

Renewable Energy policies for Local Development Frameworks

- **Local authority area:** Calderdale Council
- **Stakeholders:** Spatial Planning & Housing Energy Team

Summary

To use planning policy to increase the levels of renewable energy generated on-site and in doing so assist in meeting national and regional targets for renewable energy generation.

Key learning points

- Ensure you have a robust evidence base;
- Speak to those with a technical knowledge of issues surrounding installation of various renewable energy technologies;
- Be clear in the wording used and what it means e.g. 'expect' versus 'require';
- If possible look ahead and see where the renewable energy agenda is going to enable the policy to be as bold as possible and remain current for as long as possible in an area of policy which is changing rapidly.

Background

- Policy EP27 was adopted in the 2006 Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan.
- At the time, the national agenda was starting to push for an increase in renewable energy generation.
- The consultation comments at the first stage of plan preparation drew attention to the approach taken by London Borough of Merton to require on-site renewable energy generation.

Method

- The Council began preparing a Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (RCUDP) in 2002, although the first draft in November 2002 did not include a 'Merton' style policy.
- Comments made on this first draft drew attention to London Borough of Merton's policy.

- A draft policy was added at the Revised Deposit stage in March 2004, which read as follows:

“Major employment, retail and residential developments will be required to incorporate renewable energy generation to provide at least 10% of predicted energy requirements up until 2010, 15% up until 2015 and 20% up until 2020.”
- Two supporting paragraphs were added to provide justification for the policy.
- At the Pre-Inquiry Changes stage in November 2004, the policy wording was tightened based on experience in Merton. The Policy was amended to read as follows:

*“Major employment, retail and residential developments (**either new build, conversion or renovation**) will be required to incorporate **on-site** renewable energy generation to provide at least 10% of predicted energy requirements up until 2010, 15% up until 2015 and 20% up until 2020.”*
- During the RCUDP public inquiry from February to June 2005, there was discussion with the Council’s Housing Energy team to counter technical arguments, together with Legal input on wording. This resulted in proposed changes to the reasoned justification, but the policy remained as per the Pre-Inquiry changes. No other changes were made through the process.
- The Inspector’s report was received in March 2006.
- Modifications to the Plan were published May 2006.
- The RCUDP was formally adopted August 2006, including the policy as worded above.
- **Barriers**
- Comments on the policy during the plan preparation included the following objections:
 - Imposition of targets
 - Policy needs to be more flexible and should be applied on a case by case basis
 - The Council should consider the amounts of renewable energy already supplied by the main power suppliers rather than requiring on site generation
 - Policy should encourage rather than require renewable energy
 - Targets should be deleted
 - Policy imposes undue financial burden on developers
 - Unlikely that all development can achieve targets
 - Such a requirement is a barrier to regeneration
 - The policy will impact upon the viability of proposals
- In terms of addressing these barriers, the policy and the justification were amended. In particular the amendments were concerned with:
 - Amending the justification to emphasise that the targets were in line with national and regional targets
 - Amending the justification to explain that in circumstances where a developer has concerns over the feasibility of installing

renewable energy on site, then a statement would be required setting out the technical reasons why it would not be possible to do so.

- Amending the policy as per the final draft

- **Resources**

Colleagues in the Housing Energy team, legal advice, and national & regional policy

- **Length of project**

From start to finish the process took a little under 4 years.

Result - Key outcomes and impact

- An adopted policy requiring certain types of development to incorporate on site renewable energy generation.
- First policy of its nature in the Yorkshire and Humber Region and in advance of Regional Spatial Strategy 2008, Policy ENV5.
- In place prior to preparation of LDF (currently underway) and therefore did not have to wait for LDF to have policy in place.

Key contact

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References / Links

PPS22 and Companion Guide

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicystatements/pps22/>

Energy White Paper

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+/http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/policy-strategy/energy-white-paper-2003/page21223.html>

(The above link is to the white paper that was in place at the time of developing and adopting the policy; this has since been updated)