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ENERGY EFFICIENCY, CARBON REDUCTION & SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING GUIDE - STOCKPORT

A Guide to Securing Planning Permission in Stockport: Energy Efficiency, Carbon Reduction & Sustainability

If you are seeking planning permission for a new development in Stockport, there are a number of energy efficiency, carbon reduction, and sustainability requirements that must be met. The Stockport Local Plan Strategy sets clear expectations for new developments, aligning with national climate targets and local priorities for sustainable growth. This guide provides an overview of what applicants need to consider to ensure their proposals meet the necessary standards.

1. Energy Efficiency Requirements

Stockport Council promotes developments that follow the **Energy Hierarchy**, prioritising energy reduction, efficiency, and low-carbon energy sources. Key requirements include:

- **Energy Efficiency Standards:** New developments should aim to exceed the minimum Building Regulations where possible, achieving high ratings in schemes such as BREEAM (for non-residential development) and the Code for Sustainable Homes (for residential development). (Policy SD-1)
 - **Decentralised & Renewable Energy:** New developments should incorporate decentralised, renewable, or low-carbon energy generation where feasible, with a particular focus on solar PV and district heating systems. (Policy SD-3)
 - **District Heating Networks:** Major developments should install site-wide district heating networks or demonstrate future-proofing for connection. (Policy SD-4)
 - **Energy Statements:** Proposals should include a statement detailing how energy efficiency and renewable energy requirements will be met. (Policy SD-3)
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2. Carbon Reduction Measures

Stockport is committed to supporting the transition to a **low-carbon economy** and expects new developments to contribute to reducing emissions. To comply with local policies:

- **Climate Change Adaptation:** All developments must demonstrate how they are designed to adapt to the impacts of climate change, including overheating and flood resilience. (Policy SD-6)
 - **Low-Carbon Energy Sources:** New developments should prioritise the use of low and zero-carbon energy sources, particularly in areas off the gas grid. (Policy SD-3)
 - **Sustainable Materials:** Developers should use sustainable construction materials and minimise embodied carbon in buildings. (Sustainable Design SPD)
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3. Sustainability & Environmental Responsibility

A truly sustainable development is not just about energy efficiency—it must also minimise environmental impact and contribute positively to local communities. Applicants should consider:

- **Sustainable Construction:** Using recycled and sustainable materials where possible, minimising waste, and designing for the re-use of existing structures. (Sustainable Design SPD)
- **Water Efficiency:** Developments should integrate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), encourage rainwater harvesting, and incorporate water-efficient appliances. (Policy SD-6)

- **Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure:** Proposals should protect and enhance existing trees, hedgerows, and wildlife habitats while incorporating green spaces and planting schemes. (Policy CS8)
- **Low Carbon Transport Options:** Developers must encourage walking, cycling, and public transport use, with dedicated cycle parking, electric vehicle charging points, and improved pedestrian access where applicable. (Policy T-1)

4. Checklist for Different Development Types

To assist developers, the following checklist outlines the key sustainability and energy requirements based on development type:

<p>Small Residential Developments (Fewer than 10 dwellings)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Statement Required? Yes, as per Policy SD-3 in the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD. • Ensure high levels of insulation and air tightness. (Policy SD-1) • Incorporate renewable energy where feasible. (Policy SD-3) • Use sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). (Policy SD-6) • Provide cycle storage and pedestrian-friendly access. (Policy T-1) • Protect and enhance biodiversity on site. (Policy CS8)
<p>Non-Domestic Developments (Over 1,000 sq. metres)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Statement Required? Yes, demonstrating compliance with Policy SD-3 and renewable energy targets. • Achieve at least 10% of energy needs from renewable or decentralised sources. (Policy SD-3) • Consider passive design measures such as orientation and glazing. (Policy SD-1) • Connect to a district heating network if available or future-proof for future connections. (Policy SD-4) • Integrate electric vehicle charging points. (Policy T-1) • Implement sustainable construction techniques. (Sustainable Design SPD)
<p>Major Developments (100+ dwellings or 10,000+ sq. metres)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Statement Required? Yes, a comprehensive energy statement must be submitted outlining carbon reduction measures (Policy SD-3). • Install or connect to a district heating network. (Policy SD-4)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a comprehensive energy statement demonstrating carbon reduction measures. (Policy SD-3) • Use a minimum of 10% low-carbon energy sources. (Policy SD-3) • Ensure significant biodiversity net gain and green infrastructure. (Policy CS8) • Provide high-quality pedestrian, cycling, and sustainable transport links. (Policy T-1)
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5. Justifying Compliance with Planning Policies

When submitting a planning application, applicants must provide clear evidence that their proposals align with Stockport’s sustainability policies. This includes:

- **Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) Reports:** To demonstrate compliance with energy efficiency and carbon reduction targets.
- **Design & Access Statements:** Explaining how sustainability measures have been integrated into the design.
- **Energy Statements:** Detailing how the development meets local renewable energy and efficiency requirements.

Conclusion

Achieving planning permission in Stockport requires developers to take a proactive approach to sustainability. By prioritising energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions, and integrating environmentally responsible design, applicants can create developments that not only meet planning requirements but also contribute to a greener, more sustainable future for the borough.

For further guidance, applicants should refer to the full **Stockport Local Plan Strategy** and engage with planning officers early in the process to ensure compliance with local policies. <https://www.stockport.gov.uk/topic/planning-and-building>