

Climate change policy making in the Sherburn in Elmet Neighbourhood Plan

1. SDC Local Plan says:

Climate Change & Flooding

Issue: Respond positively to address climate change and flooding

Objective: To provide resilient and adaptive measures to address climate change to meet national and local targets of achieving net-zero carbon emissions; and to help York and North Yorkshire become the first carbon negative sub-region. To develop, in line with national flood policy guidance, a resilient and adaptive approach to managing flood risk from all sources, by diverting development to the areas of lowest flood risk where possible; and in partnership develop a strategy for the Humber and tidal rivers.

Natural Environment

Issue: Ensure that development pressures do not threaten the green and blue assets of the former Selby district area which contribute to the attractive, tranquil and rural nature of the countryside and the setting of its settlements with benefits to health and well-being, climate change mitigation and flood resilience

Objective: To protect and enhance the existing network of wildlife sites and priority species; distinctive landscape character; green and blue infrastructure; air and water quality; strategic tree planting to support the ambitions for the White Rose Forest Project, local tree and hedgerow planting; nature recovery networks; and protect against pollution and deliver net gains in biodiversity.

2. Potential policy areas to explore

a. Renewable energy

Local resources and locations for renewable energy plants

- If you live in an area that has good potential for particular kinds of renewable energy (for example streams or rivers that used to have mills on them, areas with a good wind resource, fields suitable for solar farms, or the potential for an anaerobic digester in a neighbourhood that is very agricultural), could you detail these in your policies?

Scale of development and criteria for support

- Once your community starts talking about possible sites and particular types of renewable energy, you'll find pretty quickly that your community has strong opinions. Would medium scale wind turbines be supported along a particular hillside, but not large scale turbines? Would a solar farm be supported in a particular field, but only if

effectively screened from view from the west by native planting? This sort of detail is really helpful for would-be developers, and can help you to roll out the welcome mat for renewable energy developments of the type that will carry support in your community (and discourage developments that wouldn't).

Community energy

- The NPPF states that local planning authorities “should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy (paragraph 152)”, but very few local plans have policy to reflect this national objective.
- Your neighbourhood plan is a great opportunity to fill this policy vacuum, and encourage community owned projects that will return tangible benefits to your neighbourhood.

e.g.

Support will be given to renewable and low carbon energy generation developments that:

- a. are led by, or meet the needs of local communities; and
- b. create opportunities for colocation of energy producers with energy users, in particular heat, and facilitate renewable and low carbon energy innovation.

When considering such proposals, regard will be given to the wider benefits of providing energy from renewable sources, as well as the potential effects on the local environment; including any cumulative impact of these proposals.

Proposals for individual and community scale energy from hydro-electricity, solar photovoltaic panels, local biomass facilities, anaerobic digestions and wood fuel products will be supported subject to the following criteria:

- the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape; and
- the proposed development does not create an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents; and
- the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.

b. Sustainable buildings

You can include policies in your neighbourhood plan to encourage zero carbon homes and high levels of energy efficiency in new development, and potentially, create binding energy efficiency standards for new development. Seeking to do so pushes up against (and potentially beyond) what can be done through a neighbourhood plan, but the need for such policies is well documented, and many local plans entirely lack adequate policies.

e.g.

Provision of well-designed energy efficient buildings and places

The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions. This includes:

- Siting and orientation to optimise passive solar gain,
- The use of high quality, thermally efficient building materials,
- Installation of energy efficiency measures such as loft and wall insulation and double glazing.
- Non-residential developments should aim to meet the Buildings Research Establishment BREEAM building standard 'excellent'.
- Any new development to incorporate on-site energy generation from renewable sources such as solar panels, to at least the extent required by NS core strategy policy CS2.
- The retrofit of heritage properties/assets is encouraged to reduce energy demand and to generate renewable energy where appropriate, providing it safeguards historic characteristics and development is done with engagement and permissions of relevant organisations.
- Alterations to existing buildings must be designed with energy reduction in mind and comply with sustainable design and construction standards.

Retrofitting Historic Buildings - suggested policy wording - Centre for Sustainable Energy

The sensitive retrofitting of energy efficiency measures and the appropriate use of micro-renewables in historic buildings will be encouraged, including the retrofitting of listed buildings, buildings of solid wall or traditional construction and buildings within conservation areas, whilst safeguarding the special characteristics of these heritage assets for the future.

c. Sustainable transport

Re-shaping transport systems has enormous potential to enhance quality of life. Better facilities for walking, cycling and public transport, alongside reductions in car traffic, can create a cascade of benefits, including improved public health, improved air quality, more hospitable public spaces, greater footfall to support town centre uses and reduced economic losses from congestion. At the same time these measures will help meet environmental commitments: the transport sector is responsible for approximately 36% of all UK energy use, and 23% of CO2 emissions, so reducing car usage can bring significant savings.

e.g.

Connection to sustainable transport.

New developments should integrate with the current green infrastructure network and provide access to public and community transport, to connect with the social, community and retail facilities of the villages.

Footpath and cycle path network.

Support will be given to proposals that improve and extend the existing footpath and cycle path network, allowing greater access to new housing, the village centres, green spaces and the open countryside. The loss of existing footpaths and cycle paths will be resisted.

Contributions to maintain and improve the network.

Funds raised from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be put towards the costs of maintaining and improving the network of footpaths and cycle paths. Developer contributions towards those costs will be sought in appropriate cases.

d. Flooding, extreme weather and water conservation

Neighbourhood planning introduces the opportunity to explore the vulnerability of your local community to these effects, and what the opportunities are to increase your community's resilience. Questions you could

ask to explore this area are:

- Does your area suffer from local flooding problems, and is it clear what the root causes are? (e.g. houses built on a flood plain, rivers overwhelmed by heavy rain, loss of green space including paving over of front gardens).
- Are there specific areas where surface water drainage is inadequate or sometimes overwhelmed?

- Does your area suffer from water stress and over-abstraction? Do streams and rivers disappear in the summer?
- Does new development incorporate sufficient landscaping?
- Could new developments incorporate green roofs and walls?
- What could new developments do to reduce water use and reduce surface water flooding?

e.g.

Flood Risk

Proposals must incorporate a sustainable and integrated approach to the management of flood risk, surface water (including run off) and foul drainage. These proposals should be robust to the expected impacts of climate change ...

All development involving the loss of permeable surfaces, loss of trees, loss of soft landscaping or loss of any other feature that reduces flood risk is required to use appropriate mitigation measures to prevent an increase in flood risk within the site or elsewhere. This should be proportionate to the scale of the proposal, with small interventions (such as planting or use of impermeable surfaces) acceptable for minor developments in areas of low flood risk.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be used proportionately to mitigate any predicted increase in flood risk. These may include:

- i. Planting, particularly trees.
- ii. Introduction of permeable driveways, parking or other 'hardstanding' areas.
- iii. Rainwater water harvesting and storage features (including butts).
- iv. Green roofs.
- v. Attenuation tanks.
- vi. Soakaways.
- vii. Attenuation ponds.

SuDS must be designed as an integral part of the green infrastructure and street network. The system should effectively mitigate any adverse effects from surface water run-off and flooding on people, property and the ecological value of the local environment. A surface water sewer should be seen as a last resort and no surface water will be permitted to enter the public foul sewage network. Major developments must provide a SuDS Strategy and drawings showing all SuDS features. This must be supported with calculations showing how surface water flood risk will not increase.

e. Green infrastructure and biodiversity

The Sherburn plan is already considering a range of policies in this thematic area. One area for additional consideration could be actively mapping and promoting green corridors, as well as general and site specific action on GI and biodiversity.

e.g.

While we have a good network of green spaces in our NP area, these are generally not linked. Identifying and securing wildlife or green corridors is essential to ensure the necessary replenishment and maintenance of species diversity for healthy ecological functioning.

Policy EN51 Green Corridors

Development proposals should seek to maintain and enhance the connectivity of all green corridors where possible.

EN5.2 Proposals for development on or adjacent to primary green corridors, as defined by map x, must maintain and if possible enhance the function of the corridor. Planning applications for new dwellings must clearly demonstrate how they have incorporated appropriate measures to secure the connectivity of the corridor and the freedom of movement for species on and through the site.