

Proposed Changes to Local Validation Requirements

It is proposed to change the current local validation requirements reflect requirements of recently adopted planning policy documents. They relate to the issues of climate change and community involvement in the planning process. The changes will take place at the beginning of February 2025. The proposed changes are:

Energy Statements and Sustainability Statements

The Council adopted the Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document in September 2024. This document sets out requirements for Energy Statements and Sustainability Statements to accompany applications for planning permission at Paragraph 1.26. These requirements are:

- a. For Minor development (less than 10 dwelling) applicants will complete and submit a Sustainability and Energy Statement which is subject to review by officers as part of the application process; and
- b. For schemes of 10-99 dwellings, applicants are required to provide a Sustainability and Energy Statement from a qualified entity (e.g. Architect or Consultant) as a formal assessment of the sustainability credentials of the development which is examined and reported on by officers as part of the application process.
- c. For major schemes of 100+ dwellings, applications should include both an Energy Statement and a Sustainability Statement from a certified assessor which will be secured, where required and appropriate, by planning conditions or other measures.

Non- residential development is also addressed in the Sustainability SPD, and the Local Validation Matrix has been amended to address this.

Community Involvement

Whilst pre-application engagement with neighbours for small scale and householder development can be of significant benefit to applicants, wider community engagement will benefit larger proposals. This proposed change relates to the requirement for Statements of Community Involvement to accompany larger applications, especially those subject to master planning.

The National Planning Policy Framework encourages pre-application engagement as does this Council. A Statement of Community Involvement that sets out who has been consulted, the responses received and any consequential changes to a proposal, will assist in informing the Local Planning Authority of the nature and extent of community engagement that has been undertaken by the applicant.

It is therefore proposed to amend the Local Validation Requirements whereby Energy Statements and Sustainability Statements will be required in-line with recently adopted SPD, and Statements of Community Involvement will be required to accompany applications for planning permission for larger developments.

14 January 2025