

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 This Green Charter sets out the green vision for the masterplan area along with a list of expectations which developers will be expected to adhere to.

7.1.2 The Green Charter is supported by an annex of approaches for how these expectations could be met. This, and further information on particular techniques and technologies is set out in Appendices F and G.

7.2 VISION AND OBJECTIVES

7.2.1 The Vision for Sittingbourne is set out in the SPD. It includes the ambition:

Sittingbourne will be at the forefront of the eco-agenda and a model of sustainability.

7.2.2 The current environmental quality of the SPD area is generally poor, although there are many listed buildings and areas of townscape value. The regeneration of Sittingbourne which this SPD paves the way for is dependent on creating a high quality and robust environment. If we are to achieve the vision outlined above we must address key issues, or objectives, along the way. For Sittingbourne these objectives aim to create a development:

- of high environmental performance;
- that is future proof and adaptable to climate change;
- uses water and other resources responsibly;
- is safe and easy to get around; and
- provides green space for users as well as protecting and enhancing opportunities for biodiversity

The planting of street trees is promoted within the Masterplan area



3D visualisation of Masterplan showing open space and tree planting through the central spine in the Milton Creek area



The Green Charter promotes the use of Green Walls where appropriate



7 'GREEN CHARTER'

7.3 CODE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOMES AND BREEAM

7.3.1 The Code for Sustainable Homes provides national sustainability standards for residential development and BREEAM for non-residential development.

7.3.2 The Code rates houses against nine categories ⁽⁸⁾ and rates homes at Levels 1 to 6 with 6 being a zero carbon home. The code is voluntary for privately built housing, though all new homes should be rated against the Code. ⁽⁹⁾ The Council has undertaken a study 'Climate Change Strategy – Sustainable Design and Construction, Swale Borough Council' December 2009 carried out by Creative Environmental Networks. This research suggests that the Sittingbourne and Milton Creek regeneration project provides a significant opportunity to attain high standards of sustainable design and construction exceeding current Government requirements and targets.

7.3.3 The Council would expect developers to bring forward residential development which conforms to a minimum of Code Level 4 or any stipulation brought forward by the Government at any future date. Should a developer believe they are not in a position to meet code level 4 because of practicability or viability grounds, a full statement and evidence should be submitted with the planning application to justify the lower Code 3 level. The Council will not accept any development below Code level 3.

7.3.4 BREEAM ratings are Pass, Good, Very Good, Excellent and Outstanding. Although there is no specific legal requirement for non-residential development to achieve a specific level under BREEAM, the Council believes that the BREEAM ratings are a tool by which

planning authorities can help to achieve the national timetable for reducing carbon emissions from non-domestic buildings. These tools should be used by developers to show the sustainability of their buildings and how standards will be improved over time and given the opportunities available as outlined in this masterplan, the Council would be expecting developers to attain at least 'Excellent' or any new higher standards brought forward by the Government. Should a developer believe they are not in a position to meet the "Excellent" standard because of practicability or viability grounds, a full statement and evidence should be submitted with the planning application to justify the lower "very good" standard. The Council will not accept any development below the "very good" standard.

7.3.5 In cases where developers are not meeting the higher standards set out above, the Council will undertake an independent review of the justifications put forward as part of the planning application submission.

7.4 DECENTRALISED ENERGY AND LOW AND ZERO CARBON TECHNOLOGIES

7.4.1 Decentralised energy is the generation of energy close to where it is needed. A decentralised energy system would see homes, businesses and communities playing host to devices such as wind turbines, solar panels and combined heat and power systems that produce electricity as well as providing heat and hot water. Any surplus could be fed into a local network.

7.4.2 In comparison to conventional heating decentralised energy generation is a far more efficient way of providing heat as the overall losses from combustion are

8 The 9 categories are: Energy & CO2 Emissions, Water, Materials, Surface Water Run-Off, Waste, Pollution, Health & Well-Being, Management and Ecology

9 Homes not assessed against the Code must include a nil-rated certificate of non-assessment

lower and, where electricity is supplied in conjunction with heat, efficiencies are much higher than in conventional power stations. A decentralised network can provide both heating and cooling.

7.4.3 Major regeneration projects such as Sittingbourne and Milton Creek are particularly appropriate for the integration of a heat and/or power network.

7.4.4 Whilst the SPD does not prescribe where a CHP plant should be located it should be assumed that if this is part of the energy solution to Sittingbourne and Milton Creek's requirements then it should be located in phase 1 of the development south of the rail line, possibly within a public building such as a new town hall, car park or community building.

7.4.5 An evidence-based study of the feasibility and potential for renewable and low-carbon technologies for new development within Swale has been prepared for the Council by Creative Environmental Networks (CEN). This study sets out a target percentage of the energy to be used in new development to come from low and zero technologies, whilst allowing flexibility on what technologies will be used as specified in PPS1: Planning and Climate Change.

7.4.6 Suitable low and zero carbon technologies identified in the CEN study as appropriate for Swale include opportunities for exploiting wind power, wood fuel and solar power.

Use of Green Roofs and Photovoltaic Cells



Micro wind turbine



Incorporating Solar Panels into Street Lights



7.5 EXPECTATIONS FROM DEVELOPERS

7.5.1 This Green Charter seeks to set out what we expect developers to provide within the Design and Access statements within major Planning Applications. These expectations are ordered under the list of objectives outlined above. Appendices F and G to this document sets out some approaches ('recommendations') by which these objectives could be met. Whilst the approaches in these Appendices are not prescriptive, they do provide suggestions

7 'GREEN CHARTER'

as to how to fulfil the objectives. This Green Charter seeks to encourage innovative approaches to sustainability.

7.5.2 Where developers are not in a position to set down precisely how they are going to comply with the green charter requirements, developers can set out clear strategies and action plans for bringing forward initiatives as details of their schemes are developed. In these circumstances the strategies would form part of the planning application and the Council would expect to impose either conditions or legal obligations upon which proposals would need to be presented and agreed by the Local Planning Authority before any development takes place, unless otherwise agreed by the Local Planning Authority.

7.5.3 In all cases the Council would wish to engage in pre-application discussions to ensure as far as possible developers are taking on board the requirements set out in this document.

7.5.4 Below are a set of guidelines upon which the Local Planning Authority would expect developers to bring forward proposals or strategies for dealing with Green charter issues:

HIGH ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE

7.5.5 Developers will be required to show how they will achieve high environmental performance in their development in the following ways:

- Energy efficiency measures
- Their approach to passive design and achieving a sustainable layout
- The use of decentralised energy generation
- Use of low and zero carbon technologies
- How the development will be planned to reduce waste

FUTURE PROOFING AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE

7.5.6 Developers will be required to show how the development will be future proof and adapt to climate change in the following ways:

- How the development is sited and designed to adapt to the effects of climate change including sea-level rise, increased storminess, increased temperatures and periods of drought (this will include a flood risk and sustainable drainage assessment)
- How the development will be adaptable to future uses, technologies and expansion thereby increasing the lifetime of the development.
- How users of the development will be encouraged to use the development sustainably
- How provision for biodiversity takes into account the impact of climate change.

WATER AND RESOURCE USE AND PROTECTION

7.5.7 Developers will be required to show how they will manage water and resource use in their development in the following ways:

- Reducing water consumption throughout the development
- Making effective use of water resources
- Demonstrating how low environmental impact, local and recycled materials will be used
- Protecting and enhancing water and soil quality

SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

7.5.8 Developers will be required to show how the development will be safe for all and easy to move around in the following ways:

- Safe against the effects of all types of flooding
- Presents a strategy for the sustainable movement of pedestrians, cycles and vehicles and integration with public transport
- Secure against crime and fear of crime
- Ensure that development proposals allow for effective access for emergency services to new development and take into account the need for swift and safe access to all areas of the town centre.

A GREEN ENVIRONMENT

7.5.9 Developers will be required to show how the development will provide a green environment in the following ways:

- Green Infrastructure – including green routes
- Protection and enhancement of ecology
- A strategy for open space and play space

7.6 SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST

7.6.1 It may also be useful for Planning Applications to be accompanied by a completed Sustainability Checklist.

For details of this please go to <http://southeast.sustainability-checklist.co.uk/>

Examples of SUDS integrated within development areas



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