

Review of Planning Policy Statement 22: Renewable energy policies in emerging development plans

Planning policy on renewable energy is set out in Planning Policy Statement 22 (PPS22) Renewable Energy published in 2004. Paragraph 8 allows local planning authorities to include policies in their plans which require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy sources.

Yvette Cooper's written ministerial statement of June 2006, building on PPS22, made it clear that 'Ministers expect all local authorities to include policies in their developments plans to require a percentage of energy in new developments to come from on-site renewable sources where viable'.

The statement can be viewed at

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200506/cmhansrd/cm060608/wmstext/60608m0068.htm#060608640>

The statement confirmed that in the plans scrutinised to-date there had been a strong take-up of the policy in PPS22 to secure the use of on-site renewables in new developments.

The review can be viewed at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1500549>

Subsequently, the Town and Country Planning Association published their own survey highlighting "an impressive surge in on-site renewable energy policies". This suggested that more than 170 local authorities were "working up policies to require developers to generate clean, safe energy on-site in new developments".

The draft Planning Policy Statement (PPS) on climate change, Planning and Climate Change (published for consultation on 13 December 2006 alongside Building a Greener Future) sets out a clear and challenging role for regional and local spatial strategies on energy - they are expected to help shape the framework for energy supply in their area.

The consultation can be viewed at

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1505140>

At the local level, development plan documents (DPDs) are expected to set policies on the provision of low carbon and renewable sources of energy to provide the platform necessary for securing and complementing the increasingly high levels of energy and carbon performance required by Building Regulations. This provision is expected to be "significant", so as to reflect the full potential of local opportunities but without undermining the new development needed in communities. In the interim period before plans are adopted it is proposed planning authorities should require a standard of 10 per cent.

The approach in the PPS reflects the important role of local government in leading, shaping and supporting regional and local strategies that help move to low-carbon living. Appropriate technologies, and their potential, will vary from place-to-place. Judgements as to how new development should integrate with local potential, and the vision for securing and delivering this potential, are best made locally not nationally, and as part of the wider consideration of the infrastructure and services needed to secure sustainable communities.