

Appendix: Sustainability and Climate Change Statement Guidance

Many areas around the UK have been addressing ways to contribute to the importance of all new development being measured against sustainability dimensions. Ways this has been addressed has been through sustainability and climate change statements, where development at the application stage must demonstrate and promote through a series of key questions how the proposal will impact the environment positively and potentially negatively.

The statement should also outline how the proposal will address key questions set out in the below guidance and how it will support such key issues under the sustainability pillars (environment, economic and social).

This guidance is to be viewed as a sustainability toolkit to help aid applicants at the initial planning application stage to think about the key questions and ideas which can assist them in writing their statement.

The guidance should always be read and used in conjunction with the policies contained in the relevant development plan and any applicable legislation and regulations. This guidance does not prescribe specific design solutions, policy requirements or standards above set in the local development plan or national legislation. It is a tool to help individuals think further into developing their applications and statements.

Reference within the statements should be made to particular policies such as LP06 Climate Change Policy and other relevant policies throughout the adopted local plan.

The Six Key Questions which should be answered are:

- 1. What are the intended characteristics of the development as a whole which will contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation?***
- 2. How will the development contribute to the importance of sustainable and accessible transport options within West Norfolk, and help reduce the CO₂ emissions in the borough particularly from transport?***
- 3. How will the development integrate high quality design which addresses our obligation to move towards being carbon neutral by 2050?***
- 4. How will the development protect and enhance West Norfolk's natural environment and assets?***
- 5. How will the development support the local economy in West Norfolk?***
- 6. How will the development support local neighbourhoods and their community needs when adapting and mitigating to the local impacts of climate change?***

The statement will allow all users to find in one document how an application will deal with climate change and sustainability. It will help individuals who wish to view, comment and use the information from the statement, to find this set material easily and we hope this will ease time consumption on viewing planning documents for the information required in the key questions.

The statement does not need to be a strenuous task, however the more detail or information which the applicant has will always be welcomed and encouraged. The key questions are there to be helpful to all users and for applicants to answer to the point how they have understood and will address the needs of the borough.

Key Glossary Terms in the Local Plan to assist with the below questions:

Climate change adaptation:	Adjustments made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities. .
Climate change mitigation:	Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions
Sustainability	Meet the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations to meet their own needs. (Brundtland Commission, 1987)
Sustainable Development	Development which seeks economic, social and environmental gains simultaneously and jointly through the planning system.

The below guidance gives a summary behind the set key questions followed by key prompting bullet points to help assist individuals writing their statement. We hope the guidance below allows individuals to then explore further into the ideas which can and will be relevant to the applicant at hand.

Key Questions:

1. What are the intended characteristics of the development as a whole which will contribute to climate adaptation and mitigation?

This question draws together the key points for applicants to really show how the application at hand is planning to play its part in contributing positively to climate change through adaptation and mitigation. This question will help guide the statement to feed into the more specific points such as:

- Transport
- Design
- Local community needs
- Local economy

2. How will the development contribute to the importance of sustainable and accessible transport options within West Norfolk, and help reduce the CO2 emissions in the borough particularly from transport?

The importance of sustainable and accessible transport options are at the heart of sustainability and creating greener and better futures for all. By having sustainable and active options of travel brings a vast number of positive attributes to the local borough including: on individuals health and well-being, reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality, improving social interaction and accessible links throughout development.

Development should always where possible be contributing to accessible and sustainable options of travel, here is where the applicant can explain how sustainable transport ideas have been taken into consideration. Sustainable transport should be addressed within the climate change and sustainability statement in a way which fits appropriately with the application.

- Can the development help improve the current conditions available for sustainable transport?
- Will electric vehicle charging points be incorporated into the development?
- Is the development in close proximity to sustainable transport links?
- Travel plans?
- Walking distance to core services?

3. How will the development integrate high quality design which addresses our obligation to move towards being carbon neutral by 2050?

The importance of high-quality design and contributing to the adaptation or mitigation of climate change within development is crucial. Development should always address and demonstrate how design will be appropriate and sustainable. The climate change and sustainability statement should address how the application will integrate such measures in detail where possible. The bullet points below may help prompt further exploration in planned designs:

- **Sustainable design aspects to think about:**
 - Are sustainable and local materials being used?
 - Adapted to meet and exceed energy efficiency standards?
 - Density (appropriate surroundings)
 - District heating
 - Elevational treatment
 - Flexible to adapt change
 - Green Infrastructure (Green roofs, Green walls?)
 - Internal Arrangement & layout (light and ventilation)
 - Shade
 - Reduce the degree of heat loss
 - Water recycling systems
 - Waste management

- **Design quality**
 - clear design rationale
 - read the latest published design guidance

- **Renewable energy and low carbon energy solutions:**
 - Are there any grant schemes available?
 - Incentives on using these solutions?
 - What are the policy requirements?
 - National guidance?

- **Reducing demand and energy efficiency:**
 - air tightness
 - passive design e.g. solar gain and cooling
 - minimising thermal bridging

4. How will the development protect and enhance West Norfolk's natural environment and assets?

The protection and enhancement of the environment is of critical importance to West Norfolk, and one of the key features of the Local Plan Review is to create a borough that protects and enhances our justifiably famous natural and historic environment by ensuring growth of the borough is in a sustainable manner.

Planning can assist in achieving this through encouraging positive action to reduce carbon emissions and meet the current and future challenges of climate change by supporting and going above and beyond set national requirements wherever is possible and appropriate in local development. Planning can assist in achieving a number of important themes for our natural environment including: the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity, geodiversity, improving our open and green spaces, and improving our water corridors.

These points should be addressed in your Sustainability and Climate Change Statement where can be deemed appropriate detailing points linked to themes below or other relevant factors:

- Air Quality
- Biodiversity
- Contamination
- Flood risk
- Green network
- Sustainable drainage and SUDS

5. How will the development support the local economy in West Norfolk?

The importance of our local economy is to ensure that we continue to grow a strong local economy in a sustainable manner, which will be both responsive and competitive, and recognises technological innovations and the movement into a more digital and changing world with more flexibility and home working patterns. We want to be a place where businesses want to locate, establish and grow including the skills of all ages that will come with this.

- Can people adapt and work from home?
- Good fibre connections?
- Close proximity to local businesses?

6. How will the development support local neighbourhoods and their community needs when adapting and mitigating to the local impacts of climate change?

The local community and their needs should be a key requirement planning should address from the start to ensure that the development supports the requirements of residents and all people who interact within our borough. Neighbourhood plans in particular are very popular in West Norfolk with a vast number of parishes in the process of creating their own neighbourhood plans in accordance with the local plan and national requirements.

Local communities and their specific visions/wants can be a great starting point to understand how developments will support and engage with such plans, and where neighbourhood plans are not in place, how will your application help the regeneration, local distinctiveness and accessibility of the people who live and wish to live in the set area you wish to develop.

Ideas to think about:

- **Accessible communities:**
 - appropriate for all
 - affordable
 - mixed
 - diverse
 - inclusive

- **Context & local distinctiveness:**
 - local character & what makes the area unique?

- **Neighbourhood plans?**
 - Is there an adopted plan or proposed plan in place?
 - What are the needs and wants of the specific area and community?
 - Have you spoken to the parish/neighbourhood group if a neighbourhood plan is in place?

- **Regeneration**
 - Accessible to community and mixed-use buildings?
 - Can the development help regenerate this area?
 - Sufficient infrastructure provision?

- **Safety & security**
 - natural surveillance
 - social inclusion & justice