Bluestone Planning

South Oxfordshire District Council

Listening Learning Leading

Climate change Policy Guidance

For Your Neighbourhood Plan

V4.0

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Neighbourhood Planning Guides and Templates for Groups in South Oxfordshire

Contents

1 Introduction

Executive Summary

1.1 This guide helps communities within South Oxfordshire District develop effective climate change policies for their neighbourhood development plans, also referred to as neighbourhood plans. As climate change continues to impact local environments, economies and societies, it is crucial for communities to integrate sustainable and resilient policies into their planning processes.

1.2 This guide provides practical advice, real-world examples from made neighbourhood plans and user-friendly templates to assist communities in creating policies that address climate mitigation, adaptation and transformation.

1.3 By using this document, you will gain insights into different policy types and best practices for policy writing. Whether you are drafting a new neighbourhood plan or updating an existing one, this guide aims to support you in developing robust and actionable climate policies tailored to your community's specific needs and challenges.

Importance of Climate Change

1.4 In addition to the latest scientific assessments, such as the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report[1] and UK Climate Projections (UKCP18)[2], The Royal Society also provides a clear explanation as to why addressing climate change is so important. It states: *"Global warming of just a few degrees will be associated with widespread changes in regional and local temperature and precipitation as well as with increases in some types of extreme weather events. These and other changes (such as sea level rise and storm surge) will have serious impacts on human societies and the natural world".*[3]

1.5 Changes in regional and local temperature precipitation will negatively affect water resources, food supply, ecosystems, human health and even infrastructure. Addressing climate change is therefore not just an environmental imperative but a societal one, as its impacts affect every aspect of life on Earth.

1.6 While the urgency of tackling climate change may be widely understood, there is often a need to highlight the broader benefits of action - including improvements to public health, energy security, economic resilience and long-term sustainability.

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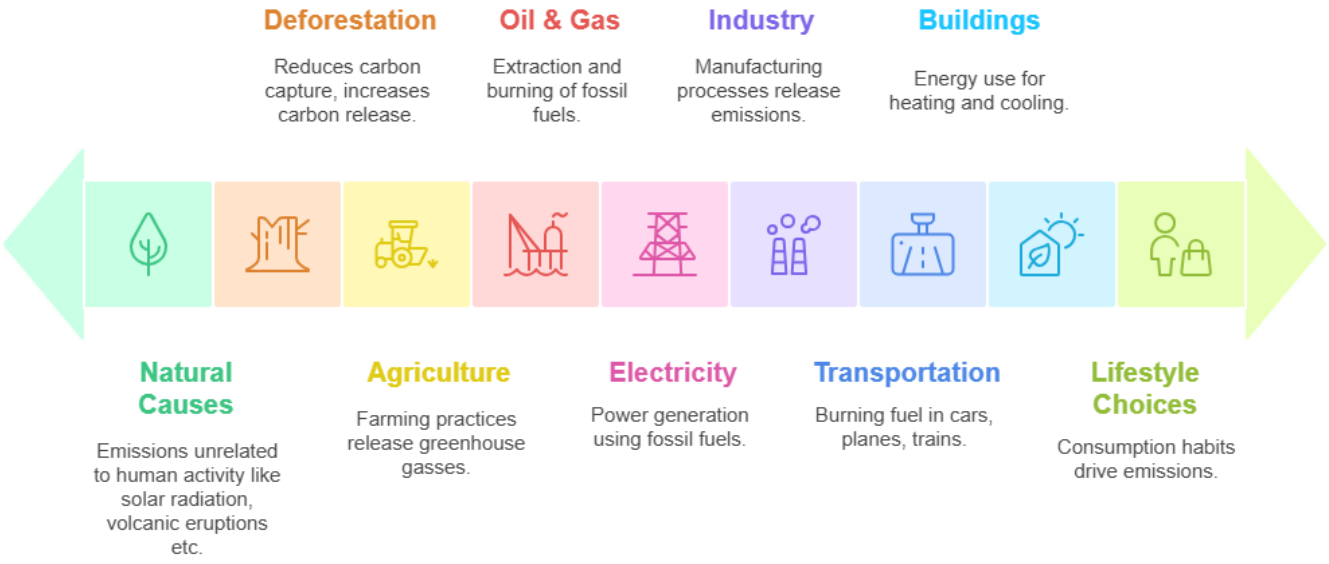
[1] IPCC (2023) *Sixth Assessment Report*. Available at: https://www.ipcc.ch/assessment-report/ar6/ (Accessed: 12 March 2025).
[2] Met Office (2025) *UK Climate Projections (UKCP18).* Available at: https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/approach/collaboration/ukcp (Accessed: 13 March 2025).
[3] The Royal Society (2020) *17. Are climate changes of a few degrees a cause for concern?* Available at: *https://royalsociety.org/news-resources/projects/climate-change-evidence-causes/question-17/* (Accessed: 14 March 2025).

1.7 A number of key drivers contribute to climate change and intensify its effects. These include:



What is Climate Change Policy?

1.8 A climate change policy in a neighbourhood plan is a structured statement that establishes clear expectations for addressing climate-related issues within a community. These policies provide a framework for sustainable development, ensuring that future growth aligns with climate resilience and environmental sustainability.

1.9 Including such a policy in a neighbourhood plan empowers and enables communities to take an active role in local climate action by shaping how development supports mitigation and adaptation efforts.

1.10 Neighbourhood plan climate change policies can support local climate strategies, foster collaboration within the community and contribute to reducing climate change, as illustrated in the graphic below.

1.11 These policies are broad in scope, allowing neighbourhood plans to address a wide range of local issues and priorities, for example:

1.12 Within this wide scope, climate change policies are commonly categorised into three areas:

1.13 **Climate Change Mitigation** - policies that focus on minimising the impact of human activity on the climate system, particularly through reducing greenhouse gas emissions and contributing to the UK's legally binding net zero target by 2050. These include:

- renewable and low carbon energy generation (solar, wind, heat pumps),
- energy efficiency in buildings and sustainable design,
- sustainable transport infrastructure, and
- carbon reduction through development location, orientation and design.

1.14 **Climate Change Adaptation** - policies that enable adjustments in natural or human systems in response to actual or anticipated climate change impacts, aiming to reduce harm, including:

- flood risk management and sustainable drainage systems,
- managing water scarcity and drought resilience,
- preventing overheating in buildings,
- green infrastructure to reduce climate impacts, and
- storm risk management.

1.15 **Climate Change Transformation (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Infrastructure)** – policies that address energy used for electricity generation, heating and cooling, and promote the use of naturally recurring resources such as wind, solar, water, biomass and geothermal energy. They also support technologies that significantly lower greenhouse gas emissions compared to traditional fossil fuel systems. These include:

- identifying suitable areas for renewable energy development,
- supporting community-led energy projects,
- decentralised energy supply systems,

- co-location of heat customers and suppliers, and
- repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites.

1.16 Neighbourhood plans can integrate all three elements to support local responses to the climate emergency, helping ensure that development is both environmentally responsible and aligned with community priorities.

1.17 For neighbourhood plans specifically, these three categories provide a framework for creating effective climate policies that have statutory weight equal to Local Plan policies when properly formulated as land use and development policies.

1.18 The level of detail in a neighbourhood plan's climate policies can vary depending on the needs and priorities of the community. Some policies may be brief and straightforward, while others may include detailed explanations supported by contextual information, justification and implementation guidance. Together, they communicate the specific vision and requirements for the development area.

Benefits of Including Climate Change Policies in Neighbourhood Plans

1.19 There are many benefits to integrating climate change policies into your neighbourhood plan. The key benefits include:

- planning benefits,
- community benefits, and
- environmental benefits.

Planning Benefits

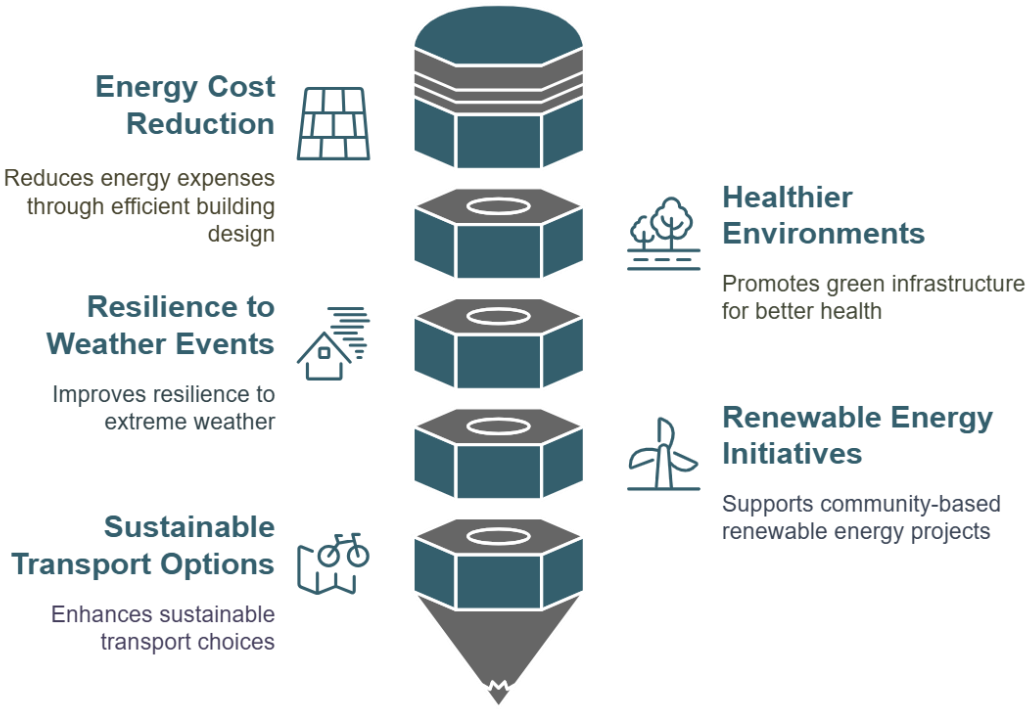
1.20 Including climate change policies in your neighbourhood plan can strengthen sustainable planning outcomes and ensure future development is climate-resilient and environmentally responsible.

1.21 As summarised above, these policies offer several planning benefits, such as:

- **Clear Guidance for Applicants:** Climate change policies provide a local framework that sets out clear expectations for how new developments should respond to climate-related challenges. This helps applicants understand and meet community standards from the outset.
- **Framework for Assessing Planning Applications:** These policies create a consistent local basis for evaluating planning applications in terms of their climate impacts, supporting more informed and sustainable decision-making.
- **Securing Climate-Friendly Features in Development:** Neighbourhood plans can help ensure that developments incorporate features such as energy efficiency measures, low-carbon technologies and sustainable design principles.
- **Alignment with Local Authority Climate Goals:** By aligning neighbourhood-level policies with wider district climate strategies, communities can contribute meaningfully to achieving long-term climate objectives such as carbon reduction and resilience.
- **Focus on Local Priorities:** Including climate change policies enables communities to reflect local risks, opportunities and values within the planning framework. Examples include flood risk, green infrastructure and transport.

Community Benefits

1.22 Including climate change policies in your neighbourhood plan can enhance community wellbeing and help build long-term local resilience and quality of life for residents.

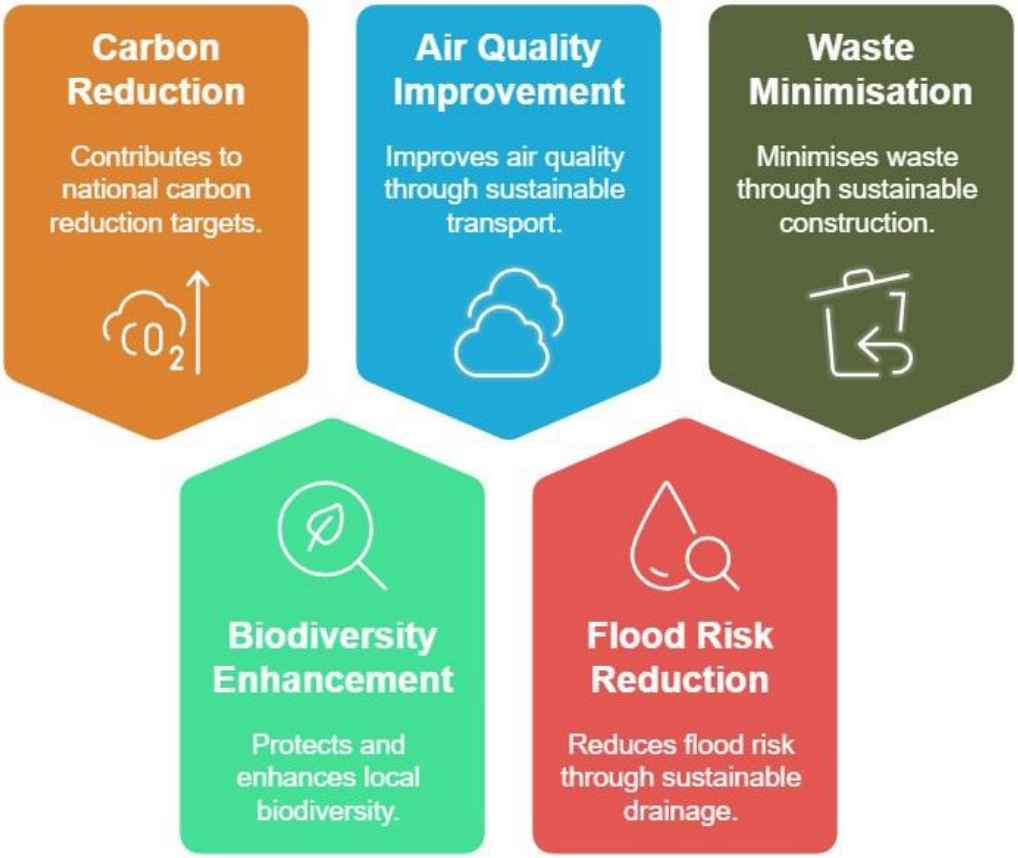


1.23 As summarised above, these policies offer several community benefits, such as:

- **Resilience to Weather Events:** Planning for climate adaptation improves resilience to extreme weather, helping protect homes, infrastructure and public safety during floods, heatwaves and storms.
- **Sustainable Transport Options:** Climate policies can promote walking, cycling and public transport, supporting low-carbon mobility and reducing traffic-related emissions.
- **Healthier Environments:** Encouraging green infrastructure, such as trees, open spaces and sustainable drainage systems, can improve air quality, support mental wellbeing and create more attractive, liveable places.
- **Energy Cost Reduction:** Efficient building design can help reduce household and community energy expenses, supporting long-term affordability.
- **Renewable Energy Initiatives:** Neighbourhood plan policies can support community-based renewable energy projects, enabling residents to generate clean energy, reduce emissions and foster energy independence.

Environmental Benefits

1.24 Including climate change policies in your neighbourhood plan can support a healthier natural environment and contribute to broader environmental objectives.



1.25 As summarised above, these policies offer several environmental benefits, such as:

- **Carbon Reduction:** Helps meet national and local carbon reduction targets by promoting low-carbon development and renewable energy solutions.
- **Air Quality Improvement:** Encourages sustainable transport and energy-efficient development that contributes to cleaner air and a healthier environment.
- **Waste Minimisation:** Supports sustainable construction practices that reduce waste generation and promote reuse, recycling and resource efficiency.
- **Biodiversity Enhancement:** Protects, restores and enhances local biodiversity by integrating green infrastructure and supporting habitat connectivity.
- **Flood Risk Reduction:** Promotes the use of sustainable drainage systems and natural flood management measures to lower flood risks in vulnerable areas.

2 Policy Conformity

Compliance with Planning Documents

2.2 Climate change policies within a neighbourhood plan must meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This means they must:

- have appropriate regard to national policy,
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan,
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, and
- be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.

2.3 Neighbourhood plans should complement, not duplicate, higher-level policies. They are an opportunity to add local detail and develop non-strategic policies that reflect the specific priorities, needs and opportunities for climate mitigation, adaptation and transformation within the community.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets the national context which every neighbourhood plan must have regard to. Below are the most relevant NPPF sections and paragraphs on climate change, together with practical pointers on how neighbourhood planning groups can build locally specific policies that complement, rather than repeat, national guidance.

2.5 The NPPF makes clear that climate change should be considered in both plan-making and decision-taking, requiring all development to take into account *"the full range of potential climate impacts"* (paragraph 163).

Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change (Section 14)

2.6 In the NPPF, section 14 highlights how plan making and decision taking should meet the challenge of climate change as well as flooding and coastal change.

2.7 Paragraph 162 states that *"Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperature[1]. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future health and resilience of communities*

and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure".

2.8 Paragraph 165 states that "*To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:*

a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts)

b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and

c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers."

Why the NPPF Matters Locally

2.9 Having regard to Section 14 of the NPPF (and national policy as a whole) helps to demonstrate that your neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions when examined.

2.10 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. An adopted neighbourhood plan forms part of the development plan, and the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions. The relationship between the NPPF and your neighbourhood plan is therefore important, with careful consideration reducing the risk of policy conflict.

2.11 Lastly, when you translate national climate objectives into place-specific policies, such as promoting renewable energy installations, improving local flood resilience, or enhancing green infrastructure, your policies can have a meaningful impact on your local area.

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

2.12 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) includes a dedicated section on climate change titled 'Climate Change'. National PPG is intended to add further context to the NPPF and should be read alongside the NPPF. The climate change guidance outlines how the planning process can incorporate effective mitigation and adaptation measures to address the wide-ranging impacts of climate change.

2.13 The guidance addresses several key questions related to climate change and

planning, such as: *"Why is it important for planning to consider climate change?"* and *"How can planning deal with the uncertainty of climate risks when promoting adaptation in particular developments?"*.

Conformity with the Local Plan

2.14 Policies in your neighbourhood plan should be specific to the local area and should meet the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. One of these basic conditions is that the neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area. For South Oxfordshire, this is currently the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.

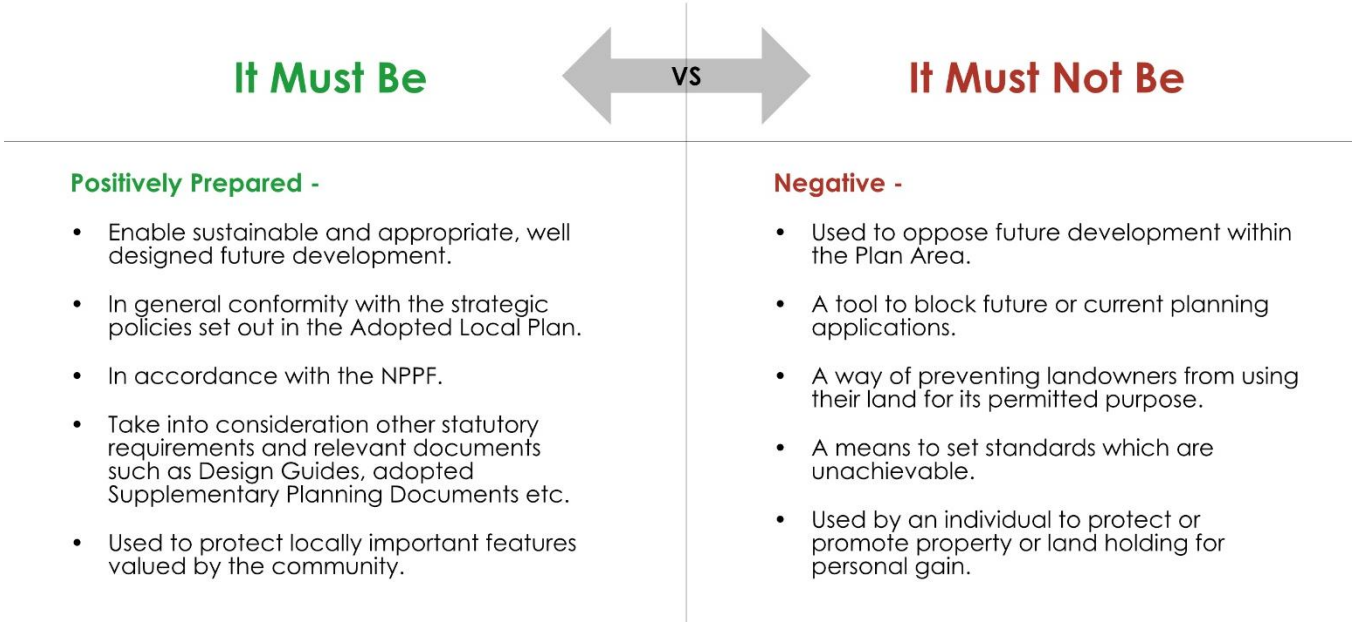
2.15 Neighbourhood planning policies should avoid directly copying and repeating policies from the Local Plan (see Plan Making section of the NPPF[4]). Instead, they should be tailored and crafted to fit the specific needs and demands of the neighbourhood area according to your evidence.

2.16 By including locally relevant policies and site-specific actions, your neighbourhood plan can better address the climate issues that matter most to your community. These policies must relate to the development and use of land. You can also include non-planning initiatives, such as community awareness campaigns or local energy projects, but these should be clearly marked as Community Aspirations rather than formal planning policies. More information on this distinction is available in the Neighbourhood Plan Guide.

2.17 A neighbourhood plan must be positively prepared and not a vehicle for preventing future development. This is not to say that you cannot protect elements, merely that it needs to be a balanced approach. The diagram below illustrates this.

[4] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/3-plan-making

When Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan



South Oxfordshire District Council Adopted Local Plan 2035

2.18 Combatting climate change is one of the core objectives of the adopted Local Plan 2035. In the Strategic Objectives section, Objective 8 – Climate Change states: *"Minimise carbon emissions and other pollution such as water, air, noise and light, and increase our resilience to the likely impact of climate change, especially flooding. Lower energy use and support an increase in renewable energy use. Support growth in locations that help reduce the need to travel".*

2.19 Planning policies in neighbourhood plans should generally conform and support the Local Plan's strategic policies and objectives. The strategic policies are identified in Appendix 14 of the Local Plan 2035.

2.20 Policy DES7 of the Local Plan 2035 addresses the efficient use of resources, setting out requirements for new developments to make appropriate provision for the effective use and protection of natural resources, where applicable. It states that, *"including:*

i) the efficient use of land, with densities in accordance with Policy STRAT5 Residential Densities. Proposals which seek to deliver higher quality and higher density development which minimises land take will be encouraged;

ii) minimising waste and making adequate provision for the recycling, composting and recovery of waste on site using recycled and energy efficient materials;

iii) maximising passive solar heating, lighting, natural ventilation, energy and

water efficiency and the re-use of materials;

iv) *making efficient use of water, for example through rainwater harvesting and grey water recycling, and causing no deterioration in, and where possible, achieving improvements in water quality (including groundwater quality);*

v) *taking account of, and if located within an AQMA, is consistent with, the Council's Air Quality Action Plan;*

vi) *ensuring that the land is of a suitable quality for development and that remediation of contaminated land is undertaken where necessary;*

vii) *avoiding the development of the best and most versatile agricultural land, unless it is demonstrated to be the most sustainable choice from reasonable alternatives, by first using areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of a higher quality; and*

viii) *re-using vacant buildings and redeveloping previously developed land, provided the land is not of a high environmental value".*

2.21 Another notable Local Plan 2035 climate change policy is Policy DES10, which refers to carbon reduction, outlining various condition's development must meet in order to be approved:

1. *"Planning permission will only be granted where development proposals for:*
    i. *new build residential dwelling houses; or*
    ii. *developments including 1,000sqm or more of C2 use (including student accommodation); or*
    iii. *Houses in Multiple Occupation (C4 use or Sui Generis floorspace) achieve at least a 40% reduction in carbon emissions compared with a code 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through renewable energy and other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures. The requirement will increase from 31 March 2026 to at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions and again from 31 March 2030 to a 100% reduction in carbon emissions (zero carbon). These targets will be reviewed in the light of any future legislation and national guidance.*
2. *Non-residential development proposals are required:*
    i. *to meet the BREEAM excellent standard (or a recognised equivalent assessment methodology)*
    ii. *in addition, development proposals of 1,000sqm or more are*

required to achieve at least a 40% reduction in the carbon emissions compared with a 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case. This reduction is to be secured through renewable energy and other low carbon technologies and/ or energy efficiency measures. The requirement will increase from 31 March 2026 to at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions.

3. *An Energy Statement will be submitted to demonstrate compliance with this policy for all new build residential developments (other than householder applications) and new-build non-residential schemes over 1,000sqm. The Energy Statement will include details as to how the policy will be complied with and monitored".*

2.22 Aside from the key policies referred to above, the importance of addressing climate change is reinforced throughout the Local Plan 2035. For example, paragraph 3.9 states *"Our strategy supports the delivery of new housing and economic growth and translates our vision and objectives under inter-related spatial themes to:*

- *Support a strong network of vibrant settlements including the regeneration of town centres, making the whole district more sustainable, recognising the rural nature of South Oxfordshire and the effects generated by nearby major centres;*
- *Contribute to tackling climate change;…".*

2.23 Neighbourhood plan policies should align with and support the aspirations and objectives set out in South Oxfordshire's Adopted Local Plan.

2.24 It is worth keeping an eye on emerging policy documents, such as local plans, as the reasoning and evidence informing them can be relevant to the preparation of your neighbourhood plan.

3 Policy Types

3.1 Generally, three types of planning policy are included within a neighbourhood plan:

General Policies

3.2 General policies in neighbourhood plans are often broad in scope and apply to most, if not all, development proposals within the neighbourhood plan area. When addressing climate change, these overarching policies can play a vital role by embedding climate considerations for all types of development, rather than limiting action to specific sites or sectors. For instance, general policies can promote energy efficiency, sustainable construction or flood resilience.

Example of a General Policy

Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage

Development proposals should, as appropriate to their scale, nature and location, demonstrate that they will not increase the risk of flooding from surface water runoff across all flood zones. Proposals must also consider the predicted impacts of climate change over the lifetime of the development, including potential effects on the existing settlement, local drainage capacity and the wider watercourse network.

Comprehensive, climate-resilient drainage strategies should be integrated into development proposals from the outset.

Where appropriate, proposals are encouraged to include sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), such as integrated control systems and water retention features (e.g. balancing ponds), to manage runoff effectively.

The creation of multi-functional water features that both mitigate flood risk and enhance local biodiversity, particularly where they contribute to the **[plan area's]** green character, will be supported.

Site Specific Policies

3.3 Site-specific policies focus on particular pieces of land or defined areas and are especially effective for embedding climate change mitigation and adaptation measures into development proposals. These policies may allocate land for development or protect areas with environmental value, such as natural habitats, flood zones or green corridors that contribute to local climate resilience.

3.4 When allocating land for development, site-specific policies can set clear expectations for climate-conscious design and infrastructure. These may include principles such as solar orientation of buildings, integration of renewable energy technologies, sustainable drainage or provision for low-carbon transport. The requirements can be embedded directly in the policy or articulated in more detail through a supporting design code.

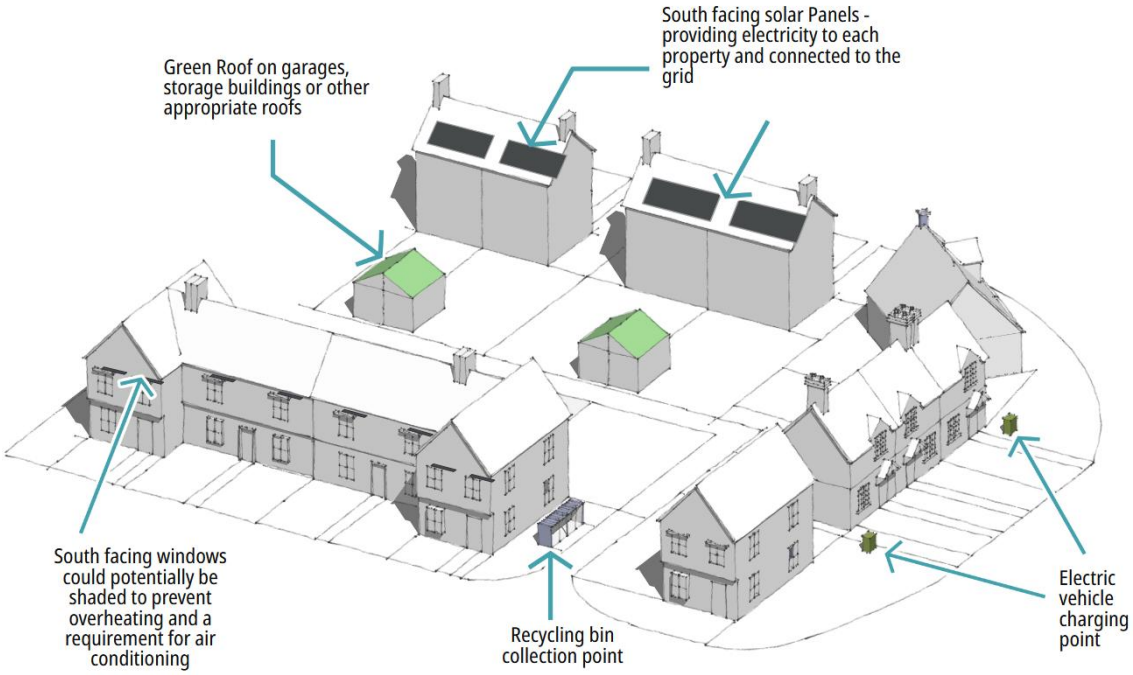
Encouragement of cycle lanes and giving priority to cyclists in a specific area within a policy promotes cycling over car use

3.5 The example illustrated in the graphic below shows how a site-specific approach within a Design Code can promote climate-resilient features at the neighbourhood level. Key design elements include:

- **South-facing solar panels** to provide electricity for individual properties and the wider grid.
- **Green roofs** on garages and outbuildings to enhance insulation and support biodiversity.

- **Electric vehicle charging points** to support the transition to low-emission transport.
- **South-facing windows designed with shading features** to prevent overheating and reduce reliance on air conditioning.
- **Sustainable waste infrastructure**, such as clearly defined recycling bin collection points.

Example of a Site-Specific Approach in a Design Code



3.6 By specifying these types of measures at the site level, neighbourhood plans can ensure that development actively contributes to local climate goals and aligns with national policy on sustainable construction and emissions reduction.

Criteria Based Policies

3.7 Criteria-based policies are a useful tool for setting out specific climate-related requirements that development proposals should meet in order to be supported. These policies are particularly effective for ensuring consistency in how climate change mitigation and adaptation measures are implemented across different types of development. For example, a policy promoting low-carbon energy or sustainable construction can include criteria related to site orientation, material use, biodiversity impact and carbon emissions.

3.8 Criteria-based policies are particularly effective when promoting renewable energy developments. For instance, a neighbourhood plan may support the installation of solar panels, wind turbines or community energy schemes provided

that they meet locally defined environmental and visual impact thresholds. This might include avoiding harm to important views, respecting the landscape character and aligning with the principles set out in a locally specific Design Code.

3.9 The use of "and" indicates that all criteria must be satisfied, while "or" signals that the criteria are alternatives, with only one needing to be met. The policy wording could also introduce a sequential approach, reflecting community priorities. These distinctions are crucial for both policy writers and users to ensure clear interpretation and proper implementation.

Policies for example can focus on linking transport modes and creating public transportation hubs – linking bus, rail and cycles, which are particularly important around stations

Example of a Criteria Based Policy

New Construction and Energy Efficiency

New residential development will be supported where it demonstrates high standards of energy efficiency, resource conservation and climate resilience, in line with Policy DES10 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan or any subsequent national or local standards.

To be supported, development proposals must demonstrate that they:

i. are designed and oriented to maximise energy efficiency, including south-facing alignment where feasible to support passive solar heating and optimise the use of solar panels; and
ii. incorporate high levels of insulation and design features that require minimal maintenance over the building's lifetime; and
iii. include on-site renewable energy generation through solar panels, ground source heat pumps or air source heat pumps, as appropriate to the development and its context; and

iv. provide sustainable water systems, including permeable drainage for driveways and rainwater harvesting or storage systems; and
v. provide electric vehicle charging points for all new dwellings, either within curtilage or in communal locations, depending on the nature of the site.

The inclusion of innovative or nature-based solutions, such as green roofs, sustainable materials and integrated design that contributes to climate mitigation and adaptation, will be strongly supported.

4 Policy Writing

4.1 Planning policies should be formulated and presented in a way that clearly communicates their intentions to readers. They must align with evidence gathered and community engagement, while supporting the vision and objectives established in the neighbourhood plan. Neighbourhood plan policies should also be accessible through the use of digital tools, such as publishing the plan on a dedicated neighbourhood plan website where residents can comment and engage with draft content.

4.2 Policies must be clear, concise and fit for purpose as they will be used to determine planning applications.

4.3 The wording of planning policies must be precise and unambiguous. An individual should be able to understand the policy's intentions without confusion.

4.4 When writing policy, try to always follow these principles:

- **Simplify:** Use plain, accessible language. Avoid overly complex or technical wording that may confuse users of the plan.
- **Justify:** Ensure that each policy is supported by clear evidence, such as landscape assessments, survey data or community engagement findings. Refer to this evidence directly where relevant.
- **Quantify:** Where possible, include measurable criteria. This can help reduce ambiguity and make it easier for development proposals to be assessed consistently.
- **Consistency:** Maintain uniform terminology throughout the plan and across policies. This helps avoid confusion and ensures that the plan reads as a coherent whole.

Policy Wording and Implications

"Must" vs "Should" vs "Could"

Must – This creates a mandatory requirement. If a policy states that something "must" be done, there is no discretion; planning applications that do not comply should be refused.

Example: Sustainable design features in new developments must be sensitive to their location.

Should – This introduces a strong expectation but allows some flexibility. A decision-maker could approve a proposal that does not fully comply if there are justifiable reasons.

Example: New developments should incorporate green infrastructure to improve biodiversity.

Could – This makes policy requirements optional and therefore weakens the use of the policy in determining applications. However, it can be used to explore options.

Example: This could include, where appropriate, double glazing in Conservation Areas or secondary glazing in listed buildings.

"Encourage" vs "Require"

Require – This sets a firm obligation. A planning application should comply or risk refusal.

Example: All new housing developments are required to include energy-efficient design features.

Encourage – This suggests an aspiration rather than a firm requirement. Development proposals are not obliged to comply with it.

Example: The use of local materials is encouraged in new developments.

"Will Be Supported" vs "Will Be Permitted"

Will be supported – This provides support for a type of development and means it is likely to be approved unless it conflicts with other policies.

Example: The development of new community facilities will be supported where they meet identified local needs.

Will be permitted – Neighbourhood Plans cannot permit development and therefore this terminology should not be used. Local authorities must have the opportunity to properly consider proposals, ensuring they align with wider planning objectives and regulations.

Key Policy Themes and Objectives

The table below is a tool that is intended to help you review the effectiveness of your draft policies against your objectives. Through this exercise you may decide to modify your policies or introduce new policies that better fit with your neighbourhood plan.

How to Use this Table:

1. Define Your Policy Themes

   Start by identifying the key themes for your neighbourhood plan policies. These should be based on the objectives that emerged from earlier community engagement or consultation activities.

2. Complete the Table

   - In the first column, insert the relevant neighbourhood plan objective.
   - In the second column, draft your proposed policy idea related to that objective.

3. Check the Policy Using the Questions

   - Use the 'Decision Aiding Questions' column to critically review your draft policy.
   - Consider what evidence should be supporting the policy.
   - These questions will help you assess whether your policy is likely to be effective and aligned with your plan's aims.

4. Cross-Reference with National and Local Policy

   - Read the relevant paragraphs of the NPPF and PPG for your chosen topic.
   - Check the Local Plan to ensure your proposed policy is not duplicating existing policies but instead adds locally specific detail.

Policy Theme Examples	Objective Examples	Policy Examples	Decision Aiding Questions Will the Policy …	NPPF (Dec 24) Paragraph Reference	Local Plan Policy Local Plan 2011-2035
[Insert your policy theme]	**[Insert your neighbourhood plan objective – relevant to this theme / topic]**	**[Insert your neighbourhood plan draft policy – relevant to this theme / topic]** ***The example text in this column is not taken from any specific adopted neighbourhood plan and is provided to show how to use the table.***	**[Insert answer relevant to your plan area]**	**[Insert NPPF paragraphs relevant to this theme / topic]**	**[Insert your Local Plan policies – relevant to this theme / topic]**
Climatic Factors	Minimise our impacts on climate change and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects.	Policy CF1: Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation Development proposals should demonstrate how they contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to climate change. Proposals should: i. Incorporate energy-efficient design and	1. Minimise emissions of greenhouse gases and ozone depleting substances? 2. Minimise the likely impacts of future development on climate change through appropriate adaptation? 3. Promote energy efficiency in buildings and new development? 4. Minimise contributions to climate change through sustainable building practices? 5. Contribute to reducing emissions associated with the transport sector?	8.c 20.d 103-107 109 123 149 - 154	DES7 DES8 DES9 DES10

		low-carbon technologies. ii. Promote the use of renewable energy sources, including solar and ground source heat. iii. Use sustainable construction materials and methods. iv. Provide climate-resilient landscaping, including shade trees and green roofs where appropriate.			
Water Resources and Flood Risk	Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner.	Policy WR1: Sustainable Water Management Development proposals should ensure the sustainable use and management of water resources by incorporating measures that reduce water consumption and protect water quality. Proposals will be supported where they:	1. Consider predicted future impacts of climate change, including water scarcity issues? 2. Encourage sustainable and efficient management of water resources? 3. Ensure that essential water infrastructure is co-ordinated with all new development? 4. Seek the installation of water saving measures such as rainwater harvesting and water metering? 5. Consider the need for adequate provision of surface water and foul drainage? 6. Promote provision of pollution prevention measures?	20 35 44 119 149 - 150 154 - 170	INF4 ENV12 EP4 DES8

		i. Incorporate water-efficient appliances, fixtures, and fittings to minimise consumption. ii. Ensure that surface water is managed as close to its source as possible and discharged in accordance with the drainage hierarchy. iii. Protect and enhance the quality of local water bodies by preventing contamination from runoff or construction activities. iv. Consider the use of rainwater harvesting and greywater recycling systems in both residential and commercial developments.	7. Protect, and where possible, improve surface, ground and drinking water quality?		

	Protect people and property from the risk of flooding.	Policy WR1: Sustainable Drainage and Water Efficiency All new developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff and reduce flood risk. Proposals should: i. Avoid increasing flood risk on-site or elsewhere. ii. Prioritise permeable surfaces, rain gardens, swales or detention basins. iii. Include water efficiency measures such as rainwater harvesting or greywater recycling. iv. Be consistent with local flood risk management strategies and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).	1. Minimise the risk of flooding to people and property (new and existing development)? 2. Take into account the predicted future impacts of climate change in the location and design of development, ensuring that development can adapt to any future flood risk scenarios? 3. Protect and enhance the natural function of floodplains? 4. Ensure the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in appropriate circumstances?	20 35 44 119 149 - 150 154 - 170	STRAT10 INF4 DES4 EP4

Land and Soil Resources	Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings.	Policy LS1: Protection of Soil and Agricultural Land Development should seek to minimise the loss of high-quality agricultural land (Grade 1–3a) and protect the integrity of soils. Proposals should: i. Justify the need for development on agricultural land and demonstrate that lower-quality land has been considered first. ii. Avoid contamination of soil and provide measures to remediate previously contaminated land. iii. Minimise soil sealing by integrating green infrastructure and permeable surfaces.	1. Protect the best and most versatile agricultural land? 2. Protect and enhance soil quality? 3. Maximise reuse of Previously Developed Land where possible/appropriate? 4. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? 5. Maximise efficient use of land within the village centres? 6. Avoid the loss of natural floodplain?	63 118 - 124	STRAT4 DES6 DES7 ENV11 ENV12 H16

Air Quality and Environmental Pollution	Promote sustainable waste management solutions that encourage the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste.	Policy AQ1: Sustainable Waste Management Development proposals should incorporate sustainable waste management practices that prioritise the reduction, re-use and recycling of waste. Specifically, proposals should: i. Integrate on-site waste sorting, recycling and composting facilities where feasible. ii. Demonstrate how construction and demolition waste will be minimised and managed responsibly. iii. Provide appropriate and accessible space for the storage of recyclable materials in residential and non-residential developments. iv. Incorporate design features that support community-led waste	1. Reduce the amount of waste produced? 2. Ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management? 3. Provide a framework in which communities take more responsibility for their own waste?	8 20	EP3 DES7

		reduction initiatives (e.g., shared composting areas, repair cafés, reuse hubs).			
	Improve air quality and minimise all sources of environmental pollution.	Policy AQ2: Improving Air Quality and Reducing Pollution Development proposals should minimise emissions and pollutants that could adversely affect air quality, water, land and noise environments. Proposals will be supported where they: i. Avoid contributing to air quality issues in or near Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). ii. Incorporate mitigation measures such as green buffers, low-emission heating systems and dust	1. Maintain and improve local air quality? 2. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour and vibration? 3. Minimise all forms of contamination to soils? 4. Mitigate the impacts on air quality from new development / road transport? 5. Avoid loss of tranquillity?	110 199	EP1 ENV11 TRANS2

		suppression during construction. iii. Promote the use of electric vehicles by including EV charging infrastructure. iv. Limit noise, odour and light pollution through site layout, operational controls and appropriate design standards. v. Demonstrate compliance with relevant national and local pollution control standards.			
Transport	Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices.	Policy TR1: Sustainable and Active Travel New development should support sustainable transport choices and reduce reliance on private vehicles where possible. Proposals should: i. Provide safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle routes that connect with existing networks.	1. Promote mixed-use, walkable developments that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car? 2. Increase uptake of sustainable travel choices i.e. public transport, walking and cycling? 3. Promote car-share schemes and home or other forms of remote working? 4. Reduce traffic volumes? 5. Avoid placing further pressure on local parking? 6. Help improve availability of local public transport choices?	109 - 112	TRANS2 TRANS1b TRANS7

		ii. Improve access to public transport and provide secure cycle storage. iii. Minimise the need for car travel through mixed-use and well-located development. iv. Include travel plans for major developments to encourage walking, cycling, and car sharing.			

5 Other Considerations

Additional Considerations and Documents

5.1 The table below shows relevant climate change related points and key documents. You may want to consider these documents when drafting your neighbourhood plan to help understand the biggest picture surrounding these topics. This includes the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire Joint Design Guide 2022, Oxfordshire Street Design Guide and Joint Nature and Climate Action Plan.

5.2 A list of climate change relevant policies can be viewed in the Appendices Section of this document.

Theme	Related Elements from the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Design Guide, Oxfordshire Street Design Guide and Joint Nature and Climate Action Plan
Sustainable Development	Within the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Design Guide 2022 (June 2022) There is a section dedicated to climate and sustainability and some of the design principles are set out below for reference. Here are some of the relevant design principles: 6.2 optimises the orientation of buildings to utilise solar gain and shading; 6.6 the use of technology on roofs for all commercial, non-commercial, industrial buildings, and solar canopies in parking areas **; 6.7 the use of solar technologies on roofs for residential developments; 6.10 A fabric-first design approach is prioritised for the built form and its envelope, focusing on airtightness, high insulation, passive ventilation and the incorporation of renewable energy systems and technologies;

	6.12 high efficiency and ultra-low energy fixed building services or infrastructure to help reduce regulated emissions. 6.13 any development which goes beyond Part L Assessment under the Building Regulations; 6.14 all non-residential development aspires to meet BREEAM excellent standards; 6.20 Net zero carbon developments. *minor applications. **major applications.
	Oxfordshire Street Design Guide (September 2021) Part 1.2 talks through the allocation of street space. It outlines the concept of claiming back space for people. Part 1.5 (Page 17) discusses key street design objectives. Below are some relevant points for sustainable developments: *"Promote minimum energy consumption through design and mitigate water run-off and flood risks; and* *Functions well and adapts to changing requirements of occupants and other circumstances".*
	Within the Oxfordshire Street Design Guide relevant elements to sustainable travel can be found. Below are summaries from relevant sections of this guide.

Sustainable Travel	Part 1.5 (Page 17) highlights key street design objectives. Below are a few relevant points: *"Prioritise sustainable and active travel to help reduce congestion – Design streets and places in way that reduces car use while promoting sustainable active travels modes to help combat the climate emergency. This means creating streets that are linked, well connected, safe and attractive for walking and cycling;* *Ensure local services and facilities beyond the development are easily accessible by sustainable and active modes of travel;* *Ensures a sufficient level of well-integrated and imaginative solutions for car and bicycle parking and external storage including bins".* Part 2.2 (Page 26) notes the importance of access to bus stops for new development. With larger developments, there may be a requirement for bus services to route through the development. As for smaller developments, it is important that access to bus services is assessed during the master planning process to design walking and cycling routes to and from the most convenient bus stops or interchanges. In addition, within Part 2.2 (Page 26) the provision and access to E-scooters is set out as another alternative for sustainable travel. Laws around the use of e-scooters on the public highway are rapidly changing and therefore it is important to understand current legislation when designing for them within developments. Part 3.1 (Page 33) highlights the promotion of cycling as an active travel preference, although it mentions that this can only be successful if there is suitable provision for cycle ownership. The type and form of cycle parking provided will very much depend on its purpose and location. In order for cycling to be a practical active option, cycle parking must be provided at various location types such as home and destination. Part 3.5 (Page 52) states that developments should be designed to have an appropriate amount of well sited lower power EV charging infrastructure. EV infrastructure should have sufficient capacity to meet predicted future demand. In addition, continuing to design street lighting using traditional methods, without

	accounting for EV charging, will lead to costly and complex retrofitting in the future to meet the energy demands of electric vehicles.
	The Joint Nature and Climate Action Plan 2025-29 outlines the Council's long term strategy to reduce carbon emissions. The plan highlights relevant actions relating to nature recovery and biodiversity, including: *"ONZ8 - A) Trial electric refuse vehicles and other relevant vehicle options, to identify the most suitable waste vehicles for reducing carbon emissions whilst maintaining service delivery.* *B) Replace end of life vehicles with the most suitable low carbon options and ensure there is the necessary supporting infrastructure".* *"DNZ12 - Install publicly accessible electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support uptake of electric vehicles and improve access to charge points, to meet the Oxfordshire EV Strategy target of converting 7.5% of local authority managed car park spaces, to fast or rapid charging, by 2025".*
Renewable Energy	Below are relevant design principles relating to renewable energy that the South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse Joint Design Guide strongly encourages: *"6.5 the use of renewable energy technologies to reduce the site's conventional energy needs;* *6.6 the use of solar technology on roofs for all commercial, non-commercial, industrial buildings, and solar canopies in parking areas **;* *6.7 The use of solar technologies on roofs for residential developments".*

Behaviour / Attitude towards Climate Change	The South Oxfordshire District Council produced a Joint Nature and Climate Action Plan 2025-29 which outlines the Council's long term strategy to reduce carbon emissions. The plan highlights relevant actions relating to attitude/behaviour towards climate change. Below are some examples: *"ONZ3 - Deliver an ongoing programme of climate training and engagement for all staff and offer additional opportunities for enhanced training for staff working in areas of high carbon emissions or potential for influencing others".* *"ONZ4 - Review the councils' approach to reporting Scope 3 emissions, considering emerging best practice and embodied carbon".* *"ONZ9 - Embed a climate-centred approach into all scales of procurement (including for routine and low risk purchases)".* *"DNZ2 - Support residents to transition to healthy, low carbon lifestyles through our services".* *"DNZ5 - Proactively engage with and support, businesses to decarbonise their own operations and influence others in the community".* *"DNZ8 - Provide resources, funding, advice and expertise to Town and Parish Councils and VCSE to decarbonise their operations and support residents to adopt low carbon lifestyles".* *"NR3 - Seek opportunities to increase support for, and the profile of the Local Wildlife Sites Project as a key mechanism to help deliver nature recovery".*

6 Appendices

Appendix 1: Policy Tables

6.1 The tables below list a number of climate change related planning policies found in made neighbourhood plans across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse Districts. These tables serve only to provide examples, for an up to date list of the policies across the districts please refer to our Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy table.

Traffic and Transport

Beckley and Stowood (October 2024)	Policy CC 2 – Low Carbon Transport Solutions
Berrick Salome (December 2019)	Policy BER8 – Managing Traffic Policy BER9 – Walking, Cycling and Riding
Binfield Heath (October 2024)	Policy BH12 – Accessibility Highways and Sustainable Transport
Chalgrove (December 2018)	Policy H5 – Walking and Cycling
Clifton Hampden (October 2024)	Policy BCH7 – Footpaths and Cycle Paths
Culham (June 2023)	Policy CUL8 – Sustainable Travel
Garsington (October 2024)	Policy GARS2 – Footpaths, Bridgeways and Cycleways
Goring (July 2019)	Policy.20 – Walking and cycling
Kidmore End (September 2022)	Policy LTPFBT – Preservation of Footpaths, Bridleways and Tracks
Little Milton (December 2018)	Policy LM14 – Road Developments
Lewknor (December 2023)	Policy FI3 – Sustainable Movement Policy TH1 – Sustainable Transport Policy TH2 – Vehicle Traffic
Pyrton (2019)	Policy BNE6 – Footpaths and bridleways
Shiplake (September 2022)	Policy SV20 – Protection of Existing Rights of Way and Cycle Network Policy SV21 – Cycle Network, Rights of Way, Footpaths and other Rules
Towersey (December 2023)	Policy TOW9 – Managing Traffic

Thame (February 2025)	Policy GAPT1 – Public Transport Policy GAAT1 – Active Travel
Tiddington with Albury (June 2023)	Policy TwA10 – Traffic Management and Transport
Wallingford (February 2025)	Policy MC2 – Access to Public Transport Policy MC3 – Cycling Policy MC4 – Safe Active Travel Policy MC7 – Provision of Electric Vehicle Charging Points
Warborough and Shillingford (October 2018)	Policy H4 – Pedestrian Links
Watlington (August 2018)	Policy P2 – Transport

Flooding, Drainage and Water Infrastructure

Beckley and Stowood (October 2024)	Policy DS 3 – Flood Risk and Development
Berrick Salome (December 2019)	Policy BER10 – Supporting Water Infrastructure
Binfield Heath (October 2024)	Policy BH13 – Flooding and drainage
Goring (July 2019)	Policy.15 – Water sewage and drainage capacity
Little Milton (December 2018)	Policy LM2 – Mitigation of Flood Risk
Pyrton (April 2019)	Policy BNE5 – Flood risk and drainage
Thame (February 2025)	Policy NEF1: Flood risk and sustainable drainage

Renewable Energy

Towersey (December 2023)	Policy TOW10 – Supporting water infrastructure
Beckley and Stowood (October 2024)	Policy CC1 – New Construction and Energy Efficiency

Clifton Hampden (October 2024)	Policy BCH8 – Provision of well-designed energy efficient buildings and places
Culham (June 2023)	Policy CUL9 – Zero Carbon Buildings
Lewknor (December 2023)	Policy FI4 – Green Energy
Towersey (December 2023)	Policy TOW3 – Climate change mitigation: zero carbon
Wallingford (February 2025)	Policy HD2 – Sustainable Design

Air Quality

Goring (July 2019)	Policy.14 – Air quality and pollution

Appendix 2: Policy Examples Expanded

6.2 The table below showcases a number of made neighbourhood plan climate policies in their entirety.

Policy Title and Detail [5]
Policy HS4 – Flexibility, Future-Proofing and Sustainable Design **North Hinksey Parish Neighbourhood Plan (May 2021) Vale of White Horse** To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here Proposals for new housing development should comply with policies TR2 and UT2 of this neighbourhood plan in relation to porous drainage materials, electric vehicle charging points, low carbon design and energy efficiency. Proposals for new housing which include any of the following features will be particularly supported. • Facilities to allow 'homeworking' and local customisation; • Flexible and adaptable spaces to ensure resilience; • Incorporation of smart technology, including access to superfast broadband; • Green roofs or other sustainable means of rainwater retention; and • As a minimum to meet the requirements of the Department for Communities and Local Government's Technical Housing Standards - Nationally Described Space Standard Level 1, and Category 1 standard as set out in the Building Regulations Approved Document M Part 2, or similar space and access standards as set out in any subsequent superseding regulations or guidelines.
Policy SB9: Sustainable Development and Climate Change **Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne Neighbourhood Plan (Mar 2025) Wiltshire** To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here Measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change should, where appropriate, be incorporated into the design of new developments and conversion or extension proposals. Opportunities to retrofit building sustainability measures into existing housing should be taken as appropriate to the site including: i. Arranging the site layout and orientation to maximise solar gain and take advantage of natural shelter whilst responding positively to the existing pattern of development, including building lines.

[5] Please note that these policies have been slightly modified so that the criterion within the policy fits the example theme.

ii. Adopt passive solar heating and cooling measures, including building orientation, glazing positioning, thermal mass, roof overhang and natural ventilation.
iii. The selection of materials to maximise heat retention in winter and minimise overheating in summer.
iv. The use of soft landscaping to provide shelter and shade as well as measures such as green roofs to moderate temperatures.
v. The incorporation of rainwater harvesting measures and SUDS measures.
vi. Carefully integrate renewable energy and low-carbon technologies, including solar PV, solar thermal, micro wind generation and heat pumps.

A sensitive approach should be taken to safeguard the special character of the conservation area and to avoid harm to the setting of designated and non-designated heritage assets (as shown in table 1).

Policy 3 – Promotion of Sustainable Transport
Tetbury and Tetbury Upton Neighbourhood Plan (Oct 2017) Cotswold

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Measures to increase the use of cycling and walking within the town will be supported. The provision of sustainable travel links between new development sites and the town centre; and the provision of a new cycle link towards Kemble Station, will be supported.

Policy NP9 – Pedestrian and Cyclists
Benson Parish Neighbourhood Plan Revision (Mar 2023) South Oxfordshire

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Major housing developments should provide on-site footways & pedestrian safety measures to facilitate pedestrian access to the village centre, to community facilities and to surrounding countryside and settlements. These footways should incorporate and link with existing footway networks and should be in accordance with principles H1-H6 of the Design Guidance.

New development should provide on-site cycle paths both in general, and specifically to facilitate access to the village centre, to community facilities, and to surrounding countryside and settlements. They should also contribute where relevant to improvements to existing cycle facilities.

Policy HWP12 – Promoting Sustainable and Active Travel
Hengrove and Whitchurch Park Neighbourhood Plan (Mar 2019) Bristol City

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Development on the Hengrove Park Site should include charging points for electric vehicles and parking for personal cycles and the Bristol shared use cycles, spread around the site. A car club for residents both new and existing should operate from points within the site and other car-sharing schemes should also be encouraged.

Links to surrounding cycle routes and facilities should be strengthened and improved with any road crossings made safer with the provision of crossing facilities to suit predicted levels of motor vehicle traffic. Cycle and pedestrian links across the site should be direct, with a sealed surface and well lit, but not intrusively so.

Policy MA2 – Sustainable Movement
Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Plan (Mar 2017) Bristol City

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Proposals for new development which would be likely to generate increased movement by people or vehicles will be supported, provided that they:

i. provide for pedestrian movement as a priority;
ii. are located so that most daily needs can be conveniently met within walking or cycling distance;
iii. enable safe and convenient access to be provided for all people including the disabled; and
iv. make possible or do not hinder the provision of improvements to public transport and of facilities for car clubs and electric vehicles.

Policy T2: Active Travel
Joint Henleyy and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (Dec 2022) South Oxfordshire

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Development proposals which would join up footpaths/ways and cycle paths/ways into comprehensive networks will be supported. Particular support will be given to proposals which would:

- encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport; and/or
- supporting projects as shown in Appendix A; and/or
- maintain and enhance connectivity with the network of public rights of way (bridleways), and the designated local green spaces as shown in Policy ENV4.

Development proposals that would result in a reduction in the capacity of existing active travel infrastructure or of the safety of active travel infrastructure will not be supported.

Policy FI4: Green Energy
Lewknor Parish Neighbourhood Plan (Dec 2023) South Oxfordshire

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Proposals for individual and community scale renewable energy schemes will be supported subject to the following criteria:

i. the siting and scale of the proposed development does not detract from the setting and its position in the wider landscape.
ii. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities of local residents
iii. the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural and biodiversity importance
iv. Siting of green energy sites will not have an unacceptable impact to the views detailed in Policy CH4 "Protection of Views".

Policy CL1: Local Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation
East Challow Neighbourhood Plan (Mar 2023) Vale of White Horse

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

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

i. are led by, or meet the needs of, the East Challow parish community; and
ii. create opportunities for co-location of energy producers with energy users, in particular heat, and facilitate renewable and low carbon energy innovation.

Development proposals are encouraged to secure a proportion of their total regulated energy from decentralised and renewable or low carbon sources. Development proposals are also encouraged to create opportunities for co-location of energy producers with energy users 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 landscape and environment, including any cumulative impact of these proposals.

Policy SB6.2: Renewable Energy
Sutton Benger and Draycot Cerne Neighbourhood Plan (Mar 2025) Wiltshire

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Proposals for the installation of new renewable energy facilities will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will not have an unacceptable impact on the landscape, public rights

of way, biodiversity and the residential amenity of neighbouring properties. In addition, proposals should respond to relevant parts of the Design Code (Appendix 2).

Development proposals for the installation of new renewable energy facilities should be well-screened and:

- Respond positively to the setting of the landscape and the important views that have been identified in the Plan; and
- Be designed and arranged to have acceptable levels of glint and glare.

Policy SD1: Minimising Carbon Emissions
Policy SD1a: Fabric First Approach
Joint Henley and Harpsden Neighbourhood Plan (Dec 2022) South Oxfordshire

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

Commensurate to their size and scale, development proposals should consider a Fabric First approach to their design to minimise their carbon emissions and as a minimum meet the energy efficiency requirements set out in the Development Plan.

A. A 'Fabric first' approach to building design should be taken to maximise the performance of the components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems. As such developers should consider the following development principles:
    a) Minimising the use of high carbon cost building materials such as Concrete, Cement and Steel.
    b) Maximising use of materials which score highly on Building for Life criteria[17] such as wood, wood and/or hemp fibre.
    c) Using modern design techniques such as EnerPHit as a best practice standard to achieve good air-tightness and insulation in retrofit and Passivhaus for new development.

Policy 4.7B: Resource Consumption
Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan (Oct 2016) Vale of White Horse

To view this neighbourhood plan: Click here

All new buildings and major refurbishments should minimise their energy, water and resource consumption and, where possible, exceed the minimum standards set by legislation. District heating schemes will be strongly supported. New developments should provide sufficient space for recycling and composting containers in order to encourage recycling and composting through the District Council schemes or home composting for garden use.

7 Glossary of Technical Terms

Brief Summary

This section presents a list of technical terms and phrases frequently used in planning policy and neighbourhood planning. Each entry includes a brief definition to support understanding and promote clarity. Where possible, definitions have been sourced from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Glossary (2024).

A

- **Active Travel** – A mode of travel that is physically active; for example walking, wheeling (all types of mobility aids and wheelchairs), and non-motorised cycling and scooting.
- **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.
- **Air Quality Management Areas** – Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.
- **Ancient Woodland** – An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

B

- **BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method)** - A widely used environmental assessment method for buildings. BREEAM assesses buildings against set criteria for sustainable building design, construction and operation, and provides an overall score.
- **Building Regulations** – Statutory instruments that set standards for design, construction and alterations to buildings.

C

- **Carbon Footprint** – The total greenhouse gas emissions caused by an individual, event, organisation, service or product.
- **Climate Change Mitigation** – Actions to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)** – A levy that local authorities can choose to charge on new developments in their area. The money can be used to support development by funding infrastructure.

D

- **Decentralised Energy** – Local renewable and local low carbon energy sources.
- **Design Code** – A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.
- **Design Guide** – A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.
- **Designated Heritage Asset** – A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under relevant legislation.
- **Designated Rural Areas** – National Parks, National Landscapes and areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985.

E

- **Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Points** – Connection for an electric vehicle (EV) to a source of electricity, to recharge electric cars and plug-in hybrids.

F

- **Fabric First** – An approach to building design that involves maximising the energy efficiency and performance of components and materials that make up the building fabric itself, before considering the use of mechanical or electrical building services systems. This can help reduce capital and operational costs, improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions.

G

- **Geodiversity** – The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.
- **Green Infrastructure** – A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

H

- **Habitats Site** – Any site which would be included within the definition at Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas

and any relevant Marine Sites.

- **Heritage Asset** – A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as have a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
- **Heat Island Effect** – A phenomenon where urban areas experience higher temperatures than surrounding rural areas due to huma activities.
- **Historic Environment** – All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

L

- **Local Plan** – A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community, under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2021. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.
- **Local Planning Authority** – The public authority whose duty is to carry out specific planning functions for a particular area.
- **Low-Carbon Technologies** – Technologies that produce low levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

M

- **Major Development** – For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m^2 or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

N

- **Natural Flood Management** – Managing flood and coastal erosion risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts.
- **Nature Recovery Network** – An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.

- **Neighbourhood Development Order** – An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which parish councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.
- **Neighbourhood Plan** – A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- **Non-strategic Policies** – Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a Local Plan that are not strategic policies.
- **Net Zero**– The balance between the amount of greenhouse gas produced and the amount removed from the atmosphere. We reach net zero when the amount we add is no more than the amount taken away.
- **NPPF** – National Planning Policy Framework; sets out government's planning policies for England.

O

- **Open Space** – All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

P

- **Passivhaus** – A rigorous voluntary standard for energy efficiency in buildings.

R

- **Renewable and Low Carbon Energy** – Includes energy from heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wild, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

S

- **Strategic Policies** – Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- **SUDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems)** – A sustainable drainage system controls surface water run off close to where it falls, combining a mixture of built and nature-based techniques to minim natural drainage as closely as possible, and accounting for the predicted impacts of climate change. The type of system that would be

appropriate will vary from small scale interventions such as permeable paving and soakaways that can be used in very small developments to larger integrated schemes in major developments.

T

- **Thermal Mass** – The ability of a material to absorb, store and release heat.
- **Town Centre** – Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, compromising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.
- **Travel Plan** – A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that details how agreed sustainable transport objectives are to be delivered, and which is monitored and regularly viewed.

South Oxfordshire District Council

Listening Learning Leading

BP Bluestone Planning

Alternative formats of this publication are available on request. These include large print, Braille, audio, email, easy read and alternative languages.

If you would like to discuss neighbourhood planning with a member of the team, please call us on 01235 422600 or email planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk