

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive's Office	Council	22 nd July 2014

RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To seek adoption of the Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- Members are asked to adopt the Renewable and Low Carbon Energy SPD as detailed in Appendix 1.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- This report explains the purposes and objectives of the Renewable and Low Carbon Energy SPD, which has now been finalised and is intended to be adopted.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) offer local planning authorities the opportunity to add guidance in specific policy areas. They are documents that must be prepared in consultation with interested parties, and must be subject to a screening process to discover whether a Sustainability Appraisal would be required. Unlike Development Plan Documents (DPDs) SPDs do not require independent examination before they are adopted.
- The Renewable and Low Carbon Energy SPD will supplement Core Strategy Policies 27: Sustainable Resources and New Development and 28: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes when adopted.
- It provides an overview of the various renewable and low carbon energy technologies available such as wind turbines and solar power, and identifies the planning issues

associated with each technology. The SPD also provides further advice and guidance for applicants on the requirements of the relevant Core Strategy policies. It draws together guidance from a range of documents that will need to be addressed in planning applications for renewable and low carbon energy schemes.

DRAFT SPD CONSULTATION RESPONSES

8. A draft version of the SPD was consulted on for 6 weeks between 31st March and 12th May 2014. 18 representations were received in relation to the consultation. A summary of the main issues raised and how those issues have been addressed in the SPD are included in Appendix 2. Approximately 1,500 people and organisations were consulted including statutory consultees and other organisations and members of the public that have asked to be kept informed of work on the Local Plan.
9. 5 supported the SPD, 12 supported subject to amendments to the SPD and 1 objected.
10. The representations supporting the SPD subject to amendments were mainly from organisations that will be consulted on renewable/low carbon energy planning applications such as English Heritage, the Highways Agency, the Coal Authority, National Trust and Lancashire County Council.
11. The objection was received from Heskin Parish Council and stated that they will object in principle to proposals for wind turbines in the Heskin parish area. Given that the intention of the SPD is to promote appropriate renewable energy schemes, it is considered that no changes can be made to the SPD to overcome this objection. Applications for wind turbines will be determined in accordance with the development plan, including Core Strategy Policy 28, the SPD and relevant material considerations.
12. The SPD has been amended to address some of the issues raised. In particular a section on unstable land has been added in the wind turbine and solar power sections of the SPD setting out the requirement for a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to be submitted with planning applications for these technologies if they are located in areas defined by the Coal Authority as Development High Risk Areas.
13. Reference has also been made to non-designated heritage assets contained in the Lancashire Historic Environment Record that will also need to be taken into consideration when assessing the impact of wind turbines, solar power schemes and hydropower schemes on heritage assets.
14. Within the ecology section of the wind turbines and solar power sections of the SPD, further information has been added in relation to information provided by the RSPB. Reference has been made to the Lancashire Goose Alert Area (GAA) to the west of the Borough which is linked to the Martin Mere and Ribble Alt Estuaries Special Protection Areas and birds from both sites feed within it. The SPD requires developers to consult the RSPB if a proposal for a wind turbine or solar power scheme is located in this area.
15. The Highways Agency has amended its policy on the distance of wind turbines to highways. They previously required the separation distance to be the height of the turbine plus 50 metres. The new policy requires the separation distance to be the height of the turbine plus 50 metres or the height x 1.5 metres, whichever is the lesser. The SPD has been amended accordingly.
16. The remaining amendments relate to minor changes to the text to assist in clarity and be consistent between the terminology used in national planning policy, the Local Plan and the SPD e.g. the SPD referred to acceptable uses in the Green Belt but one of the representations suggested changing this to appropriate to be consistent with the terminology used in the NPPF.

NEXT STEPS

17. Under the planning regulations, the revised SPD along with a statement setting out the people consulted when preparing the SPD, a summary of the main issues raised and how these issues have been addressed must be made available for a minimum of 4 weeks before it is adopted. The 4 week period took place between 23rd June and 21st July 2014.
18. Accordingly, the final version of the SPD is being placed before Members for approval to adopt.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

19. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area	✓	Policy and Communications	

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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