

#### **Policy CUL9: Zero carbon buildings**

***Development proposals which would be 'zero carbon ready' by design by minimising the amount of energy needed to heat and cool buildings through landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping will be supported. Consideration should be given to resource efficiency at the outset and whether existing buildings can be re-used as part of the scheme to capture their embodied carbon.***

***Proposals for a Passivhaus or equivalent standard buildings with a space heating demand of less than 15KWh/m2/year will be supported. Schemes that maximise their potential to meet this standard by proposing the use of terraced and/or apartment building forms of plot size, plot coverage and layout that are different to those of the character area within which the proposal is located will be supported, provided it can be demonstrated that the scheme will not have an unacceptable effect on the character area.***

***Proposals for major development should be accompanied by a Whole-Life-Cycle Carbon Emission Assessment, using a recognised methodology, to demonstrate actions have been taken to reduce embodied carbon resulting from the construction and use of the building over its life.***

5.31 Policies DES8-10 of the adopted Local Plan provide local guidance on this important matter. Its paragraph 8.30 provides the context for the approach taken and comments that the Government has established that through Part L of the Building Regulations, emissions allowed from new buildings will be reduced incrementally and that "zero carbon" buildings will be required within the plan period. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 stipulated that a review of minimum energy performance requirements under Building Regulations must be carried out and it is expected that current standards will be improved with the introduction of the Future Homes Standard. Policy DES10 sets the Council's policy requirement for carbon reduction.

5.32 Policy DES8 of the Local Plan comments that all new development, including building conversions, refurbishments, and extensions, should seek to minimise the carbon and energy impacts of their design and construction. Proposals must demonstrate that they are seeking to limit greenhouse emissions through location, building orientation, design, landscape, and planting considering any nationally adopted standards and in accordance with Policies DES10 and DES7.

5.33 Policy DES10 of the Local Plan provides more specific details and comments that a range of development proposals (including those for residential uses) should 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 policy comments that this 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). The policy also comments that these targets will be reviewed in the light of any future legislation and national guidance.

5.34 The implementation of Policy DES10 is expanded in the Joint Design Guide (June 2022). This Design Guide has been prepared as part of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' commitment to securing the highest quality development within the districts. The guide builds upon and replaces previous local design guides and aligns with the National Design Guide (2019). It is intended to assist landowners, developers, applicants, agents, designers, and planners in the process of developing high quality development and in assessing its design quality. The guide is a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The section on Climate and sustainability sets out a series of design standards to achieve the details of Policy DES10.

5.35 In November 2022 the District Council published a technical advice note on Policy DES10 of the Local Plan. The note comments that whilst it 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 also comments that it will be of use to South Oxfordshire District Council officers, developers, and applicants, elected Members, as well as any other interested parties.

5.36 Policy CUL9 of this Plan builds on this comprehensive local approach. It will result in a situation where the neighbourhood plan would offer a supportive context for development proposals in the parish to achieve more sustainable solutions that those required by the Local Plan policy. Plainly the wider situation may be affected by changes to national or local planning policies on these matters in the Plan period.

#### **Policy CUL10: Light pollution**

***As appropriate to their scale, nature and location development proposals should be designed to minimise the occurrence of light pollution and employ energy-efficient forms of lighting that reduces light scatter.***

5.37 The Culham Community Led Plan 2014 identified that less street lighting was important to the local community. The strategic allocations and transport schemes in and adjacent to the parish will have a major impact on existing lighting levels. The brightest levels can already be seen to be straying into the village's night sky (see Plan E below). Many councils across England support measures to protect and enhance the dark night sky. The policy reflects the purpose and objectives of policies ENV11 and ENV12 on Pollution of the SODCLP. For all proposed developments, factors that will be considered when deciding the appropriateness of artificial lighting, include the location, the hours of operation, the quantity of lights proposed, brightness and control, and direction of the beam. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how they have been designed to prevent light pollution. Information on these measures should be submitted with applications, and proposals should have regard with the current guidelines established for rural areas by the Institute of Lighting Professionals. Where a development proposal is otherwise acceptable, but would potentially impact on light levels in the area, an appropriate lighting scheme will be secured by planning condition.