South Oxfordshire District Council

Listening Learning Leading

# South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011-2035

# Advice Note on Policy DES10: Carbon Reduction

MARCH 2026

www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan

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## Introduction

1. This advice note has been produced to provide guidance on the application of adopted South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 Policy DES10: Carbon Reduction[1] (referred to in this document as Policy DES10). While the note is not an adopted policy document, and should not be read as such, it sets out how applicants should demonstrate compliance with the adopted policy. It will be of use to South Oxfordshire District Council officers, developers and applicants, elected Members, as well as any other interested parties.

2. The Council has ambitious aspirations for reducing the district's carbon emissions and is committed to becoming a carbon neutral district by 2030. Achieving Council net carbon neutrality by 2025 and supporting others to achieve the district target of zero carbon by 2030 is a key project identified in our Corporate Plan. Local Plan Policy DES10 plays an important role in helping to deliver this.

3. Homes being built now, and in the next 5 to 10 years, are homes that will exist in 2050 when we have a legally binding target of achieving net zero emissions in the UK. We must therefore make sure that the standard of homes puts us on the right path.

## Policy Background

4. South Oxfordshire District Council declared a climate emergency in April 2019. In May 2019 a national environment and climate emergency was declared. After this, Government made changes to the targets set out in the Climate Change Act 2008, strengthening them to net zero emissions by 2050.

5. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines climate change mitigation as being primarily achieved through reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Policy DES10 builds on national policy to secure real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions by reducing the scale of emissions we make through better design of residential and non-residential development. It also encourages development to draw energy from renewable and low carbon energy sources.

Policy DES10 builds on national policy to secure real reductions in greenhouse gas emissions

6. Importantly, the policy recognises the Council's commitment for the district to become carbon neutral by 2030 and specifically seeks to address the Council's Climate and Ecological Emergency Advisory Committee's objective to ensure that the Local Plan reflects the latest national policy as a minimum.

[1] South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035

7. Policy DES10 is not the only policy in the Plan that can make a difference. The Local Plan as a whole seeks to proactively address climate change in terms of mitigation and adaptation. The policies that directly address climate change are listed in Appendix 16[2] of the Local Plan.

## What are the policy requirements?

8. Policy DES10 requires a reduction in carbon emissions which steps up over time. For housing, it requires all new build residential dwelling houses, developments that include 1,000sqm or more of C2 use[3], and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) to achieve a percentage reduction in carbon emissions compared with the 2013 Building Regulations, starting at 40%. From 31 March 2026 this percentage reduction has increased to 50%, in line with the stepped approach set out in Policy DES10.

9. It also requires a percentage reduction in carbon emissions for all other major non-residential development (1,000sqm or more). This is in addition to requiring all non-residential proposals to meet the BREEAM excellent standard.

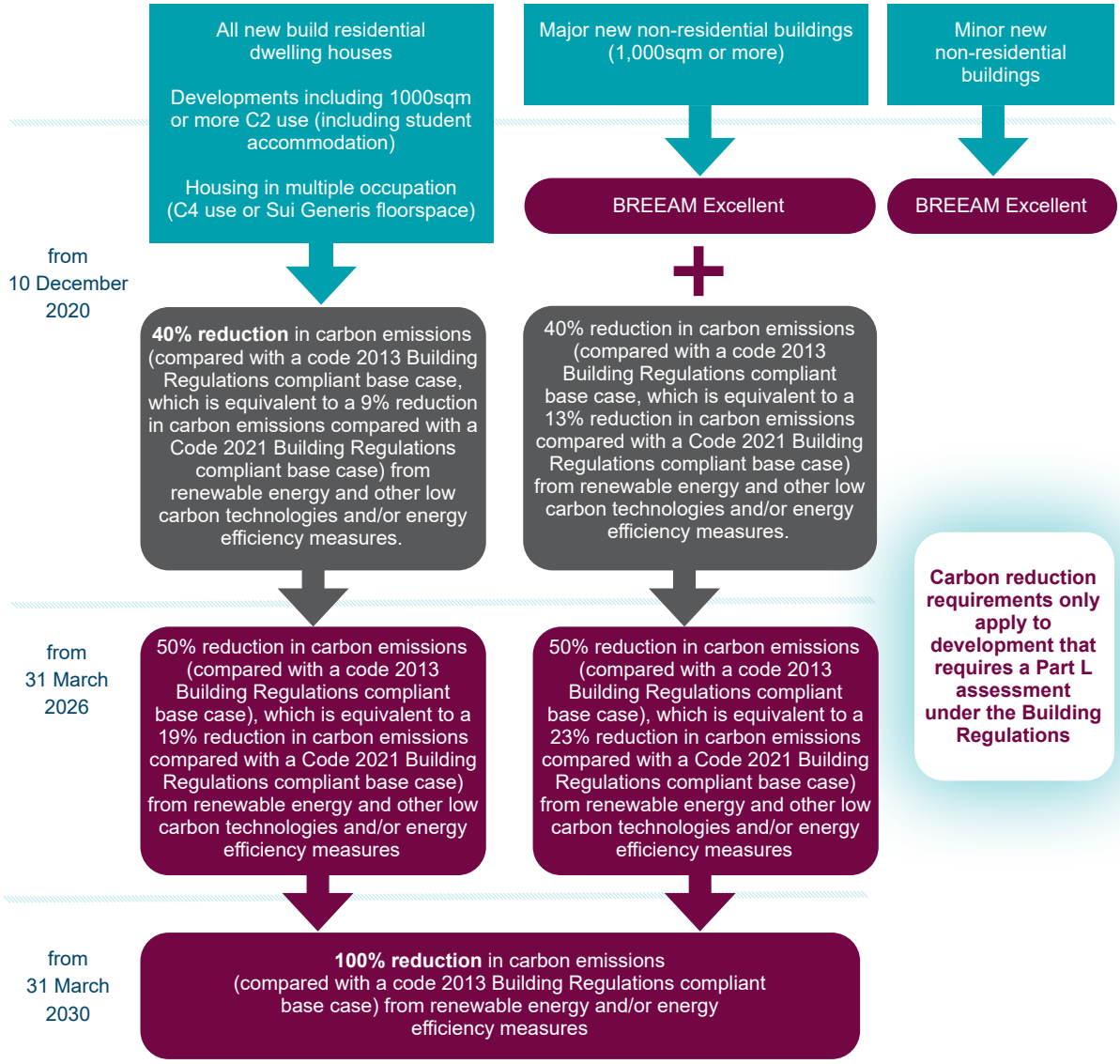
10. These requirements apply to each individual dwelling and/or building and should not just be applied to the site as a whole. More detail is set out below at Figure 1.

11. In June 2022, the Government implemented an interim uplift to Part L of the Building Regulations, updating the Building Regulations 2013. The updated Building Regulations are titled the Building Regulations 2021. Homes built to the interim standard will be expected to produce 31% less CO2 emissions compared to current standards set out in the 2013 Building Regulations, and a 27% reduction for non-residential buildings. In reflection of this update to Part L of the Building Regulations and the move from 31 March 2026 to the higher 50% standard, for housing, (all new build residential dwelling houses, developments that include 1,000sqm or more of C2 use, and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs)) we will also accept at least a 19% reduction in carbon emissions compared with the 2021 Building Regulations. For all other major non-residential development (1,000sqm or more) we will accept at least a 23% reduction in carbon emissions compared with the 2021 Building Regulations. This approach would still achieve a net result of a minimum 50% improvement on the 2013 Building Regulations, aligned with the stepped approach. Where a reference is made in this document to the 2013 Building Regulations, the updated 2021 Building Regulations and associated percentage reduction figures set out above, are also relevant and accepted.

[2] South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035

[3] As set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended)

Figure 1: Policy DES10: Carbon Reduction Requirements



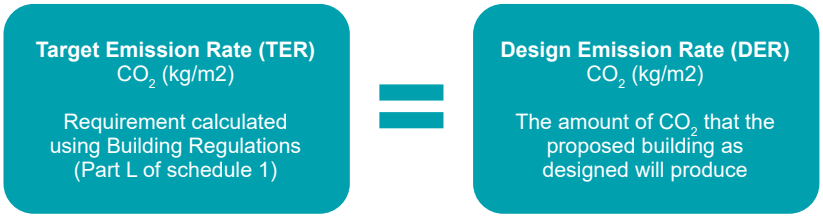

## What is a Code 2013 Building Regulations compliant base case?

12. Part L of Schedule 1 to the Building Regulations sets out the energy efficiency requirements.

A building where the DER and TER are equal would represent a Code 2013 and 2021 Building Regulations complaint base case

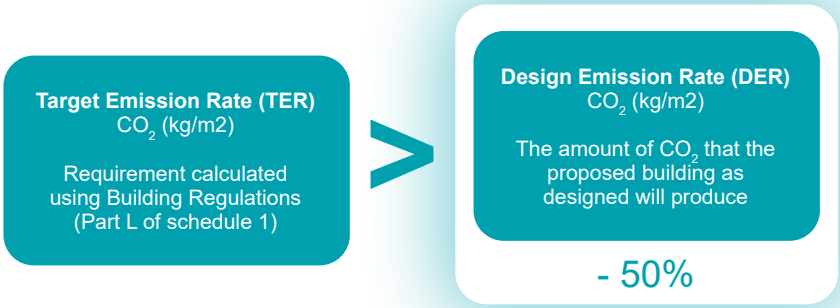
13. Developers and designers will use these requirements to calculate a 'Target Emission Rate' (TER) for the buildings that they are proposing to develop. The TER is the amount of $CO_2$ (measured in kg/m2) specified by the Building Regulations. It is specific to each individual building. The 'Design Emissions Rate' (DER) is the amount of $CO_2$ that the proposed development will produce, that is the emission rate of the building that has been designed. To be compliant with Building Regulations, the developer or designer would need to demonstrate that the DER meets the required TER that has been calculated. A building where the DER and TER are equal would represent a Code 2013 and 2021 Building Regulations complaint base case.

Figure 2: Diagram showing a Code 2013 and 2021 Building Regulations compliant base case




14. To meet the requirements of Policy DES10, the DER of each individual dwelling and/or building would need to be the required percentage lower than the TER. For example, the current requirement is 50%.

Figure 3: Diagram showing compliance with the current 50% carbon reduction required by Policy DES10.



15. The process is the same for both residential and non-residential buildings. The only difference is the terminology used to describe the calculations - the term used to express the CO2 emission rate of a proposed building for residential dwellings is the 'Design Emission Rate' (DER), whilst for non-residential buildings it is expressed as the 'Building Emission Rate' (BER)'. SAP (Standard Assessment Procedure) documents are produced for residential dwellings and BRUKL (Building Regulations UK, Part L) documents for non-domestic buildings. BRUKL documents are sometimes called SBEM reports (Simplified Building Energy Model), named after the most common methodology used to produce them.

## How should I meet the carbon reduction requirements?

16. Policy DES10 states, both for residential and non-residential development, the percentage carbon reduction should be secured through renewable energy and other low carbon technologies and/or energy efficiency measures.

17. The policy is flexible in its approach, allowing the applicant to identify the most effective way to meet the carbon reduction requirements. This recognises that there are many ways to achieve carbon reductions and the precise package is likely to be a site-specific solution. It allows low-carbon technologies to be used to meet the 40% and 50% reductions. However, a zero carbon development would need be met through on-site renewable energy and energy efficiency measures.

### A 'fabric first' approach

Applicants are encouraged to maximise the performance of the building fabric before considering other carbon reduction measures

18. Applicants are encouraged to maximise the performance of the building fabric before considering other carbon reduction measures, such as renewable energy or other low carbon technologies.

19. The fabric of a building refers to the physical elements separating the indoor environment from the outdoors, consisting of the frame, structure and insultation that make up the walls, floors and roofs of buildings.

20. Minimising energy consumption through the fabric of a building can be achieved in the following ways:
    - Using high-quality insulation
    - Increasing air-tightness
    - Avoiding thermal bridging
    - Maximising solar gain
    - Allowing for natural ventilation

## Renewable energy and other low carbon technologies

21. Renewable and low carbon energy sources should be considered for heating and cooling a building, as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, the sun, biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to the conventional use of fossil fuels). The main types of low carbon power generation that do not come from a renewable source are nuclear power and gas-fired combined heat and power (CHP). However, gas-fired combined heat and power, although more cost effective, still requires the use of gas similar to a gas boiler. Therefore, robust justification should be provided if this technology is to be used in place of greener alternatives such as air source heat pumps.

22. The National Planning Policy Framework supports the delivery and use of renewable and low carbon technologies and so does our Local Plan Policy DES9: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy. This includes the incorporation of renewable and low carbon energy applications within all new development.

Where renewable and low carbon technologies are incorporated, they should be delivered on-site

23. Where renewable and low carbon technologies are incorporated, they should be delivered on-site. If this is not possible, and renewable and low carbon technologies need to be developed off-site to meet the requirements of Policy DES10, the energy produced should directly service the proposed development scheme and measures should be put in place to ensure that the energy supply cannot be changed to a high carbon alternative.

## Requirements for zero carbon

24. The final requirement of the policy for new residential dwelling houses from 2030, is a 100% reduction in carbon emissions or 'zero carbon' as defined in the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. This definition is set out below:

'*A dwelling whose carbon footprint does not add to overall carbon emissions. However, the Government have stated that Zero Carbon will only apply to those carbon dioxide emissions that are covered by building regulations.'*

25. This requirement for zero carbon is not equivalent to the Code for Sustainable Homes Level 6 standard, which was previously the Government's standard used to help reduce carbon emissions but has since been withdrawn.

26. The requirement is also not a 'net' zero carbon requirement. All reductions in carbon emissions should relate directly to the dwelling being permitted/ constructed. However, it applies only to regulated energy, that is the carbon dioxide emissions that are covered by Building Regulations, including heating, cooling, ventilation, lighting and hot water. It does not apply to unregulated energy, which includes items plugged into electricity outlets, such as white goods, IT equipment, smaller kitchen appliances and other home electronics. This is because unregulated energy is beyond the influence of the house builder. Policy DES10 requires an improvement on Building Regulations, which excludes unregulated energy.

All reductions in carbon emissions should relate directly to the dwelling being permitted/ constructed

## BREEAM excellent standard requirement for non-residential development

27. BREEAM (Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method), is a widely used sustainability assessment method for buildings. BREEAM assesses buildings against a set of nine criterion for sustainable building design, construction and operation, and provides an overall score. The scheme provides certification of the assessment of the sustainability performance of buildings. A BREEAM excellent rating broadly represents sustainability performance equivalent to the top 10% of UK new non-domestic buildings (best practice).

28. Policy DES10 requires all new non-residential buildings to meet the BREEAM excellent standard. However, we understand that this may not always be appropriate due to the nature of some developments. For example, agricultural buildings that require planning permission[4] and other buildings that may not require heating. In these cases, a request for a departure from this policy will need to be made and agreed between the applicant and the case officer. A statement explaining why the function of the building makes it inappropriate to meet the BREEAM excellent standard should be submitted as part of the application. The statement should set out what sustainability measures are possible for the development to deliver. It does not need to contain viability evidence unless an argument regarding viability is being made. Where an argument regarding viability is being made, a viability assessment will be required. Please be aware that viability information will be made public on our website. For more information regarding departures from policy DES10 please see paragraphs 34 to 36.

We advise that if an applicant wishes to use a method other than BREEAM they check with the case officer in order to ensure that it is appropriate

29. Policy DES10 also acknowledges that BREEAM is not the only assessment methodology and that other methods of assessment are available, and therefore paragraph 2 (i) of Policy DES10 allows 'a recognised equivalent assessment methodology' to be used, for example LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). We advise that if an applicant wishes to use a method other than BREEAM they check with the case officer in order to ensure that it is appropriate.

## Do these requirements apply to my planning application?

30. 29. The carbon reduction requirements set out in figure 1 above apply only to development that requires a Part L assessment under the Building Regulations. Broadly, this applies to all buildings, or extensions (except for a ground level conservatory, porch, covered way or carport), or the carrying out of any work to or in connection of any such building or extension where the building is a roofed construction having walls; and uses energy to condition the indoor climate. There are some exemptions to Part L, including:

- Certain buildings which are listed, in conservation areas or are included in the schedule of monuments - where compliance with the energy efficiency requirements would unacceptably alter their character or appearance
- Buildings which are used primarily or solely as places of worship
- Temporary buildings with a planned time of use of 2 years or less, with low energy demand
- Industrial sites, workshops and non-residential agricultural buildings with low energy demand

[4] Many agricultural buildings (those up to 1,000sqm) on qualifying holdings do not need planning permission under the GPDO Part 6 Class A so would not trigger the full planning application process and would not require assessment against Policy DES10: Carbon Reduction.

- Stand-alone buildings other than dwellings with a total useful floor area of less than 50m²

Regulation 21 of the Building Regulations 2010 sets out the exemption criteria regarding the Part L requirements[5]. Your builder, agent or architect should know whether your proposal requires an assessment under Part L.

31. The requirements of Policy DES10 must be met by development proposals at the Outline or Full planning application stage before planning permission is granted. An Energy Statement or justification for departure from the policy must be submitted with the application in order for it to be valid. Paragraphs 40 to 46 below set out what must be included within an Energy Statement. For the avoidance of doubt, SAP/SBEM calculations will need to be submitted as part of the Energy Statement to demonstrate compliance with the policy.

32. Where compliance cannot be fully demonstrated by an Outline application because matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale are not being approved, the Council will consider applying a planning condition to the Outline permission that would require the standards to be applied and assessed when the Reserved Matters application(s) is submitted. Below is an example of such a condition:

> 'Prior to the commencement of the development hereby approved, an Energy Statement, including SAP calculations in line with the recognised methodology set by Government, demonstrating how the development will achieve at least a 50% reduction in carbon emissions compared with code 2013 Building Regulations and details of how this will be monitored shall be submitted to the local planning authority and approved in writing.
>
> Reason: To ensure high standards of sustainable design and construction in accordance with Policy DES10 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035.'

33. We acknowledge that Policy DES10 is new and relatively novel and that the production of an Energy Statement will likely result in additional cost and time, particularly for more minor applications. The policy approach means that applicants are likely to need a Part L assessment earlier in the design process than previously. This is to maximise energy efficiency gains from 'passive design[6]' of glazing, form and orientation. If these elements are not optimised at the earliest design stage, it becomes a lot harder and more

[5] Regulation 21 of the Building Regulations 2010

[6] **Passive design** maximises the use of 'natural' sources of heating, cooling and ventilation to create comfortable conditions inside buildings. This is as opposed to 'active' design; using active building services systems to create comfortable conditions, such as boilers and chillers, mechanical ventilation, electric lighting, renewable energy and so on.

expensive to achieve the energy performance required. We would advise applicants and agents to engage with an energy assessor early in the design process to avoid abortive work and costs later.

Departures to this policy will only be supported exceptionally and where robust evidence has been submitted

34. Any changes to the design of the development during determination of the application and/or once permission has been granted are likely to require amendments to the Energy Statement. The Energy Statement would need to be resubmitted so that it can be reassessed to ensure the proposed development still meets the required percentage carbon reduction set out in Policy DES10. Therefore, if you are applying for planning permission but have not finalised the design of the development, for example, if you wish to sell land with planning permission attached, we advise that you apply for Outline planning permission. This would allow an Energy Statement to be submitted and assessed at the later Reserved Matters application stage when design details are finalised. It is therefore the most appropriate form of planning consent in circumstances where the design of the development is likely to change.

## Departures from the requirements

35. It is recognised that there will be occasions where a development is unable to meet the full requirements of Policy DES10 due to the type of the development being proposed and/or the cost of meeting the requirements impacting the viability of the development. However, departures to this policy will only be supported exceptionally and where robust evidence has been submitted. Where a departure from Policy DES10 is requested, it should set out clearly the percentage carbon reduction that can be achieved by the development compared to a 2013 or 2021 Building Regulations complaint base case and it should also be evident that all reasonable technologies have been considered to try and meet the percentage carbon reduction required.

36. The Viability Assessment commissioned during the preparation of the Local Plan concluded Policy DES10 to be a viable policy that can be successfully delivered by most development.

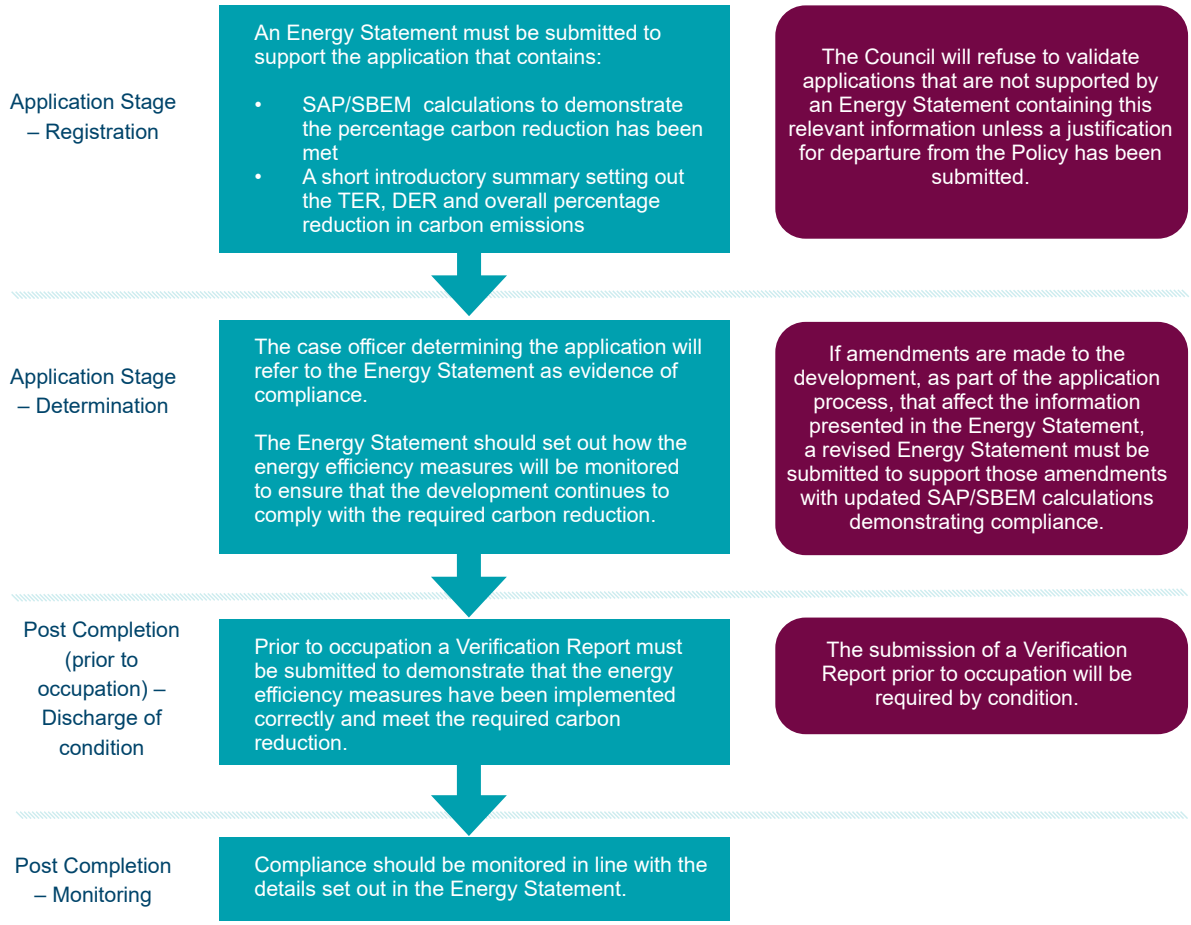
37. The initial 40% carbon reduction requirement in Policy DES10 is only slightly greater in terms of carbon reduction compared to the requirement for 20% of energy demand to be secured from renewable and low energy sources set out in Core Strategy Policy CSQ2: Sustainable Design and Construction. Because of this, it is unlikely that there should be significant viability issues.

## When do I need to demonstrate compliance with the policy requirements?

38. There has been a four-month transition period from the adoption of the Plan in December 2020 until 1st April 2021 whereby the requirements set out in Policy DES10 could be required by condition for those applications already under consideration. This transition period was implemented to give applicants and officers adequate time to familiarise themselves with the new requirements and allow developments already well advanced in their design and the application process time to comply with the policy. However, from 1st April 2021 the requirements of Policy DES10 must be strictly adhered to and met prior to planning permission being granted, as set out in paragraph 30 above, or a condition applied allowing an Energy Statement to be submitted at Reserved Matters stage, as set out in paragraph 31.

From 1st April 2021 the requirements of Policy DES10 must be strictly adhered to and met prior to planning permission being granted

Figure 4: Diagram showing stages of compliance.



## How do I demonstrate compliance with the policy requirements?

The Energy Statement submitted by the applicant must include the calculations used to demonstrate the energy performance of the building(s)

39. Part 3 of Policy DES10 requires an Energy Statement to be submitted to demonstrate compliance with the policy and how this will be monitored. This applies to all new-build residential developments, HMOs or student accommodation that meet the thresholds of the policy, and new-build non-residential schemes over 1,000sqm.

40. Most of the development sector measure the energy efficiency of a development proposal using "regulated energy". Regulated energy is the energy that a building uses that is measured and regulated through the Building Regulations. The requirements of Policy DES10 are measured using regulated energy.

41. In order to calculate the percentage reduction of carbon emissions required by Policy DES10, the Energy Statement submitted by the applicant must include the calculations used to demonstrate the energy performance of the building(s) (e.g. the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating or Simplified Building Energy Model (SBEM) calculations). The summary and inputs sheets from the Part L assessment(s) should also be included.

42. Within these calculations the Target Emission Rate (TER) and Design Emission Rate (DER) for the proposed development must be set out (see paragraph 12 for more information on TER and DER). The TER and DER should be calculated for each individual building in the development, as each individual building must meet the required percentage reduction in carbon emissions. The percentage carbon reduction should not be calculated on just a site-wide basis, as this could result in not all buildings meeting the 50% requirement. Even if the design of the buildings on the site are the same, orientation for example can influence the percentage of carbon reduction achieved which is why it is crucial to assess each building on an individual basis.

43. The assessment should be undertaken by an accredited independent energy assessor and the accreditation reference provided.

[7] Policy DES10: Carbon Reduction introduces more stringent standards in 2026 (50% reduction) and then 2030 (100% carbon reduction for new-build residential developments).

## How to calculate the percentage reduction in carbon emissions

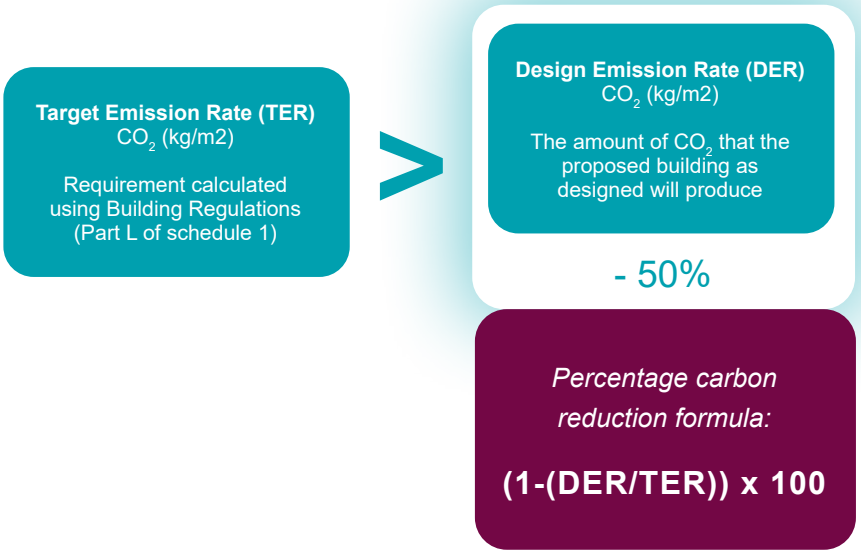
44. In calculating the percentage reduction as required by Policy DES10[7], the following formula will be used:

Figure 5: Percentage carbon reduction formula

*Percentage carbon reduction formula:*

**(1-(DER/TER)) x 100 = at least 50%**

Figure 6: The relationship between the percentage carbon formula, TER and DER




45. Below we demonstrate how this formula can be used to used to calculate the percentage carbon reduction, including how to obtain the necessary data to apply the formula and use excerpts from example Energy Statements to support this.

An Energy Statement should begin with a short summary of the information relating to the TER and DER figures and state the percentage carbon emission reduction

46. An Energy Statement should begin with a short summary of the information relating to the TER and DER figures and state the percentage carbon emission reduction (as shown in red below). The example below (Figure 7) is based on a real Energy Statement at a neighbouring authority[8] but has been amended to reflect the South Oxfordshire Policy DES10 and the following SAP calculation for ease of example. Please note this example is based off of the previous 40% carbon reduction requirement, and from 31 March 2026 a 50% reduction is required.

Figure 7: Extract from an example Energy Statement using SAP calculation software (Oxford City Council Energy Statement example amended to reflect South Oxfordshire Policy DES10)

**SAP Calculations have been produced from the planning drawings and proposed specification. Through the inclusion of passive measures, fabric improvements, and carbon reducing technologies and systems we can reduce the carbon emissions significantly beyond Part L1a 2013 Building Regulations and achieve in excess of the minimum 40% in carbon emissions, as required by South Oxfordshire District Council.**

**The TER and DER figures in the SAP calculations are measures in kg of $CO_2$ emissions per year divided by the dwelling floor area.**

**With the inclusion of passive measures, fabric improvements and carbon reducing technologies and systems, the baseline TER (Target Emission Rate) for the dwelling is 18.45 as demonstrated through the attached SAP calculation.**

**The attached SAP calculation demonstrated the DER (Dwelling Emission Rate) of 10.35 represents a 43.9% reduction in carbon emissions and is therefore compliant with Policy DES10.**


[8] The requirement of Policy DES10: Carbon Reduction to submit an Energy Statement is a new policy to South Oxfordshire. Given this, the first example is based on an Energy Statement submitted to Oxford City Council but has been amended to reflect South Oxfordshire Policy DES10. Policy RE1 of the Oxford City Local Plan 2036 has similar carbon reduction requirements as Policy DES10.

47. The TER and DER figures within the calculations (e.g. SAP) are used to check the carbon reduction figure. These figures should be included in the Energy Statement itself or the appendix. We also have provided an example below that shows the TER and DER figures highlighted in red. These figures are measured in kg/m2.

Figure 8: Example of SAP calculation showing TER and DER figures (South Oxfordshire District example)

**FULL SAP CALCULATION PRINTOUT**
**Calculation Type: New Build (As Designed)**

vectordesign

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Property Reference | Silver Birches | | | Issued on Date | 15/12/2020 |
| Assessment Reference | 005 | | | Prop Type Ref | |
| Property | | | | | |
| SAP Rating | 87 B | DER | 10.35 | TER | 18.45 |
| Environmental | 88 B | % DER<TER | 43.89 | | |
| $CO_2$ Emissions (t/year) | 5.33 | DFEE | 43.21 | TFEE | 54.69 |
| General Requirements Compliance | Pass | % DFEE<TFEE | 20.99 | | |

48. Using the formula as set out in Figure 5 above, officers can calculate the percentage carbon reduction using the TER and DER figures as demonstrated below and can confirm that this percentage matches the figure presented in the Energy Statement. Again, please note this example is based off of the previous 40% carbon reduction requirement, and from 31 March 2026 a 50% reduction is required.

Figure 9: Example of percentage carbon reduction calculation using TER and DER figures.

*Percentage carbon reduction formula:*

(1-(DER/TER)) x 100 = at least 40%

**(1-(10.35/18.45)) x 100 = 43.9%**

We need to ensure the 'as-built' performance of the building achieves the performance standards (carbon reduction) required by the policy, and approved as part of the planning permission, and also that it continues to do so.

49. The Council will also check that the calculations in the report show that all the sections of the Part L Building Regulation standards have been 'passed'. This is sometimes represented as 'OK' in the reports. The Council (Building Control) have found that, on occasion, buildings have failed to meet the solar gain standards. It is not acceptable for a building to fail any of the sections under Part L of the Building Regulations, even if an overall 50% carbon reduction has been achieved. If a building is failing a section of the regulations, the case officer will contact the applicant to inform them that the failure is unacceptable. The Council will encourage applicants to amend a scheme's design to achieve compliance.

50. 49. Policy DES10 requires an Energy Statement to include details about how the policy will be complied with and monitored. We need this to ensure the 'as-built' performance of the building achieves the performance standards (carbon reduction) required by the policy, and approved as part of the planning permission, and also that it continues to do so.

51. 50. Compliance with the performance standards of the approved planning permission will need to be demonstrated through the submission of a verification report prior to first occupation. This will be required by condition, and an example condition is set out below:

> Prior to first occupation, all carbon reduction energy efficiency measures shall be implemented in accordance with the Energy Statement hereby approved and a Verification Report shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority and approved in writing. The Verification Report shall demonstrate (with photographic evidence) that the energy efficiency measures have been implemented. These measures shall be retained and maintained as such thereafter in accordance with the Energy Statement and Verification Report.

## Preferred methods of monitoring

In the immediate term, local authorities will retain powers to set local energy efficiency standards

52. With regards to the continued monitoring of the 'as-built' performance of the buildings, Policy DES10 does not prescribe a one-size-fits-all approach, leaving applicants the flexibility to decide to how this could take place. However, the Council would support continued post construction testing. Policy DES10 does not set out any formal requirements for how the continued monitoring of development proposals should be undertaken. However, it does require that monitoring details are set out within the Energy Statement and these are carried out.

[6] LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide

53. Monitoring (particularly in the form of post-construction testing), has benefits that can be realised by owners, occupiers and other parties (e.g. housebuilders) involved in the development process. Owners and occupiers for example, can benefit from monitoring by being able to regularly check the energy performance of the building between the design stage and use of the building in practice. This could lead to financial savings, as less energy used will likely in turn reduce energy bills. Monitoring in the form of post-construction testing, will likely benefit housebuilders as they can demonstrate energy efficiencies in the homes they build. They can then share this information with customers to demonstrate effective use of technologies employed.

Monitoring in the form of post-construction testing, will likely benefit housebuilders as they can demonstrate energy efficiencies in the homes they build.

54. A good example of post-construction testing and monitoring for residential developments would be the installation of appropriate energy metering (e.g. Smart Meters). More information on energy monitoring can be found in Chapter 5 of the LETI Climate Emergency Design Guide[7].

## Reviewing the policy

55. Following the Interim Update to Part L of the Buildings Regulations implemented in June 2022, the Government intends to improve further the national energy efficiency standards for new homes under the Future Homes Standard. This standard, programmed to be implemented in 2025, will deliver homes that are zero-carbon ready.

56. The Government also proposes to improve the performance of non-domestic buildings, under the Future Building Standard. This standard, also programmed to be implemented in 2025, provides a pathway to highly efficient non-domestic buildings which are zero-carbon ready. An interim uplift was implemented in 2022, delivering a 27% reduction in carbon emissions on average per building compared with the former Building Regulations 2013.

57. The Government have confirmed that, in the immediate term, local authorities will retain powers to set local energy efficiency standards such as those set out in Policy DES10. However, to ensure the policy remains effective, the Council will review the policy as and when new legislation and national policy is implemented. We are developing a new policy on sustainable construction in our emerging Joint Local Plan which will, once adopted, replace Policy DES10. We will publish a further update to this guidance note, as needed, when the Future Homes Standard and Future Buildings Standard are implemented in 2027.

## Useful links

- **South Oxfordshire Sustainable Construction Checklist** - This is a checklist that developers and householders are required to fill in to accompany planning applications. The checklist asks applicants for information that will be used to demonstrate compliance with South Oxfordshire Local Plan Policies DES8: Sustainable Design, DES7: Efficient Use of Resources and INF4: Water Resources. On Policy DES10: Carbon Reduction, the checklist asks applicants to confirm they have submitted an Energy Statement, and that the Energy Statement demonstrates compliance with the percentage carbon reduction required by Policy DES10, and asks for a short summary of how this is being achieved, for example through high fabric efficiencies, renewable or low carbon energy generation etc. It confirms that a planning application will not be registered for determination until an adequate Energy Statement is provided.

- **A best practice example of an Energy Statement.**

South Oxfordshire District Council

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Please contact Planning Policy on 01235 422600

**www.southoxon.gov.uk/newlocalplan**

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