial areas which relate to that theme, from the Core Strategy:
- 1.4 Cleaner Greener Theme Policies:
 - **Policy CG2 – Sustainable Design and Construction**
- 1.5 The following are the spatial area policies that relate to CG2:
 - TC11.2 Urban Village – (environmentally sustainable development)
 - M2.4 Horwich Loco Works – (Sustainable power solutions)
- 1.6 Each Background Document is structured to provide information, which demonstrates the soundness of the Core Strategy as a whole:
 - Conformity with national and regional guidance,
 - Specific evidence on which the policy approach is based.
 - How the policy approach was developed at each stage of the plan making process and a summary of representations at each of those stages
 - Information and guidance provided by the Sustainability Appraisal;
 - A statement that shows how the policies contribute to the effectiveness of the Core Strategy as a whole considering deliverability, flexibility and ability to be monitored
 - Information and guidance provided by the sustainability appraisal
 - Conclusions on soundness
- 1.7 All documents referenced are held within the Public Examination Core Document Library.

2 Background

- 2.1 Policy CG2 – Sustainable Design and Construction, has been included in the Core Strategy to address the issues of incorporating sustainable design, sustainable drainage and renewable energy for new development proposals within the built environment. Policy CG2 initially evolved as part of the development management group of policies. As more work fed into the Core Strategy, it was felt that development management policies would sit more suitably in the suite of “Cleaner & Greener” policies. Sustainable Design and Construction is a logical extension to the Cleaner & Greener section, and is a way in which to actively implement the Cleaner & Greener theme within the Core Strategy.
- 2.2 Policies TC11.2 and M2.4 extend the principles of sustainable design into two key areas of development in Bolton.
- 2.3 Policy CG2 provides a set of criteria that will be applied to development proposals to ensure that they meet the borough’s environmental and social targets, and government targets for considering climate change, sustainability issues and renewable and low-carbon sources of energy.
- 2.4 The aims of sustainable design and construction are to create developments that meet the needs of building users and the wider community whilst minimising the effects on the environment. Policy CG2 and the associated sustainable design and construction spatial area-based policies exist to guide and manage the sustainability of new development, determine planning applications and help ensure future developments have a positive impact on the environment and are well-designed.

Links to the Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.5 Policy CG2 relates to the Cleaner Greener priority theme set out in Bolton: Our Vision 2007-2017. In particular the policy relates to the following points:
- Living within environmental limits by using resources such as land, energy, water, transport networks and utilities more effectively, reducing waste and boosting recycling
 - Reducing harmful emissions
 - Protecting and promoting biodiversity
- 2.6 Policy CG2 builds upon the strategic environmental policies set out in CG1.

Links to the Strategic Objectives

- 2.7 The basis of the council’s strategic approach and vision is explained in Background Document BD1. Sixteen Strategic Objectives flow from the spatial vision, and they are also explained in BD1.
- 2.8 Policy CG2 supports the delivery of the following Strategic Objectives:
- Strategic Objective 7 - To ensure that Bolton provides for sustainable waste management
 - Strategic Objective 10 - To minimise climate change and its adverse effects by minimising greenhouse gas emissions from new buildings, minimising energy consumption, maximising the use of renewable energy, locating development where

it can make the best use of existing infrastructure, and adapting to the adverse effects of climate change.

- Strategic Objective 11 - To conserve and enhance the best of Bolton's built heritage and landscapes, and improve the quality of open spaces and the design of new buildings.
- Strategic Objective 12 - To protect and enhance Bolton's biodiversity.
- Strategic Objective 13 – to reduce the likelihood and manage the impacts of flooding in Bolton and to minimise flooding to areas downstream.

2.9 The Cleaner Greener – Sustainable Design and Construction policies have been framed to deliver the achievement of the vision and the Strategic Objectives 7, 10, 11, 12 and 13.

3 Context

- 3.1 This section identifies the context against which the Cleaner Greener – Sustainable Design and Construction policies have been prepared. It shows how the guidance, issues and information have been used to inform the final policies.

National planning policy statements and guidance documents

PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development

- 3.2 The main objective of PPS1 is to promote sustainable development through the use of spatial planning, with particular emphasis on high quality design. The key themes of sustainable development within the document are:
- Social cohesion and inclusion;
 - Protection and enhancement of the environment;
 - Prudent use of natural resources;
 - Sustainable economic development;
 - Integrating sustainable development in Development Plans; and
 - Delivering sustainable development
- 3.3 The requirements of PPS1 have been dealt with in policy CG2 by:
- Ensuring that development is designed in a high quality and inclusive manner (PPS1 paragraph 13) by requiring developers to adhere to the principles of sustainable design and construction, on which details and guidance are available in the SD&C Supplementary Planning Document.
 - Reinforcing the need to mitigate the effects of, and adapt to, climate change through the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and the use of renewable energy (PPS1, paragraph 20). These objectives have been met through the requirement of utilising the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM ratings on new developments above the given thresholds.
 - Ensuring development minimises the need to consume new resources over the lifetime of the development by making more efficient use or reuse of existing resources (PPS1, paragraph 22), by utilising the CSH which has criteria for sustainable resource use
 - Promoting the use of sustainable drainage systems in the management of run-off (PPS1, paragraph 22), by including a policy clause that requires development to demonstrate the sustainable management of surface water run-off from developments; and
 - Ensuring that developments are sustainable, durable and adaptable (PPS1, paragraph 36), again by utilising the CSH and BREEAM standards, which are felt to be comprehensive and transparent criteria for developers to adhere to.

PPS1 Planning and Climate Change - Supplement to PPS1

- 3.4 This PPS sets out how local planning can support achievement of the zero-carbon targets alongside meeting community needs for economic and housing development. It builds upon the information provided in PSS1 and provides guidance for delivering sustainable development. There is a strong emphasis on incorporating decentralised, renewable and low carbon energy in new developments, alongside other considerations such as sustainable waste management, sustainable drainage systems and opportunities for sustainable transport. Some of the Key Planning Objectives for planning authorities contained within this PPS that relate to policy CG2 are as follows:

- make a full contribution to delivering the Government's Climate change Programme and energy policies, and in doing so contribute to global sustainability;
- secure new development and shape places that minimise vulnerability, and provide resilience, to climate change; and in ways that are consistent with social cohesion and inclusions;
- conserve and enhance biodiversity, recognising that the distribution of habitats and species will be affected by climate change

- 3.5 The requirements of the PPS1 planning and climate change supplement have been dealt with in policy CG2 by:

- Having an evidence-based understanding of local feasibility and potential (paragraph 26) for renewable and low-carbon technologies by drawing on the work contained in the 4NW study "Towards Broad Areas for Renewable Energy Development" and the AGMA "Decentralised Energy Study", and being founded on local strategies, including the Sustainable Community Strategy
- Adding to the policies in RSS (PPS1 sup, paragraph 18) to achieve the key planning objectives (PPS1 sup, paragraph 9) of: contributing to global sustainability; minimising vulnerability to climate change; and conserving and enhancing biodiversity. These objectives have been met through the requirement of utilising the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM ratings on new developments above the given thresholds.
- Reinforcing the need to supply renewable or low carbon energy from new development (PPS1 sup, paragraph 20).

PPS3 Housing

- 3.6 PPS3 underpins the delivery of the Government's strategic housing policy objectives and its goal is to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home, which they can afford in a community where they want to live. PPS3 states that: "Good design is fundamental to the development of high quality new housing, which contributes to the creation of sustainable, mixed communities." Utilising the requirement to achieve level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes in policy CG2 reinforces the need for well-designed houses, which are also sustainable homes.

PPS9 Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

- 3.7 This PPS describes the key principles that should be followed through the planning process, to ensure that the potential impacts on biodiversity and geological conservation

considered. PPS9 states that planning decisions should: “Aim to maintain and enhance, restore or add to biodiversity and geological conservation interests.” It also states that: “Plan policies should promote opportunities for the incorporation of beneficial biodiversity and geological features within the design of development.”

- 3.8 The issue of biodiversity and geological conservation is covered in a strategic manner through policy CG1 and policy P4 of the Core Strategy. However, the inclusion of policy CG2 reinforces the importance of recognising biodiversity by referencing further information contained within the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and incorporating a requirement for utilising the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Code for Sustainable Homes includes 5 assessment criteria for ecology issues in new development. Including a policy requirement for developers to achieve CSH level 3 on developments of 5 or more dwellings ensures that ecology and biodiversity are taken into consideration as an aspect of the development.

PPS10 Planning for Sustainable Waste Management

- 3.9 This PPS covers the waste hierarchy of reduce, reuse and recycle, and is largely concerned with providing advice on identifying sites and areas for waste management facilities, and determining planning applications on these. The issue of planning for sustainable waste management is covered in a strategic manner through policy P3 of the Core Strategy. However PPS10 also states that planning authorities should: “ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management”. This particular requirement of PPS10 has been met through policy CG2 referencing the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, which provides advice and guidance on materials / construction waste, and providing facilities for efficient waste management and recycling. There is also a requirement for developers to achieve level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The CSH contains mandatory and non mandatory elements for waste which cover the storage of non-recyclable waste and recyclable household waste, construction site waste management and composting.

PPS22 Renewable Energy

(And “Planning for Renewable Energy - A Companion Guide to PPS22”)

- 3.10 The Government’s energy policy aims to put the UK on a path to cut its carbon dioxide emissions by 60% by 2050, and to maintain reliable and competitive energy supplies. PPS22 provides guidance on increasing the development of renewable energy resources. This PPS is mainly concerned with providing guidance for standalone renewable energy developments (e.g. the location of wind farms), however there is also a section giving guidance for on-site renewable energy development. PPS22 states that: “local development documents should contain policies designed to promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the development of renewable energy resources.” The strategic aspect of renewable energy developments is dealt with elsewhere in the Core Strategy through policy CG1, which states the following: “Maximise the potential for renewable energy development where it conforms to the overall spatial approach. “
- 3.11 PPS22 states that: “Local planning authorities may include policies in local development documents that require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments.” PPS22 also states that local authorities and developers should consider incorporating renewable energy projects in all new developments and that local authorities

should specifically encourage small scale renewable energy schemes through positively expressed policies in local development plan documents.

- 3.12 The companion guide to PPS22 recommends that local planning authorities should encourage developers to incorporate renewable technology onto sites, but that the policies should be flexible and not specify technology types. The policies should also avoid placing undue burden on developers regarding generation targets.
- 3.13 The policy requirements of PPS22 have been dealt with through the inclusion of wording in policy CG2 which requires sites of 5 or more residential units or 500m² or greater non-residential units to utilise appropriate decentralized, renewable or low carbon energy sources to reduce the CO₂ emissions of predicted energy by at least 10%. This is built upon by having a two-stage policy which requires further CO₂ reductions for development, as detailed in the AGMA decentralised energy study.

PPS25 Development and Flood Risk

- 3.14 This PPS provides information on conducting flood risk assessment and how to use the sequential approach to determine the suitability of development in flood risk areas. Using the risk-based approach should also be adopted for managing flood risk. PPS25 states that: “Since development in one part of a catchment may increase run-off and hence flood risk elsewhere, the aim should be for new development not to increase run-off from the undeveloped situation and for redevelopment to reduce run-off.” The use of SUDs in new development is also recommended to reduce the likelihood of flooding by managing flood “pathways”. The issue of flooding is covered in a strategic manner through policy CG1 of the Core Strategy, however the wording in policy CG2 reinforces the need to manage flood risk and manage surface water run-off in a sustainable manner.

The “Planning and Energy Act 2008” November 2008

- 3.15 This Act allows local planning authorities to include in the local development plan reasonable requirements for renewable and low carbon energy, and energy efficiency standards that exceed current building regulations.
- 3.16 Although The Planning and Energy Act 2008 is not national planning policy, it is law and clearly encourages local authorities, through the planning process, to ask developers to increase the quantities of for renewable energy in new developments and to increase energy efficiency. This has been reflected in Bolton’s approach in policy CG2.

The Code for Sustainable Homes

- 3.17 The Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) was published by the Communities and Local Government (CLG) in April 2008. This is an environmental assessment method for rating and certifying the performance of new homes and is a national standard for use in the design and construction of new homes, with a view to encouraging continuous improvement in sustainable home building. The document states that:

“The Code is closely linked to Building Regulations, which are the minimum building standards required by law. Minimum standards for Code compliance have been set above the requirements of Building Regulations. The Code signals the future direction of Building Regulations in relation to carbon emissions from, and energy use in homes, providing greater regulatory certainty for the homebuilding industry.”

- 3.18 The CSH incorporates an additional package of sustainability measures that are above and beyond Building Regulations standards. The Code assesses the sustainability of a home in a holistic manner against nine design categories: energy and CO₂ emissions, pollution, water, health and wellbeing, materials, management, surface water run-off, ecology, waste. At present, adhering to the Code for Sustainable Homes is only mandatory for publicly funded housing, however all new homes should be rated against the Code (even if it is for a “nil rating”). This means that to date, the majority of private housing developments have not incorporated CSH principles. Since the economic downturn, the English planning press has reported increasing numbers of housing developers voluntarily submitting planning applications that will achieve CSH Level 3-6. This increase is possibly in response to a growing consumer appetite for more sustainable products and the desire for lower household running costs.
- 3.19 In May 2009, Wales indicated that it will require all housing proposals to meet the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 and non domestic buildings to meet the BREEM ‘Very Good’ standard as a minimum, from 1st September 2009. Measures were announced by the Environment, Sustainability & Housing Minister Jane Davidson, and are intended to cut carbon emissions and improve the overall sustainability of the Welsh built environment.

Regional policy and evidence

North West Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.20 Policy CG2 and the associated spatial area-based policies have full and proper regard to the policies set out in the North West of England Plan, Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) to 2021. The policies have been developed to conform with policies EM16, EM17 and EM18 in the RSS.
- 3.21 Policy EM16 emphasises that the approach to energy should be that energy consumption is minimised and energy efficiency is improved. This should be supported through incorporating policies into plans which support the delivery of the national timetable for reducing emissions from domestic and non-domestic buildings.
- 3.22 Policy EM17 states that the proportion of electricity which is supplied to the region from renewable sources should increase incrementally between 2010 and 2020 from 10% to 20%. A sub regional study should be produced to support these targets, and establish local strategies to deal with renewable resources. It also states that the use of renewable resources should be encouraged by the local authority, and gives a list of criteria which should be considered in the provision of renewable technologies.
- 3.23 Policy EM18 emphasises that local authorities should encourage renewable and low carbon energy in new development. It states that DPDs should set out targets for the energy to be used in new development, and to what type and size of development these targets should be applied. It also states that
- “In advance of local targets being set, new non residential developments above a threshold of 1,000m² and all residential developments comprising 10 or more units should secure at least 10% of their predicted energy requirements from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources”*
- 3.24 The requirements of NW RSS policies EM16, EM17 and EM18 have been dealt with through the inclusion of the Sustainable Design and Construction policy CG2. This

stipulates a target and threshold for the contribution of renewable energy on developments, and requires applicable development to meet targets for energy efficiency and sustainability by adhering to the Code for Sustainable Homes and the BREEAM standard. Policy CG1 deals with renewable energy development in a more strategic manner. A sub regional study has been commissioned by AGMA, as indicated by RSS policy EM 17.

Other plans, strategies and evidence

AGMA Decentralised Energy Study

- 3.25 AGMA commissioned a study to provide an evidenced based understanding of local feasibility and potential for renewable and low carbon energy technologies within the Greater Manchester City Region. The focus of the AGMA Decentralised Energy Study (URBED, Aecom & Quantum, June 2009) is on providing sufficient strategic evidence to enable Core Strategies to set minimum targets for heat and power and identify opportunities for linking new development and supporting energy infrastructure with existing communities. The project's objectives are taken from the PPS1 Climate Change Supplement and the Draft Practice Guide. Paragraphs 18-32 of the PPS (and 3.11-3.12 of the Draft Practice Guide) outline the need for an evidence based understanding of local feasibility and potential. The study should meet these objectives.
- 3.26 Representative locations and types of development are used in real case studies to illustrate mixes of energy supply technologies, and the enabling mechanisms and planning policy requirements. Although each area has its own distinctive features, the lessons are applicable across similar development locations across Greater Manchester. The case studies for the different character areas across Greater Manchester are used as the basis for a bottom-up analysis across the City Region. The case studies show that there is real potential for generating renewable energy across the districts. In terms of onsite renewable and LZC technology, the case studies indicate that for smaller sites there are fewer opportunities for achieving zero carbon homes, as the potential for district heating and the feasibility for combined heat and power is reduced.
- 3.27 More information on how the AGMA Decentralised Energy Study has been incorporated within the Core Strategy is discussed later this document under the section entitled "summary of policy formulation".

Towards Broad Areas for Renewable Energy Development

- 3.28 This research by 4NW: Towards Broad Areas for Renewable Energy Development (Ove Arup & Partners July 2008) covers the whole of the North West region and provides information to help with the formulation of a policy approach on the identification of broad areas for renewable energy development. It forms parts of the evidence base for the Partial Review of the RSS policies on renewable energy. The report presents the findings of work in four main areas:
- Assessing the existing capacity, broad potential and constraints for renewable energy resources;
 - Assessing the future energy demand and the progress against draft and recommended renewable energy targets;

- Producing a clear set of criteria for the development of renewable energy; and
 - Identifying broad areas for the development of renewable energy resources
- 3.29 Perhaps most importantly, this study considers the potential maximum theoretical levels of renewable electricity and heat generation in the North West, and contrasts these figures against a more 'pragmatic' maximum. RSS sets a renewable electricity target of 7,930GWh by 2020 (NW RSS page 119), however this report suggests that a 'pragmatic' electricity figure of 7,477GWh can be achieved – a significant shortfall.
- 3.30 The report also states that in 2007/2008, there was an estimated renewable electricity output of 3,154GWh – less than half that of the target figure in RSS for 2020, indicating that we need to significantly increase our renewable energy capacity to reach these targets.

Bolton's Affordable Warmth Strategy – 2008 update

- 3.31 A household is said to be in fuel poverty if it needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain a satisfactory heating regime. Fuel poverty is recognised as a serious obstacle to the health and well-being of many households in the borough. The Centre for Sustainable Energy has highlighted the geographical areas most at risk of fuel poverty in Bolton. The areas with the highest proportions of households in fuel poverty are very similar to those highlighted in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (2004), and are concentrated in the inner parts of Bolton. In 2005, NEA estimated that there were 17,999 households living in fuel poverty in Bolton. Domestic energy prices have increased by 50% in real terms in the period 2003-2008. These fuel price rises mean that the number of households living in fuel poverty will be increasing. Bolton has a consistently higher incidence of excess winter deaths than that of colder Scandinavian countries.
- 3.32 Bolton's Local Area Agreement (2006-09) identified the reduction of excess winter deaths as a key priority for the Older People's block, also helping to meet the target to reduce health inequalities under the Health block. Bolton's new Local Area Agreement (2007-2017) does not have a specific target about fuel poverty but does include targets to reduce health inequalities and increase life expectancy, in which the reduction of fuel poverty is cited a key priority.
- 3.33 Poor energy efficiency is an issue for Bolton's housing stock. The Decent Homes Standard and the Affordable Warmth Strategy exist to address poor energy efficiency and fuel poverty in existing housing. However it is important to consider the future: building houses that are increasingly energy efficient will help prevent future occupants from increasing energy bills and protect them from slipping into fuel poverty.
- 3.34 The following were also considered in the preparation of the Sustainable Design and Construction policies:
- Building a Greener Future: Policy Statement 2007
 - National Indicator 188: Adapting to Climate Change (this work is a project in progress by the Sustainable Development Team of Bolton Council)
 - Definition of Zero Carbon Homes and Non-Domestic Buildings (Consultation paper December 2008)

- Research to Assess the Costs and Benefits of the Government's Proposals to Reduce the Carbon Footprint of New Housing Development (aka the Cyril Sweet Report)

Evidence Summary

- 3.35 A national precedent was set by Merton Council requiring certain developments to install technology which would supply 10% of a building's energy needs from renewable sources. The national political agenda of combating climate change precipitated this ground breaking change in planning policy, which has now been formalised through the requirements set out in PPS1. The recent "Planning and Energy Act 2008" allows local authorities to set out reasonable requirements for energy used in development to be from renewable sources or low carbon sources and to require developments to comply with energy efficiency standard that exceed the energy requirements of building regulations. Set against the backdrop of the Planning and Energy Act 2008, and the encouragement of the government for local authorities to take an increasingly proactive attitude to tackling climate change, Bolton has chosen a policy approach that supports this agenda. This policy approach balances the needs for increasingly sustainable, efficient and resilient homes, whilst being mindful of the economic margins of small developments and the needs of smaller construction companies.

'Building a Greener Future' states that:

"In summary, we propose to achieve a zero carbon goal in three steps: moving first, in 2010 to a 25 per cent improvement in the energy/carbon performance set in Building Regulations; then second in 2013, to a 44 per cent improvement; then, finally in 2016, to zero carbon. We said that zero carbon means that, over a year, the net carbon emissions from all energy use in the home would be zero."

- 3.36 This is significant because Bolton's Core Strategy is due to run until 2021 – enough flexibility needs to be built into our policies to support the attainment of zero carbon housing by 2016, this is reflected by the inclusion of a two-stage policy. Setting thresholds and targets to slightly higher levels now will help to signpost to developers the issues of climate change and fuel poverty that are faced by Bolton. There is a large stock of outstanding planning permissions for dwellings in Bolton, and none of these dwellings will be subject to policies contained within the Core Strategy.
- 3.37 The AGMA Decentralised Energy Study built up a picture of Greater Manchester for the potential of renewable energy to be generated across the area. Representative locations and types of development were used in real case studies to illustrate mixes of energy supply technologies, and the enabling mechanisms and planning policy requirements. The case studies for the different character areas across Greater Manchester were used as the basis for a bottom-up analysis across the City Region. They show that there is real potential for generating renewable energy across the districts, particularly on sites that can utilise CHP and district heating.
- 3.38 PPS1 makes it clear that: "policies should seek to minimise the need to consume new resources over the lifetime of the development by making more efficient use or reuse of existing resources" (paragraph 22). Through the planning process, this is difficult to implement through planning conditions, and then subsequently monitor and enforce. The most transparent way to show consistency with this requirement of PPS1 is to utilise the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) and BREEAM standards on all developments of 5 or

more dwellings and 500m² or greater, respectively. These standards are nationally recognised and endorsed by Communities and Local Government. It is for this reason, combined with other drivers detailed above, that a policy approach incorporating the CSH has been chosen for consistency and transparency, in line with the national agenda for tackling climate change.

- 3.39 Regarding thresholds, it was initially proposed that the policy requirements for renewable technology and the CSH should be asked for on all developments, thus making the threshold equal to zero (rather than 5 dwellings or 500sqm of commercial). The policy would be then applied flexibly to allow developers to demonstrate issues with viability on a site by site basis, as indicated by PPS1. However the Cyril Sweet report indicates that small developments would struggle with viability in meeting more ambitious targets:

“Costs are also expected to be higher for smaller scale developments (because most costs effective site wide solutions are less applicable). Therefore, costs may be higher for smaller firms which would have a greater exposure to smaller scale developments.”

- 3.40 It is for this reason that the threshold of 5 dwellings and 500sqm commercial has been taken across the suite of Sustainable Design and Construction policies, firstly to ensure consistency, and secondly to take into consideration the issue of viability for smaller developments. Just as with any other planning requirement, the onus will be on the developer to demonstrate viability (paragraph 42 PPS1 supplement). Planning decisions will be taken which take a balanced view of the costs and benefits of the development.

4 Council Approach

Core Strategy Key Issues

- 4.1 In the Key Issues consultation document the following general underlying issue was posed for public comment:
- G7 Planning policies for determining planning applications - The Core Strategy will contain generic development control policies
- 4.2 Several comments requested that the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD was referenced or reflected in Core Strategy policy. One comment raised the issue of utilising sustainable construction techniques and maximising energy efficiency and recommended it for inclusion as policy. There were several responses recommending the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage to manage surface water runoff, to help protect freshwater resources and to reduce flooding. The use of the Ecohomes standard was encouraged in some comments. Biodiversity, green corridors and the protection of natural resources were also common points made in comments.

Core Strategy Issues and Options

- 4.3 Within the Issues & Options Report, a question regarding the Sustainable Design & Construction Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was posed, which asked consultees to choose their preferred option. These options included:
- BE4 A – Specify the same level of sustainable design and construction standards as set out in the draft Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- BE4 B – Specify an improved level of sustainable design and construction over what is set out in the draft Sustainable Design and Construction SPD
- BE4 C – Set out a general requirement of sustainable design and construction standards that should be as good as possible, but detailed requirements should be set out in a revised Sustainable Design and Construction SPD, which can be further revised quickly to reflect changing circumstances.
- OR – Another option – please explain what this would be.
- 4.4 In response to the consultation on the Issues and Options Report, the majority of people felt that Option BE4 C was the appropriate option, however it was suggested that more written guidance on utilising renewable energy technologies both through new build and retro-fitting existing buildings, should be provided. There were several comments requesting the inclusion of a stronger approach to protecting and enhancing biodiversity through policies in the Core Strategy. Other comments stated that the Code for Sustainable Homes would replace the Eco Homes standard and that this would deal with

energy provision issues, and also that there would be no need for a Merton style 10% rule.

- 4.5 The Sustainability Appraisal analysed the options for the Sustainable Design and Construction question within the Issues and Options report and found that all three options would make an excellent contribution to improving the image and strengthening pride in the borough along with protecting Bolton's natural environment.

Core Strategy Preferred Options

- 4.6 In the Preferred Options stage of consultation, the following wording was suggested as the Preferred Policy Approach:

"It is recommended that in determining planning applications, the following should be taken into consideration:

- Sustainable design and construction standards should be as high as possible, therefore aiming to exceed the minimum requirements stipulated in the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and to track best practice and precedent.
- Detailed requirements will be set out in a revised Sustainable Design and Construction SPD with the in built ability or function to be revised quickly to reflect changing circumstances, policy or targets.

Issues taken into account within the SPD will include:

- Sustainable Design
- Considerate Construction
- Sustainable Drainage, including Water Use
- Materials and Construction waste
- Biodiversity
- Climate Change and Renewable Energy
- Waste Management and Recycling

For more detailed information please view the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD."

- 4.7 Representations supported the use of Sustainable Design and Construction SPD which can be revised rapidly. It was also highlighted that the aspirations of the SPD could be better represented within the Core Strategy, than they were at the Preferred Options stage. The inclusion of sustainable drainage (SUDs) and water use policies was encouraged. One comment asked for a stronger approach on issues relating to biodiversity, however this is covered in a more strategic manner through policy CG1. One comment highlighted the fact that PPS1 requires us to set out in a DPD the following:

- I. set out a target percentage of the energy to be used in new development to come from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources where it is viable. The target should avoid prescription on technologies and be flexible in how carbon savings from low energy supplies are to be secured;

- II. where there are particular and demonstrable opportunities for greater use of decentralised or low-carbon energy than the target percentage, bring forward development area or site-specific targets to secure this potential;
and, in bringing forward targets,
 - III. set out the type and size of development to which the target will be applied;
and
 - IV. ensure there is a clear rationale for the target and it is properly tested.
- 4.8 Several representations were made regarding the inadequate coverage of biodiversity issues within the Core Strategy. The issue of biodiversity is not explicitly covered in the Sustainable Design and Construction Policy, however the Code for Sustainable Homes includes a set of criteria for protecting and enhancing the ecological value of sites. Biodiversity is covered in a strategic manner through policy CG1.
- 4.9 These comments made have been consider, and where appropriate have been carried through and met within the Core Strategy Publication Document.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 4.10 The Sustainability Appraisal showed that the Sustainable Design and Construction achieved a mixed level of scores on the various assessment areas. The following are two key points that have been extracted from the SA report:
- The radar diagram clearly shows that the Sustainable Design and Construction Preferred Option makes the biggest contribution to the objectives of 'Cleaner and Greener Bolton'. Clearly, by specifying sustainable design and construction principles, the Council's Preferred Option will ensure the efficient use of natural resources and energy, encourage waste reduction and minimisation, and help prevent flooding and minimise the impact on climate change. Additionally by ensuring the requirements to be as good as possible, therefore aiming to exceed the minimum requirements stipulated in the SDC SPD and to track best practice and precedent. This option offers a flexible approach to allow the Council to respond to new and emerging national policy, and will ensure that Bolton Council's requirement are consistent with national policy.
 - However, if the Sustainable design and construction requirements apply to some small developers this may add additional costs to developments which may be detrimental to local businesses. It is not certain whether this will be an issue, and anecdotal evidence has shown that developers do not have difficulties with sustainable design and construction standards, but with the differing standards in different local authority areas. In the longer term these differing standards will be less of an issue as more local authorities adopt similar SPD's The Council's Preferred Option offers a flexible approach to allow the Council to respond to new and emerging national policy, and will ensure that Bolton Council's requirement are consistent with national policy.

5 Conclusion

Summary of policy formulation

- 5.1 The content of the policy wording contained within the Publication Document has evolved from that included in the Preferred Options report and Issues and Options report. As the policy has evolved, content changes have occurred due to the results of public consultation, the inclusion of more succinct wording, and more evidence becoming available. During the formulation of the Core Strategy, the issues surrounding climate change have been steadily rising up the political agenda in England, and this has also influenced policy direction. A two-stage policy approach has been taken to ensure flexibility over the lifetime of the Core Strategy.

Soundness

- 5.2 The council considers this sustainable design and construction policy and the contribution to the overall Core Strategy is sound because it is:

Consistent with National Policy

- 5.3 This Background Document shows that the spatial vision and objectives are in accordance with national policy.

Justified

- **Founded on robust and credible Evidence Base**

- 5.4 This background document shows that policy CG2 has been founded on a robust and credible evidence base, including the AGMA Decentralised Energy Study, the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD and the results of public consultation. Representations have been accounted for and incorporated into policy where applicable.

- **The most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives**

- 5.5 This Background Document shows that the Council has chosen a policy that best reflects the available evidence. It also shows that the Council has developed this policy through a process of publicly consulting upon the contents of the sustainable design and construction policy, and then adjusting the policy to reflect consultation responses.

Effective

- **Deliverable**

- 5.6 The sustainable design and construction policy will be delivered through the development control process.

- **Flexible**

- 5.7 The sustainable design and construction policy references the Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document. This SPD sets out detailed requirements and can be further revised quickly to reflect changing circumstances. The

Council will apply this policy flexibly by considering it as part of an assessment of the costs and benefits of a development.

- **Capable of being monitored**

- 5.8 The sustainable design and construction policy will cover a wide range of planning applications submitted to Bolton Council. In this instance, the per capita reduction in CO₂ emissions in Bolton will be the indicator used for the Core Strategy. Any developments that do not comply with the sustainable design and construction policies should be dealt with and monitored through the planning control and planning enforcement process.

Measuring Delivering – Cleaner Greener - Sustainable Design and Construction (CG2)
Strategic Objectives met SO7, SO10, SO11, SO12, SO13
Indicators (and targets)
Per capita reduction in CO ₂ emissions in Bolton (2010/2011: -10%, 2012/2013: -15%, 2017/2018: -26%)
Flexibility and phasing
The Council will apply this policy flexibly by considering it as part of an assessment of the costs and benefits of a development