

PLYMOUTH AND SOUTH WEST DEVON CLIMATE EMERGENCY PLANNING STATEMENT - ADOPTION

Briefing Note

1. Introduction

- 1.1. In March 2019, Plymouth City Council declared a climate emergency and committed to net zero by 2030. Consequently, urgent action is required to make sure new development appropriately mitigates for and adapts to climate change. This will help ensure that new buildings do not need retrofitting as soon as they are built.
- 1.2. The Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Statement is prepared as a response to the climate emergency. It puts in place interim policy and guidance pending the next review of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP). This allows us to go further than our adopted policies and guidance because of the urgent need to act now.

2. Background

- 2.1. The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) was adopted by Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council in March 2019, before the climate emergency declarations. The Plymouth and South West Devon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) amplifies adopted policy and was adopted in July 2020.
- 2.2. The JLP Partnership Board provides governance of the JLP and is made up of two cabinet members from Plymouth City Council, South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council. In December 2021, the Board agreed that urgent action was required to address the climate and biodiversity emergencies and that more should be done to go further than our current policies.
- 2.3. The JLP is not due for review until 2024 and must be undertaken according to regulations. This is a lengthy process and there are no options for quick updates and refreshes of local plans. However, use of an interim policy statement enables a local planning authority to proactively address an issue where there is a pressing need to take a different planning policy approach. This does not have the status of a statutory development plan would therefore carries less weight in the decision making process than local plans. However, it is an important material consideration in planning decision making.
- 2.4. The Board agreed that an interim policy statement should be prepared. A draft, entitled 'Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Policy and Guidance' was presented to the Annual General Meeting in February 2022 and approved for a minimum 6-week consultation.

3. Consultation

- 3.1. Public consultation ran from 3 March 2022 to 5pm on 19 April 2022 in line with the agreed principles set out in the Statement of Community Involvement. It sought comments on the draft Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Policy and Guidance document as well as the detailed mitigation and adaptation measures set out in a series of factsheets. Specific questions were asked seeking views and detailed information on a range of issues. A Sustainability and Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken as part of the process and was published.

- 3.2. Over 1,800 comments were received from 128 individuals and organisations and a Consultation Report has been prepared providing more detail and is provided as a background paper. These comments were taken into account in finalising the planning statement.
- 3.3. The JLP Partnership Board has been fully briefed on the measures included within the Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Statement, together with the Consultation Report and Climate Emergency Compliance Form and on 18 July 2022 agreed it should be progressed to the Full Councils of each Authority.

4. Structure and content of the Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Statement

- 4.1. The Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Statement is attached at Appendix B and is intended to be used by all members of the community, as well as those directly involved in the development industry.
- 4.2. It has been divided into the following sections:
 1. Introduction
 2. Why is this planning statement need and what is its status
 3. How the planning statement relates to local planning policy and guidance
 4. What the planning statement does and how it works
 5. How the planning statement will be delivered
 - 6-10 Appendices
- 4.3. Appendix 2 and 3 set out the new mitigation and adaptation requirements as follows:

Appendix 2 Mitigation Measures:

- M1: Onsite renewable energy generation
- M2: Energy Storage
- M3: Low and zero carbon space and water heating systems
- M4: Resilient and low carbon building materials
- M5: Demolition and Rebuild
- M6: Electric Vehicle Charging points
- M7: Active and sustainable travel

Appendix 3 Adaptation Measures

- A1: Passive Solar Design
- A2: Protecting our soil resource
- A3: Protecting and enhancing tree cover
- A4: Protecting and enhancing gardens, green spaces and greenfield sites
- A5: Delivering sustainable drainage, surface water management and restricting urban creep
- A6: Delivering biodiversity net gain and habitat improvements

- 4.4. For ease of use, it has been primarily designed as an interactive web based tool that will direct people to the detailed mitigation measures required for residential and commercial development and the adaptation requirements for all development types.
- 4.5. It will be implemented using a Climate Emergency Compliance Form that all development proposals are required to complete in order for them to be validated. This will be added to the Local Validation Lists and can be delegated to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Communities.

5. Next steps

- 5.1. Following approval by Cabinet, the Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Statement will be recommended for adoption by Full Council. The same will be done in South Hams Borough Council and West Devon District Council.
- 5.2. Once approved for adoption across all three JLP authorities the Plymouth and South West Devon Climate Emergency Planning Statement will come into force and be a material consideration in the determination of all new planning applications submitted after 30 September 2022.
- 5.3. It will apply only to new planning applications submitted after 30 September 2022 and will not be retrospectively applied to any planning applications already in the system at that point. Changes are being made to the local validations lists that will require all applications to complete a Climate Emergency Compliance Form in order to be validated. This will be agreed by the Cabinet Member for Homes and Communities.
- 5.4. The interactive webtool is being developed and will be made live on the website once this Climate Emergency Planning Statement has been adopted.