

Report to Cabinet

Subject: Low Carbon Planning Guidance for Gedling Borough

Date: 20 May 2021

Author: Planning Policy Manager

Wards Affected

All

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet approval of the Low Carbon Planning Guidance for Gedling Borough (attached as **Appendix A**).

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- 1) Approve the appended Low Carbon Planning Guidance as informal planning guidance for Gedling Borough.

1 Background

- 1.1 Nottinghamshire councils have jointly prepared planning guidance on low carbon development in order to help the relevant councils to achieve their stated objectives of reducing carbon emissions. The Nottinghamshire guidance provides a foundation for the various Councils to take forward the low carbon agenda as they see fit through the planning system. The document attached as **Appendix A** to this report - Low Carbon Planning Guidance for Gedling Borough is based on the Nottinghamshire Guidance, which has been adapted to meet the particular local circumstances for Gedling Borough. Subject to Cabinet approval, the Low

Carbon Planning Guidance may be a material planning consideration in determining major planning applications.

- 1.2 Most Nottinghamshire Councils have declared climate emergencies and/or set local targets for zero carbon emissions and some of these have set ambitious targets to be carbon neutral varying between 2027 and 2030. Gedling Borough Council has declared a climate emergency and has a target of 2030 to be carbon neutral.
- 1.3 The Low Carbon Planning Guidance includes practical guidance to assist both local planning authorities and developers towards achieving more sustainable design and construction. The guidance would apply to major development defined as ten or more dwellings or commercial development of one hectare and above or one thousand square metres of floorspace and above. A checklist for major planning applications is attached as an appendix to the guidance setting out information needed to support planning applications. The checklist distinguishes between information that is required under current policies and those more aspirational elements likely to be required in future.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that Cabinet approves the Low Carbon Planning Guidance attached at **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 The document is structured as follows:

Purpose of the guidance

Explains that the main purpose of the planning guidance is to provide:

- Practical guidance on the forms of sustainable design and construction for major developments;
- Guidance to help inform planning applications and the development management process in relation to major planning applications. Of note is the inclusion of the following:
- A checklist guide for developers to assist in the submission of major planning applications (Appendix 1)

Introduction

- Establishes the background to the preparation of the planning guidance and that it is based on the Guidance for Low Carbon Development produced by the Nottinghamshire Councils.

Policy Context

- Establishes the policy context set out nationally and locally supporting the document

Sustainable Development and Construction Principles

- This section includes Policy 1 that major development proposals will be required to include information on the sustainability and low carbon credentials of the development proposal in accordance with the checklist. It goes on to set out practical guidance for developers to help inform planning applications. The guidance is not prescriptive but rather informative in nature. For example guidance is provided on the following (amongst other matters):
 - Sustainable layout and design for e.g. improved connectivity within and off the site to encourage more sustainable travel;
 - Maximising site potential for e.g. solar orientation of buildings to encourage solar heating;
 - Minimising energy use such as through thermal mass and insulation within buildings; and
 - Integrating new development with existing green networks and incorporation of sustainable drainage systems to help to adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change such as flood risk.

Appendix

- Sustainability checklist for major development.

Next Steps

- 2.8 Subject to Cabinet approval, the document will be a material consideration in terms of decision making on major planning applications. It is also intended that elements of the guidance will be incorporated into the local plan, specifically Policy 1, and will be given greater weight as it progresses through the plan preparation process.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 An alternative option is not to approve the Low Carbon Planning Guidance as informal planning guidance. This would mean the document would be given no weight in determining planning applications. A further option is to prepare the document as a supplementary planning document, which would require a more formal process and public consultation. However,

this option is not favoured as the document is seen as an important interim measure pending the review of the Local Plan.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5 Legal Implications

5.1 The 2004 Planning and Compensation Act empowers Local Planning Authorities to prepare local plans and supplementary planning documents. As the document has not been prepared as a supplementary planning document and not subject to public consultation it will not be given the weight in decision-making afforded to supplementary planning documents adopted through the formal process. However, as approved planning guidance it may be a material consideration in planning decisions.

6 Equalities Implications

6.1 None direct. However, by contributing towards meeting Gedling Borough Council's zero carbon target and helping to improve the sustainability of major development will lead to positive environmental benefits for all groups including those with protected characteristics.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

7.1 The document promotes low carbon standards and sustainable design for new development. The key implication for carbon reduction is that the document has a role in guiding major planning applications so they are better designed to reduce carbon emissions and energy use thereby contributing to meeting Gedling Borough Council's zero carbon target. In terms of sustainability implications the document sets out key principles and planning guidance to help improve sustainable design for new development.

8 Appendices

8.1 **Appendix A:** Low Carbon Planning Guidance for Gedling Borough

9 Background Papers

9.1 Low Carbon Guidance for Nottinghamshire

10 Reasons for Recommendations

10.1 The reasons for the recommendations are:

- a) For the purpose of planning guidance.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer