

ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

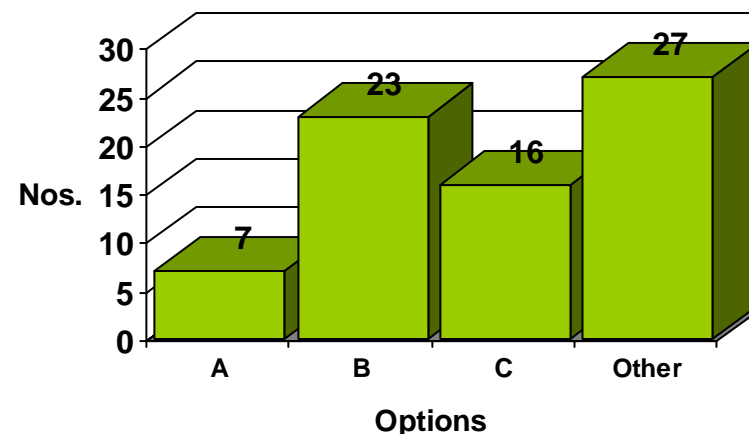
Option EQ1 – Code for Sustainable Homes

EQ1a: Which of the following Code for Sustainable Homes standards should new development be required to meet:

- A. Level 1 (10% more energy efficient than 2006 Building Regulations standard).**
- B. Level 3 (25% more energy efficient than 2006 Building Regulations standard).**
- C. Level 6 (carbon neutral)**
- D. Another level.**

Response Levels to Options

Which of the following Code for Sustainable Homes standards?



| EQ1a: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|---|
| Level 3 to be set now with the opportunity to review as technology and innovation becomes available and is reasonably priced. | Building Regulations will be changed nationally, requiring new dwellings to reduce CO2 emissions by: 25% from 2010, 44% from 2013 and zero carbon from 2016; and non-domestic buildings should be zero carbon from 2019. If more ambitious targets on implementing building sustainability standards are to be sought, the focus should be on development area or site-specific opportunities and be evidence based and viable (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 31). | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Building Regulations, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |

| EQ1a: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|---|
| Amended Development Policy G of the draft RSS requires that developers, local authorities, regional agencies and others must ensure that their strategies, plans and programmes achieve best practice in sustainable construction. | National Government is gradually introducing more demanding building sustainability standards. The Proposed Changes to the RSS (July 2008) has amended Development Policy G to reflect this, but includes the promotion of best practice in sustainable construction and help to achieve the national timetable for reducing carbon emissions from residential and non-residential buildings. | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |
| The introduction of the Code for Sustainable Homes should conform to national standards and will be imposed by Building Regulations and the Government, and should not be an issue for the local authority to decide. PPS1 (para 30) states that planning policies should not replicate, cut across, or detrimentally affect other legislative requirements such as Building Regulations. | Accept, but higher levels of building sustainability can be set in advance of Government policy (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 31), if there is local evidence to support this. | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |
| Applying Level 6 too early in the plan period will threaten the delivery of housing – the imposition of any Level above 3 would severely impact upon the delivery of the strategic housing requirement due to a lack of feasibility and viability. | There would need to be clear local evidence to support application of zero carbon dwellings in advance of the Government timetable. | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance. Agree that the early introduction of Level 6 would make residential development more expensive and may adversely affect developer's intentions to develop. |
| The major problems of inefficiency are in the existing stock. | Government consultation (in Dec 08) on zero carbon buildings permits retrofitting of existing buildings in the locality as an “allowable solution” to enable zero carbon buildings to be achieved through the buildings regulations. | Reflect Government policy when finalised. |
| The Code Level should be subject to the ultimate viability of the development scheme; in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to accept a lower level if that ensures delivery of the required housing on the right site at the right time. | Any policy relating to sustainable buildings will need to evidence-based and viable, having regard to the overall costs of bringing sites to the market and the need to avoid any adverse impact on the development needs of communities (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 33). | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |

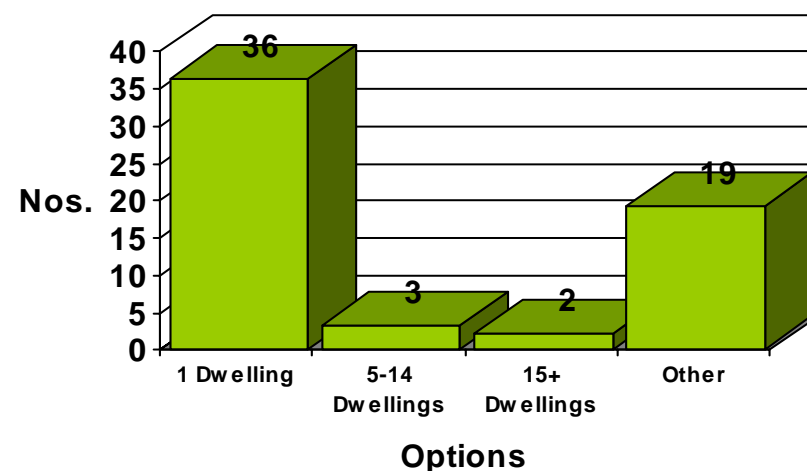
| EQ1a: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|--|---|---|
| The Code for Sustainable Homes should be used solely for the provision of publicly funded housing until they have been incorporated into the building regulations. | Code standards for publicly funded housing are in advance of that for 'private' homes, with Level 3 required from April 2008, but higher levels of building sustainability can be set in advance (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 31), if there is local evidence to support this. | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |

Response Levels to Options

EQ1b: The Code for Sustainable Homes should be mandatory in proposals for:

- A. A single dwelling upwards**
- B. 5 – 14 dwellings**
- C. 15 dwellings or more**
- D. Another option.**

The Code for Sustainable Homes should be mandatory in proposals for?



| EQ1b: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|--|--|
| This is a matter for national standards and not local considerations. | Local standards can be set for development area or site-specific opportunities if evidence permits (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1). | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance. |

| EQ1b: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|---|
| There is no reason why there should be threshold in place specifying the level of development which should be considered against the Code for Sustainable Homes – it should be mandatory for all proposals as there is no planning justification or need to impose a threshold specifying a number of dwellings. | There would need to be evidence to justify setting dwelling thresholds for implementation of the Code. Local standards can be set for development area or site-specific opportunities if evidence permits (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1). | Consider setting thresholds/development are/site specific targets on the basis of local evidence. |
| Refer to PPS1 Supplement paras. 32 and 33 which sets out criteria for proposing local requirements ahead of national standards. | Accept that the core strategy must be consistent with national policy to ensure that it is 'sound'. | Conform to PPS1 supplement. |
| Current technological viability beyond developments at Code levels 3 or possibly 4 is in question, particularly with increased design and affordable housing costs. The planning process is not the best place to test viability, need to ensure that you are not requiring a Code level that is not deliverable. | Viability and technological issues will need to be overcome in time to accord with the Government's timetable for tightening the building regulations (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1). | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |
| All dwellings if a realistic timetable for implementation is put forward. If going ahead with Government timetable then 50 plus dwellings should be the target where economies of scale can cope with the financial cost. | The building regulations are progressively being tightened, so setting 50 plus dwellings as the threshold if going ahead with Government timetable is not possible. | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |
| The Code for Sustainable Homes should be used solely for the provision of publicly funded housing until they have been incorporated into the building regulations. There should therefore be no need to set a size of development to which it should apply; the only distinction should be the involvement of public subsidy. | Level 3 is required for publicly funded homes from April 2008. Any threshold will need to be based on evidence that it is viable (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1). | Support implementation of sustainable buildings in line with Government timetable, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |
| A single dwelling (A) would be a good start with the intention of an increase in five years time. | This does not make sense for part b) as an increase in the number of dwellings threshold ("in five years time") would represent a step backwards. If referring to part a), it would not accord with the Government timetable. | Do not agree, so none required. |

Question QEQ1 – Code for Sustainable Homes

QEQ1: Is the implementation of the Code for Sustainable Homes a matter for planning policy, or Building Regulations?

| QEQ1: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|--|--|---|
| The planning system may identify specific opportunities for higher standards of sustainable development (e.g. Eco Towns), but they will need to be justified. Arbitrary standards in excess of Building Regulations should not be imposed through blanket policies for the whole district. | Local standards can be set in advance of this if evidence permits (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 31, 33). | Support implementation of sustainable construction in line with Government timetable, reflecting proposed changes to the Building Regulations, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance. |
| Will need to be in conformity with the RSS. | The Proposed Changes to the RSS (July 2008) Development Policy G promotes best practice in sustainable construction and help to achieve the national timetable for reducing carbon emissions from buildings. | Ensure conformity with RSS. |
| If a different standard for housing design and construction across the country there will be little point in maintaining a national standard such as the building regulations, which is a very well established process for progressing building standards. Ad-hoc acceleration of this process, on an uninformed basis can have unacceptable and disproportionate cost implications that will lead to unnecessary issues of viability leading to significant delays in delivery. It is unnecessary to have two systems of standards and two systems of compliance regulation. | The Building Regulations will be progressively tightened, but local standards can be set in advance of this if evidence permits (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 31, 33; RSS Proposed Changes). | Support implementation of sustainable construction in line with Government timetable, reflecting proposed changes to the Building Regulations, unless evidence indicates higher levels can be achieved in advance – an evidence base study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |

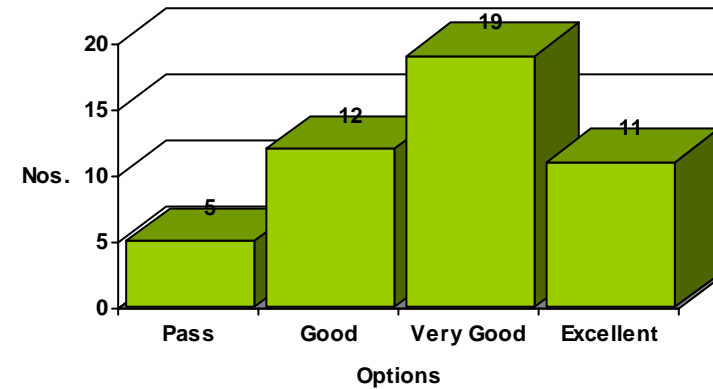
Option EQ2 - Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM)

EQ2: All new and refurbished buildings should meet which of the following BREEAM standards:

- A. Pass***
- B. Good***
- C. Very good***
- D. Excellent***

Response Levels to Options

All new and refurbished buildings should meet which of the following BREEAM standards?



| EQ2: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|--|---|---|
| Good – refurbished; very good – new. Or very good for refurbishment; excellent for new build. | Planning policies should support innovation and investment in sustainable buildings (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 30). Best practice should be promoted and help to achieve the national timetable for reducing carbon dioxide emissions (RSS Proposed Changes). | Help achieve the national timetable, unless local evidence permits faster implementation in specific areas. Further work required in order to justify the introduction of BREEAM standards – a study is currently being prepared. |
| The core strategy should allow for the specific characteristics of uses to be fully taken into account when considering the achievement of BREEAM standards – there are a number of BREEAM schemes covering a range of building types and buildings outside of these categories would require a bespoke BREEAM; therefore a blanket approach for implementing BREEAM for all uses should not be imposed. There should be a sound evidence base and a clear understanding of the issues associated with different land uses as a means by which an overall target might be met. | The Government’s ambition is to achieve zero carbon non-domestic buildings by 2019, with public sector buildings the year before this (RSS Proposed Changes). If local requirements for sustainable buildings are to be proposed in development area or site specific opportunities, there must be clear evidence in support of this (RSS Proposed Changes Development Policy G). | Require evidence to support incorporation of BREEAM into a policy, considering land uses that are not categorised by BREEAM. |
| Accreditation to BREEAM can take 12 months and can thus delay the delivery of development – care must be taken in proposing any policy. | Accept that issues of deliverability will need to be considered if implementation of sustainable building standards before the national timetable. | Help achieve the national timetable, unless local evidence permits faster implementation in specific areas. |
| Building regulations form a robust and clearly understood basis for design that is based upon up to date technology and construction techniques. Buildings can be enhanced through public sector funding and grant provision for example, but imposing such additional costs through the planning system would risk the viability of many projects. We strongly oppose the inclusion of any policy such as this. | If local requirements for sustainable buildings are to be proposed in development area or site specific opportunities, there must be clear evidence in support of this, including consideration of the viability (RSS Proposed Changes Development Policy G). | Help achieve the national timetable, unless local evidence permits faster implementation in specific areas. |

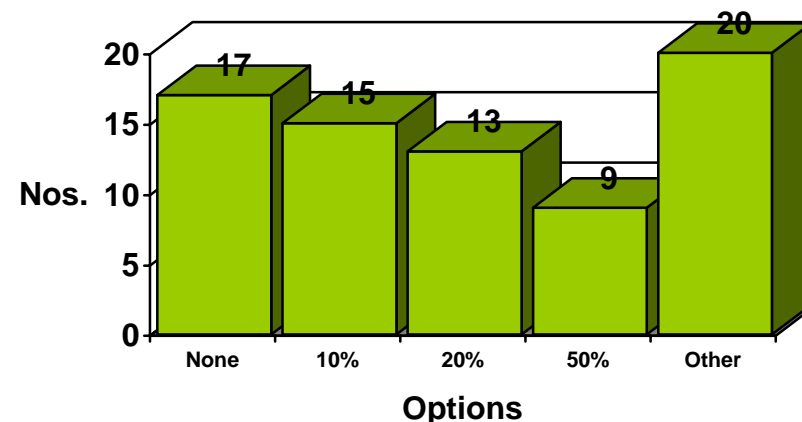
Option EQ3 – Proportion of renewable energy

EQ3a: Which of the following percentages of energy consumption should new developments generate from on-site renewable sources and/or from a decentralised, renewable or low-carbon, energy supply:

- A. None
- B. At least 10%.
- C. At least 20%.
- D. At least 50%.
- E. A different proportion. (please state)

Response Levels to Options

Which of the following percentages of energy consumption should new developments generate from on-site renewable sources and/or from a decentralised, renewable or low-carbon, energy supply?



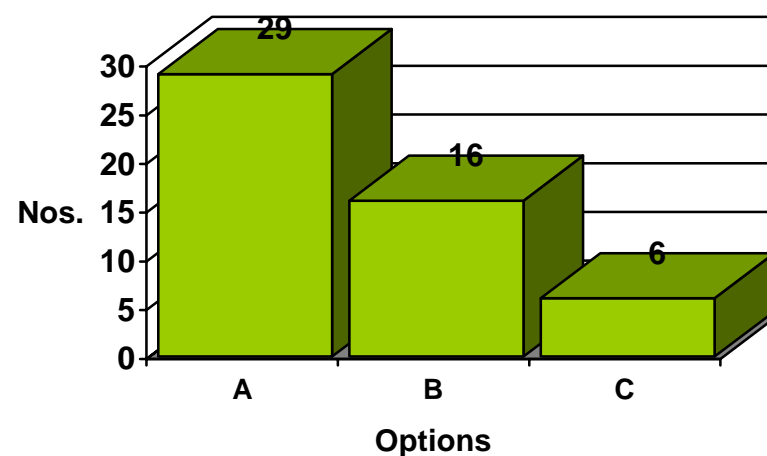
| EQ3a: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|--|--|--|
| Each case should be assessed in terms of the opportunity the development presents and the technology currently available, as much renewable energy should be sought as practicable. | Local planning authorities should have an evidence-based understanding of the local feasibility of decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy, and set a % target accordingly – the RSS Policy RE5 states 10% for 'larger scale' development until local targets are brought forward (RSS, PPS1 Supplement). | Use evidence to set decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy target – a study is currently being prepared to inform the core strategy. |
| Any proposals for a renewable energy target that is higher than the 10% recommended in the emerging RSS should be clearly justified, and considered carefully in terms of scheme viability. PPS22 Companion Guide para 4.14 indicates that | Proposed policy will be evidence-based and viable, but Government policy includes caveat to any proposed policy “unless it can be demonstrated that it is not feasible or viable” (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to | Set % target, but include caveat consistent with national policy – evidence to be gathered. |

| EQ3a: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|--|--|
| such polices should not be inflexible and not place undue burdens on developers. An exception to the policy should be added, where applicants can provide evidence to demonstrate that the target renewable requirement is inappropriate and/or would make the scheme unviable. | PPS1, para 26, 33, 42). | |
| Developments comprising 10 or more dwellings will be expected to provide, as a minimum, sufficient on-site renewable energy to reduce CO2 emissions from energy use by users of the buildings constructed on site by the equivalent of 20% of regulated emissions. | Although this is Policy RE5 in the RSS Panel Report, the RSS Proposed Changes has amended this policy. The Core Strategy should reflect the RSS (when adopted). | The core strategy % target will need to be based on evidence of local feasibility – evidence to be gathered. |
| New development should consider all types of renewable energy supplies and incorporate a mixture of techniques to minimise the use of natural resources. | The target should avoid prescription on technologies and be flexible in how carbon savings from local energy supplies are to be secured (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 26). | Avoid prescribing renewable technologies in the core strategy. |
| It should conform to national standards; this should not be an issue for the local authority to decide – renewable energy has a long way to go before it can be considered a viable alternative. | Local planning authorities should set targets for the % of energy to be used in new development to come from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy sources (RSS, PPS1 Supplement). | Set decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy target, using evidence to justify– evidence to be gathered. |
| Evidence does not prove that on site energy provision can be as efficient or as sustainable as large scale off site provision – is it correct for the planning system to require the provision of energy alternatives that are not as sustainable as the alternatives? | Decentralised and renewable or low carbon energy can include near-site provision (PPS1 Supplement), and the Government are considering whether to allow greater flexibility (CLG Zero Carbon consultation). | Ensure consistency with national policy on what can constitute decentralised energy– evidence to be gathered. |
| It is important and feasible to minimise energy needs for developments and more important still to reduce the energy requirements of existing buildings. | The Code for Sustainable Homes proposes to minimise energy needs through, for example, improved insulation, and will be supported in the core strategy. Although a laudable objective, there is little that planning policies can do regarding existing buildings. | Help achieve the national timetable for sustainable buildings, unless local evidence permits faster implementation in specific areas– evidence to be gathered. |

| EQ3a: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|--|---|
| <p>The ability to provide on-site renewables at realistic and viable cost is dependent on many factors including: the nature of the site, aspect, shading, slope/topography; density of development; wind profile of the site; the type of development. Most commercial development would be unviable with a blanket requirement of 20% on site renewables; the viability of residential schemes would also need careful consideration. A much smaller proportion of renewable energy should be considered on all developments.</p> | <p>The target that is set should be viable and based upon evidence. The emerging RSS (Proposed Changes) specifies 10% for larger scale developments in advance of local authorities setting their own targets. Note that “decentralised energy” incorporates on-site and near-site but not remote off-site (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1).</p> | <p>Set decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy target, using evidence to justify– evidence to be gathered.</p> |
| <p>It is not considered appropriate for the core strategy to rigidly prescribe the % of renewables that should be accommodated in all development, as this is inconsistent with PPS22.</p> | <p>PPS22 states LPAs may include such policies (para 8), as long as the target is viable and does not place an undue burden on developers.</p> | <p>Set decentralised and renewable or low-carbon energy target, using evidence to justify– evidence to be gathered.</p> |

Response Levels to Options

This renewable energy proportion should be required?



EQ3b: This renewable energy proportion should be required:

- A. For all development**
- B. Only in ‘larger scale development’**
- C. A lower threshold than ‘larger scale development’ (please state suggested threshold)**

| EQ3b: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|---|
| Larger scale development, but based on there being room for negotiation based upon the viability of a scheme rather than a strict mandatory requirement. | This reflects the RSS Proposed Changes but local evidence is required (RSS Proposed Changes). | Use evidence to inform threshold to which target will be applied – evidence to be gathered. |
| Should be assessed on a case by case basis in terms of the opportunity the development presents and the technology currently available. | Evidence will be required to set a threshold to accord with national policy (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 26) – development in some locations may offer opportunities for utilising existing decentralised energy supply systems. | Use evidence to inform threshold to which target will be applied – evidence to be gathered. |
| Adopt a much smaller proportion of renewable energy on all developments, as there is a risk of halting the amount of “qualifying development” that would be proposed, with the effect of only allowing development with no renewables at all. | Viability will be one of the key issues when considering renewable energy thresholds. | Use evidence to inform threshold to which target will be applied – evidence to be gathered. |
| There is no planning justification to set a threshold. | The type and size of development to which the target will be applied should be stated (Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1, para 26; RSS Proposed Changes). | State the type and size of development to which policy will be applied – evidence to be gathered. |

EQ4 – Renewable energy

EQ4: What approach should the Core Strategy take to a policy on proposals for large scale renewable energy schemes:

A. Set out broad locations that would be appropriate for large scale renewable energy uses

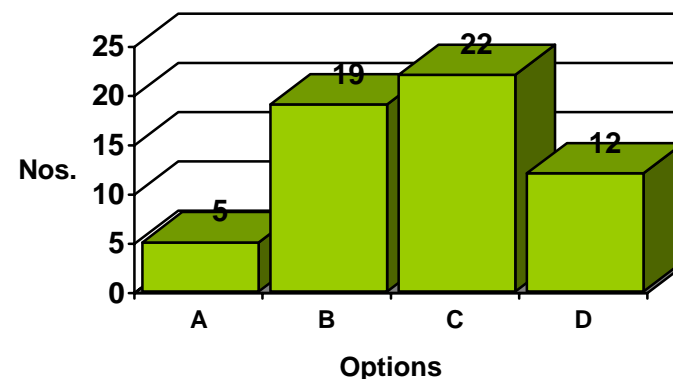
B. Include a criteria-based policy for considering proposals for renewable energy generation within the Development Management policies

C. Both A and B

An alternative option. (please give details)

Response Levels to Options

What approach should the Core Strategy take to a policy on proposals for large scale renewable energy schemes?



| EQ4: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|--|---|---|
| Set a long term strategy of providing wind turbine generated electricity for rural villages and hamlets in the area, taking into account construction costs, depreciation, public consultation and planning. | Renewable energy resources should be promoted and encouraged and should not be limited to rural villages and hamlets, but at development area or site specific opportunities it may be appropriate to set higher standards (PPS: Climate Change, RSS Development Policy G). | Reflect the Government's general approach of promoting and encouraging renewable energy generation. |
| The Severn Barrage scheme could cause serious damage to moors upstream of Langport. | A decision on the Severn Barrage scheme is outside the scope of South Somerset's core strategy. | None required. |
| Advocate a criteria based policy (option B) otherwise multiple grid related sites would need to be specifically identified for each of wind, biomass and waste generation facilities. | Government policy states that assumptions should not be made on the feasibility of renewable energy projects, such as identifying broad locations for development based on wind speeds (PPS22, para 1(v)). | Consider including criteria based policy for renewable energy schemes covering relevant issues such as landscape and visual effects, biodiversity, noise, odour, transport. |
| Renewable energy resources are too immature to | Government planning policy makes clear that | Promote and encourage development of |

| EQ4: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|--|
| be considered as part of policy. | renewable energy generation should be encouraged (PPS1 Supplement, PPS22). | renewable energy resources – evidence of opportunities in South Somerset being gathered. |
| Focus on large scale generation. | Also need to accept the valuable role that small scale projects can have (PPS1 Supplement, PPS22). | Encourage renewable energy generally, rather than focus on large scale schemes. |
| Modular plants (used in small to medium sewage treatment works and for commercial sewage treatment) in urban locations i.e. Westlands, Lufton, Brympton (future). | May be explored as part of considering anaerobic digestion potential as decentralised or renewable or low carbon energy supply. | Use evidence to inform potential technologies to supply decentralised or renewable or low carbon energy – evidence to be gathered. |

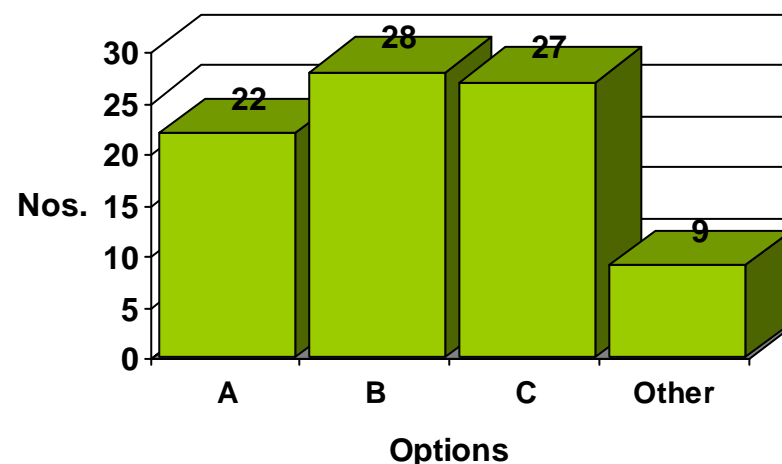
Q5 - Opportunities for biodiversity enhancement

EQ5: How should the Core Strategy seek to enhance biodiversity within the District (tick any that apply):

- A. Require new development to contribute to South Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan targets, where appropriate;**
- B. Require new development to seek biodiversity enhancement in line with the South West Nature Map, where appropriate;**
- C. Set out the broad locations of existing and proposed Green Infrastructure;**
An alternative option. (please give details)

Response Levels to Options

How should the Core Strategy seek to enhance biodiversity within the District?



| EQ5: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|--|
| Protect Sites of Special Scientific Interest and ancient woodland. | SSSIs are a national designation and benefit from a high degree of protection; ancient woodland should be protected unless the need for the development outweighs the loss (PPS9). | PPS9 provides sufficient protection. |
| Seek biodiversity enhancement through development schemes. If biodiversity impact is unavoidable and mitigation alone cannot adequately protect a species or habitat, then compensatory habitat should be provided. A monitoring process should be agreed to demonstrate the recovery or growth. | This approach is outlined in Government policy (PPS9). Local Wildlife Sites and BAP priority habitats should be protected (South Somerset Biodiversity Action Plan, PPS9). A robust monitoring framework is recommended within the BAP. | Be consistent with Government policy. Use South Somerset BAP and SW Nature Map to identify potential biodiversity enhancement. |
| Incorporate locations for green infrastructure and biodiversity enhancements at the earliest stage possible – river corridors and floodplains can be utilised. Natural England have recommended access standards to natural greenspace of at least one 2 ha within 280m of their home, one 20 ha within 2km, one 100 ha within 5km, one 500 ha within 10km. | The emerging Open Space strategy (and Infrastructure Delivery Plan) will inform location of green infrastructure. | Identify green infrastructure locations as part of the ‘strategy’ for development. |
| Need to consider whether areas of the Nature Map are close to development areas. It would be more appropriate for developers to create and enhance habitat more locally, contributing to a green infrastructure strategy e.g. create country parks close to urban centres. | Strategic Nature Areas should be incorporated into the LDF (South Somerset BAP). E.g. woodland, neutral grassland, purple moor grass and rush pasture south of Yeovil. Green Infrastructure is promoted in the RSS Proposed Changes. The emerging Green Space strategy will inform. | Use SW Nature Map to assess whether Strategic Nature Areas are located near to development areas. Identify green infrastructure locations as part of the process for determining where development will be located. |
| Tourism development should be allowed in areas adjacent to sites of nature conservation importance, provided mitigation measures are put in place. | Tourism is vital to many rural economies, and there will be scope for tourist development in designated areas, subject to appropriate control (PPS7). | Follow the “avoid – mitigate – compensate” approach to areas with biodiversity interest, whilst considering the important economic benefits of tourism - no need for a specific policy as already covered in PPS7 and 9. |

Question QEQ2 – Biodiversity

QEQ2: Do you have any suggestions for the future location of Green Infrastructure?

| QEQ2: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|--|---|---|
| Ninesprings / Ham Hill / Somerset Levels and other sites interspersed around South Somerset. | The emerging Open Space Strategy (and Infrastructure Delivery Plan) will inform the core strategy. | Identify Green Infrastructure locations as part of the 'strategy' for development. |
| Future location: between Pen Mill and Yeo Leisure Park and through to the end of the cycle way at Brympton Way. | This link could already be classed as 'green infrastructure'. | Agree the suggested location to be existing Green Infrastructure. |
| Near to new developments, for efficiency. | Green Infrastructure should be planned around existing environmental characteristics, and will be easily accessible if planned with new development (RSS Proposed Changes). | Integrate proposals to improve Green Infrastructure in the delivery of new developments. |
| Landowners, developers and councils should come together to develop 'green infrastructure' in the same way as roads etc. are organised and agreed. | This approach is advocated in PPS12 – an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be prepared to inform. | Use findings of Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Green Space strategy to inform Green Infrastructure proposals, and encourage Green Infrastructure. |

Question QEQ3 – Landscape

QEQ3: What is it about South Somerset's landscape that you value?

| QEQ3: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|--|---|--|
| Various comments on the aspects of South Somerset's landscape that are valued, including: diversity, open vistas/hedges, panoramic views, small country lanes, natural, unspoilt, lack of signs, rural villages, trees, rolling countryside, relatively undeveloped, rolling hills and vales, woodlands, tranquillity. | Criteria based policy should provide sufficient protection for landscape areas that are highly valued locally (PPS7). The Peripheral Landscape Study identifies areas around the main settlements with capacity for landscape sympathetic growth. | Consider including a criteria based policy that protects highly valued local landscape areas. |
| Specific places named: Summerhouse Hill, Ninesprings, Wyndham Hill, top of Milford Recreation ground, Yeovil's northern escarpment. | Noted. | Consider these areas as being highly valued locally and whether they should be identified as 'green infrastructure'. |

Question QEQ4 – Air Quality

QEQ4: Should the effect upon air quality be a priority in considering the location of new development within South Somerset?

| QEQ4: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|--|
| Air quality should be a priority as South Somerset suffers from increasing pollution from traffic, especially in larger towns – keep developments out of Yeovil and put development in a well designed new settlement. | Air quality is an important consideration in determining future development, especially in Yeovil due to the Air Quality Management Area incorporating the entire town (RSS Policy RE9). See 'Strategy' response on consideration of a new settlement. | Consider including air quality within a policy. Also ensure air quality problems are not exacerbated in Yeovil's AQMA. |
| Air quality is important but is only one of a range of factors to be considered and should not be the sole determinant. | The consideration of air quality has greater significance in Yeovil as it is designated an Air Quality Management Area (RSS Policy RE9). | Consider including air quality within a policy. Also ensure air quality problems are not exacerbated in Yeovil's AQMA. |
| The designation of Yeovil as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was disproportionate and inappropriate as it detracts focus on those locations that technically represent unacceptable situations – is there an opportunity to now correct this? | The AQMA includes the entire urban area of Yeovil in order to ensure a holistic approach is taken in tackling air quality issues. The Air Quality action plan is subject to annual review, and air quality has actually deteriorated since the AQMA was designated in 2002/3. | Continue to reflect Yeovil's AQMA. |
| Air quality should be within the transport chapter as it is synonymous with traffic generation. | Transport is the main contributor to air quality but not the only factor – therefore it is an 'environmental quality' issue. | Continue to include air quality within 'environmental quality' chapter. |

Option EQ6 - Design

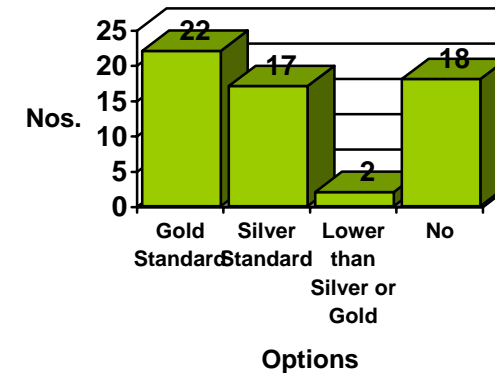
EQ6a:

In order to promote high standards of design, should new residential development accord with 'Building for Life' standards?

- A. Yes – gold standard*
- B. Yes – silver standard*
- C. Yes – a standard lower than gold or silver*
- D. No*

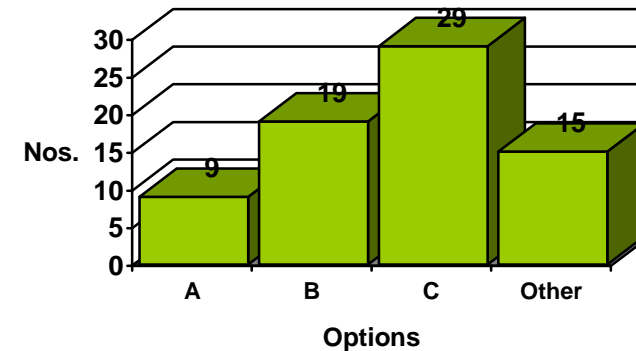
Response Levels to Options

Should new residential development accord with 'Building for Life' standards?



Response Levels to Options

What other ways of improving design quality should be sought within the Core Strategy?



EQ6b: *What other ways of improving design quality should be sought within the Core Strategy (tick any that apply):*

- A. Adopt a 'percentage for art' policy*
- B. Encourage 'Home Zones' within new residential development*
- C. Require new development to accord with 'Secured by Design' principles*
- D. An alternative option (please give details)*

| EQ6: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
|---|---|--|
| 'Percentage for art' should be avoided as it is a cost on homes for nebulous benefits. | There may be viability issues with adopting such a policy, and there is currently a lack of evidence to support this. | Do not propose a percentage for art policy, but promote design quality of the public realm in a policy. |
| Sport England have produced 'Active Design' guidance. | This guidance promotes physical activity and walking and cycling in the design of new developments, and is consistent with Government policy (e.g. PPS1, 3, PPG13). | Incorporate the principles of encouraging walking and cycling in the design of new development. |
| All development should deliver the highest standards of design, both in terms of urban form and sustainability criteria, including through the use of local materials, avoidance of cul de sacs and respecting the locality. | Good design is fundamental to the creation of high quality new development (PPS1 and 3). | Promote high standards of design through respecting local character in a design policy. |
| Design in flood risk areas is particularly important as it may influence the built conservation, e.g. raising floor levels may alter streetscape. Green spaces could enhance urban areas. | The intention will be to avoid developing in flood risk areas so raising floor levels should not be an issue. Green infrastructure can improve design quality. | Promote green infrastructure in association with development. |
| 'Building or Life' is a voluntary, national scheme and it is not appropriate for it to be a policy requirement. The core strategy does not need to provide additional guidance to that contained in PPS1, 3 and other publications. Other LDDs may interpret design guidance for local circumstances. | Building for Life has been incorporated in national planning indicators for developments of 10 or more dwellings (core output indicator H6). | Promote Building for Life as a nationally recognised way of improving design quality in a design policy. |
| 'Home zones' are appropriate for some developments and should be considered as one of the many design options for the appropriate scheme. | The promotion of Home Zones is included within Manual for Streets (cited in as a way of promoting high quality development in PPS3). | Agree, consider Home Zones within the design policy. |
| The principles of 'secured by design' should be treated as every other piece of design guidance and not elevated to special status. SBD often conflicts with other priorities e.g. pedestrian permeability. | It may be too prescriptive to incorporate a core strategy policy requiring development to meet 'secured by design.' | Promote secured by design, where appropriate, within a design policy. |

Question QEQ5 – Historic Environment

QEQ5: How can the Local Development Framework best preserve and enhance existing Conservation Areas within South Somerset? Do you have any suggestions for new areas to be classed as Conservation Areas within the District?

| QEQ5: Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
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| Buffer zones should be created around existing areas. | It is a statutory duty for the character or appearance of conservation areas to be preserved or enhanced, so the creation of buffer zones is not considered necessary. | No need to create buffer zones. |
| More stringent design restrictions in Conservation Areas. | Conservation areas are already protected by law. Specific design guidance is provided on conservation area appraisals. | No need for specific core strategy policy. |
| Allow some adaptation of existing properties in a conservation area in order to enable appropriate use or re-use; limit building density on conservation areas and ensure compatible design using local stone. | It is a statutory requirement that the character or appearance of conservation areas should be preserved or enhanced. | No need for specific core strategy policy. |
| Existing areas should be reappraised and consider what scope exists for extension. Suggested additional conservation areas: Yeovil 'new town' area; Chiselborough conservation area should be expanded to include the whole valley; extend conservation areas in hamstone villages; The Park, Yeovil; Cucklington should be classed as conservation area. | Conservation area appraisals have been carried out. Guidance on considering the designation of new conservation areas is set out in PPG15. | The core strategy will not determine the location of new conservation areas, but ensure the Conservation team considers suggested conservation areas. |
| Energy efficient buildings are not encouraged in conservation areas as design and use of specific materials limits its potential. | The character or appearance of conservation areas should be preserved or enhanced, and this may include energy efficient buildings – need to be judged on a case-by-case basis. | No need for specific core strategy policy. |
| Conservation legislation does not require additional policies in the LDF. Conservation area statements should identify explicitly what there is in the character or appearance of an area that should be preserved or enhanced. | Development proposals will be judged for their effect on the character and appearance of the areas in the context of PPG15. | No need for specific core strategy policy. |

Other Issues – Environmental Quality

| Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
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| Suggest use of the 'Sustainability Checklist', a new online tool. | Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the Core Strategy will be based upon the SA Scoping Report. | SA will be used to help develop policies, so a sustainability checklist is unnecessary. |
| Little thought has been given to environmental impact as a result of development e.g. Chard Key Site will have a flooding impact into Forton Brook. | Environmental impact is a key consideration within the core strategy. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared for the District; issues at Chard Key Site will need to be addressed through a site specific flood risk assessment when appropriate. | Environmental impacts are to be considered in determining the future development of the District, using the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for flooding. |
| It is important that all irreplaceable semi-natural habitats are protected, and not just those with protective statutory designations. Planning permission should not be granted for any developments that would result in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland and ancient trees (PPS9). | ...unless the need or benefits of a proposal outweigh the loss of woodland habitat (PPS9). | Ensure consistency with PPS9 in protecting ancient woodland and ancient trees – no need for additional policy. |
| The core strategy should support the use of the natural environment to mitigate the effects of climate change (woodland can make a significant contribution), whilst also proposing measures to help adaptation to climate change. | This approach is supported in PPS1 Supplement: Planning and Climate Change. The South Somerset District Council Climate change mitigation and adaptation strategy also considers this. | Use the natural environment to help climate change adaptation e.g. policy supporting green infrastructure – consider SSDC's climate change strategy. |
| It is important to note the impacts of Nox and PM10 as measures of air quality rather than focus on CO2. | The air quality section does not focus on CO2 as a measure of air quality, merely stating that reductions in car use will also lessen CO2, as well improving air quality. | Ensure air quality considers Nox and PM10 (as well as CO2) when considering air quality as a factor influencing the location of development. |
| Restricting levels of parking is a fundamental measure on which to base other measures to reduce car use – carbon emissions will never be reduced whilst car use grows. | Restricting car parking is a potential demand management measure – see 'Transport and Accessibility'. The emerging YTSR2 and the Chard Regeneration Framework transport assessment will inform consideration of modal shift in these towns. | Consider car parking restrictions in context of modal shift policy, particularly in Yeovil and Chard. |
| Reduce the visual impact of development through screening new industrial development and roads with trees, and enforcing specific colours for industrial/agricultural buildings. | Visual and landscape impact should be minimised, but should not be overly prescriptive in setting standards. | Consider visual and landscape impact in general design policy. |

| Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
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| Emphasise passive design to help minimise demand for energy. Contemporary building design, embracing local vernacular materials and scale should be encouraged. | High standards of design should be sought, consistent with national policy (e.g. PPS1 and 3). | Promote good design in appropriate policy. |
| Pleased to see: a general theme to conserve and enhance species and habitats; references to PPS9, PPG15 and the SW Nature Map; and river and wildlife corridors mentioned under Green Infrastructure. | Noted. | Continue to include these themes. |
| There is limited information on flood risk – it is vital that the SFRA is incorporated into the next stage, including an appropriate policy response for the differently affected areas. This should consider adapting development (existing and new) to the level of change that is likely to happen because it can no longer be prevented. | The findings of the SFRA will inform the next stage of the core strategy. Most of the main urban areas intersect with Flood Zone 3, and other causes of flooding are also an issue. Climate change assumptions suggest changes in floodplain limits are likely to be negligible for much of the district, although localised areas may have a larger effect. | Use SFRA findings to inform core strategy in order to determine the ‘strategy’ i.e. locations for development. PPS25 is prescriptive; no need for additional policy. |
| River water quality is mentioned only fleetingly and should be considered in more depth, specifically the impacts from polluting run-off. | Impact upon water quality should be considered, but the control of processes or emissions is governed by the pollution control system (para 10, PPS23). | Consider the impact upon water quality from new development in determining the location for future development. |
| The increased demand for water resources will require consideration of water efficiency. All new developments should have zero rainwater runoff conditions. | The Code for Sustainable Homes requires greater water efficiency in new homes. Water efficiency is promoted in SFRA through encouraging SuDS. | Promote water efficiency through a policy promoting SuDS. |
| Large scale wind farms are completely inappropriate due to impact on local residents, tourism, visual impact, health implications and variable supply difficulties caused to the national grid – wind power should only be applied offshore. | Wind turbines may have some of these effects, but policies that rule out or place constraints on specific types of renewable energy should not be included (PPS22). | None required. |
| Demonstrate how the historic environment will inform and be affected by the emerging spatial strategy through evidence, such as a historic landscape analysis. | The various aspects of the historic environment will be considered (PPG15). Historic landscape characterisation was considered in the Peripheral Landscape Studies. | The historic environment will be considered as a material factor in locating development. |

| Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
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| No consideration of noise impact, particularly pertinent for any development near Yeovilton and Westlands airstrip in determining appropriate development types and scales and possible mitigation measures. | Noise is considered in Option DMEQ4. Should ensure that noise-sensitive developments are located away from sources of significant noise, as far as practicable (PPG24). Area-specific policies may be useful for Yeovilton and Westlands. | Include noise as consideration within a policy, with core policy on the impact of Yeovilton and Westlands if directing development near these areas. Noise contours for Yeovilton to be updated and used in consideration of the potential development in that area. |
| Indicators 12 and 16 of the LAA on protection and enhancing biodiversity should be included. | Somerset LAA LPI6 'Health of the Natural environment' should be considered in monitoring the core strategy. | Noted and accepted. |
| European Protected Species' populations and local distribution are now afforded protection under the revised Habitat Regulations and should be used to direct development away from these areas. | Noted. | Noted. |
| Ensure that environmental considerations do not resist otherwise appropriate new tourism developments, particularly adjacent to sensitive areas such as landscape/ biodiversity/historic importance and waterside holiday locations (flooding). | Tourism is vital to many rural economies, and there will be scope for tourist development in designated areas, subject to appropriate control (PPS7). Tourist development may be appropriate in areas of flood risk (PPS25). | None required. |
| The issues in table 9.4 should be mapped in order to highlight where in the district these are an issue. This may also help in identifying reasons for some of the issues and thus help in developing options for addressing them e.g. why South Somerset has the highest CO2 emissions in the county – transport, households, industry? What are the key landscape features in the various parts of the district? Where are the areas at risk of flooding, what adaptation measures should be put forward as options? | Greater use of diagrams/maps would make the document more legible, and help explain the options. 38% of CO2 emissions in Somerset are from industry and commercial, 29% from road transport, 28% from domestic, and 5% from land use, land use change and forestry (South West Observatory, 2006 figures). South Somerset is divided up into 7 visual character regions (The Landscape of South Somerset, 1993). The SFRA shows areas at risk of flooding from rivers and other sources. | Agreed – use maps and diagrams to highlight 'place-specific' issues. |
| Light pollution should be reduced by use of appropriate lighting that reduces spillage in new developments. | The need to limit and, where possible, reduce the adverse impact of light pollution should be considered, e.g. on local amenity, rural tranquility and nature conservation (PPS23). | Consider light pollution as a criterion within a design policy. |

| Summary of Issues | Evidence base consideration | Policy or Proposal |
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| Areas of archaeological importance should enjoy strong protection. | Nationally important archaeological remains benefit from strong protection (PPG16). Development plans should include policies for the protection, enhancement and preservation of sites of archaeological interest and their settings (PPG16). | Consider including archaeology in a general historic environment policy. |
| Social cohesion is an important consideration when allocating new homes. | This is supported in PPS1 and PPS3. | Social cohesion should be encouraged and relevant to the Strategy and Housing chapter and strategic objectives. RSS Strategy is focussed on sustainable development. Implementation of this through the core strategy should support social cohesion. |
| The area south of Placket Lane, Yeovil should remain as a hay-meadow. | Noted. | The strategic growth of Yeovil will be considered in the 'Strategy' section. The site in question is being considered in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for suitability for development or otherwise. |