

# Agenda Item 8

<b>TITLE</b>	To examine how the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) is embedded in the Local Plan Update
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 23 <sup>rd</sup> May
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Giorgio Framaliccio – Director, Place & Growth

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

To inform Members of the actions taken with the Local Plan Update to embed the Climate Emergency Action Plan

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Members are asked to review the report and note the progress made to date, the work ongoing and next steps.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Council is currently preparing an update to its planning policies, known as the Local Plan Update (LPU).

The LPU is being prepared in the context of extant national planning policy, guidance and legislation. Its principal aim is to set out the strategy and associated policies for managing future development. The Council has consulted on two draft strategies for the new local plan – the Draft Local Plan in 2020 and the Revised Growth Strategy in 2021 to date. Key evidence base studies have been and continue to be developed to support the LPU.

The LPU's approach to the spatial strategy – where development will and will not go to accommodate its needs – and to individual development management policies has been influenced by the declared Climate Emergency and associated Action Plan. Key aspects of the spatial strategy and an overview of the key policies which have been consulted upon to date, are detailed within the body of this report.

Officers from the Planning Policy and Climate Emergency teams collaborate on an ongoing basis to share best practice and monitor progress towards the achievement of the Climate Emergency Action Plan's (CEAP) goals. This includes research into the successful approaches of other local authorities to ensure best practice is embedded into the CEAP and LPU.

## Background

National planning policy requires local authorities to regularly review, and where necessary, update their local plans. An up-to-date local plan is the starting point for determining planning applications and development proposals must be determined in accordance with the local plan and any relevant neighbourhood development plan unless other material planning considerations indicate otherwise.

The Council's existing local plans – the Core Strategy plan (2010) and the Managing Development Delivery (MDD) plan (2014) were intended to manage development in the period up to 2026. To ensure the policies remain effective, the Council is progressing a new local plan – the Local Plan Update (LPU), which, once adopted, will provide a framework to manage development over a longer period, most likely 2040.

National planning policy requires that local plans should be prepared with the objective of contributing to sustainable development, be prepared positively and shaped by engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees.

Policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for housing, employment and other uses, supported by infrastructure. They should look over a minimum 15 year period from the date of adoption.

When facilitating future development and growth, from a climate perspective, the focus of the planning process is to minimise the impacts of construction and operation of new development, with the goal of securing development that operates as close to net zero<sup>1</sup> as possible. Planning policies only apply to new development proposals, where the grant of planning permission is required through the planning application process. Planning policies must work within the boundaries of national policy, guidance, and legislation which includes a need to demonstrate development viability, taking account of all costs. Local plans are also subject to independent examination by a government appointed Planning Inspector and must be 'found sound' by that Inspector, before they can be adopted and applied to the determination of new development proposals.

The role of plan-making is largely reflected in the 'New Development' chapter of the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP). The CEAP, and associated progress reports, sets out how the Council's climate emergency declaration will be implemented. The declaration set out the commitment to play as full a role as possible, leading by example as well as by exhortation, in achieving a carbon neutral borough by 2030.

### Legal and National Policy context

The Climate Change Act (2008) introduced a statutory target for the UK to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 80% by 2050. This was updated in June 2019 under

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<sup>1</sup> Net zero development refers to a scenario in which regulated, operational greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions resulting from the use of a development are eliminated by creating buildings which use little energy to run, and which meet their demand with energy from renewable sources. In exceptional circumstances where elimination of regulated, operational GHG emissions through efficient design and use of renewables is not possible, GHG emissions are minimised and offsetting local to the development is used to equal any remaining emissions.

the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order to a 100% reduction (or net zero) by 2050.

Since the adoption of the Climate Change Act in 2008, emissions in the UK are nationally accounted over Carbon Budget Periods which each have a 5-year span. Targets are set for each Budget Period 12 years in advance. The UK is currently in its fourth Carbon Budget Period which runs from 2023-2027. The carbon budget for this period is 1950 MtCO<sub>2</sub>e<sup>2</sup>. The relevance of the national carbon budget to the LPU is that it sets a legal limit on national emissions during each budget period, which is met in part by application of local authority policies directed at lowering emissions. The ability to apply up-to-date planning policies through a new, adopted LPU will enable the Council to lower emissions that would otherwise occur from new development.

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)<sup>3</sup> sets out duties for plan-making in England. Section 19(1A) of the act (as amended by Section 182 of the Planning Act 2008) states:

*“Development plan documents must (taken as a whole) include policies designed to secure that the development and use of land in the local planning authority’s area contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.”*

This duty clearly demonstrates the priority that local planning authorities must give to mitigating climate change in plan-making.

The Planning and Energy Act (2008) sets out powers for local authorities to have local plan policies which impose reasonable requirements for a proportion of energy used by developments in their area to be energy from renewable sources and/or to be low carbon energy from sources in the locality of the development. As such, this allows local planning authorities to set energy efficiency standards that exceed the energy efficiency requirements of Building Regulations.

Building Regulations are set by government. They are detailed, mandatory minimum regulations that all developments must satisfy. They cover specific topics including: structural integrity, fire protection, accessibility, energy performance. Building Regulations consent is required separate to planning permission. The Council’s building control service is not able to require proposed development to exceed the minimum regulations.

The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) (NPPF) at Paragraph 153 similarly requires local plans to *“take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change...”* which footnote 53 makes clear should be in line with the Climate Change Act 2008. In effect, this means the objective of a 100% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050 is a clear obligation for plan-making, and to comply with national law the inclusion of such policy is fundamental to the LPU being found ‘sound’ through Examination. Our present, adopted local plan policies include no such obligation.

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<sup>2</sup> Priestley, Sara. “Briefing Paper: UK Carbon Budgets.” UK Parliament Research Briefings. House of Commons Library, 2019. p.3 [Online] Available at: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-7555/CBP-7555.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> UK Government (2004) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

## Future Homes Standard

In January 2021, government published the outcome of the Future Homes Standard consultation, outlining what changes will be made and at what pace. The new Standard will ensure that all new homes built from 2025 will produce 75-80% less carbon dioxide emissions than homes delivered to 2013 minimum building regulations, with requirements for low carbon heating and higher fabric standards. From 2025, all new homes will further be 'zero-carbon ready', requiring no further energy efficiency retrofit work to enable the homes to become zero-carbon as the electricity grid decarbonises. There is expected to be a full technical consultation on what this means starting in 2023. For the interim period to 2025, updated Building Regulations – Part L (conservation of fuel and power) – introduced on 15 June 2022, ensure new homes built to the updated building regulations produce 31% less carbon emissions compared to the previous minimum standards. It is the role of local plans to consider what additional energy efficiency requirements can be evidenced and required through planning policy, beyond these mandatory standards.

## Draft local plan consultations

Local plans are key documents which set out the strategy and associated policies for managing development. The Council has consulted on two draft strategies – the Draft Local Plan in 2020 and the Revised Growth Strategy in 2021. High-level summary of the outcomes of both consultations have been prepared and are available on the Council's website<sup>4</sup>.

The Draft Local Plan (2020) included a full suite of planning policies and proposed the creation of a new garden town at Grazeley. This resulted from joint work between the Council, West Berkshire Council and Reading Borough Council, supported by capacity funding from the government through Homes England. A subsequent and unexpected extension of emergency planning arrangements around AWE Burghfield resulted in this strategy being unachievable.

The Revised Growth Strategy (2021) (RGS) proposed the creation of a new garden settlement on land south of the M4 between Shinfield, Arborfield and Sindlesham, known as Hall Farm / Loddon Valley. The majority of policies within the Draft Local Plan (2020) were not impacted by the loss of the Grazeley garden town proposal. The RGS consultation therefore focussed on the areas of change - that was those policies relating to the amount of development required and how this is proposed to be met across the borough, including the land to be specifically allocated to achieve this.

Both consultations also set out an overriding vision and series of objectives. The vision set out in the Draft Plan (2020) (and replicated in the RGS) included:

*“A borough that will be sustainable for generations to come.”*

Objective 1 of the Draft Plan (2020) (and replicated in the RGS), recognised the importance of the climate emergency, stating its objective to:

*“Make the fullest contribution possible to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change and the transition to a low-carbon economy.”*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/planning-policy/planning-policy-information/local-plan-update/>

## **Analysis of Issues**

### Spatial strategy

A principal aspect of any local plan is establishing a spatial strategy – that is where development should go, and where it should not go – based on a consideration of how much development, and of what type, is required to meet identified needs.

Both of the spatial strategy consulted upon to date included the common themes of:

- Optimisation of urban areas;
- Allocating suitable land on the edge of main settlements;
- Allocating suitable land within and on the edge of existing strategic development locations;
- Allocating a new strategic development location; and
- Allocating proportional development across smaller settlements.

The principal difference between the two consultation plans is the location of the proposed new strategic development location. Both strategies were predicated on locating most of the new development in locations that reduce car dependency and provide opportunities to make walking, cycling and public transport a viable, attractive and easy option. This includes the majority of housing being delivered through large strategic locations which can include a mixed of uses.

The Executive Member for strategic planning, and members of the cross-party Planning Policy Member Working Group, have familiarised themselves with the larger scale promotions across the borough, including visiting each area and receiving a presentation from the promoters as to their vision. Decisions on the final spatial strategy will be made in due course. Notwithstanding, discussions and the technical evidence<sup>56</sup> to date suggests the inclusion of major strategic developments continues to be the most sustainable approach.

This approach is fully consistent with, and embeds, many of the aims of the CEAP. The delivery of carefully-planned, large scale communities has the benefit of allowing the infrastructure they need to be built alongside. This includes schools, parks, shops and services, local employment, allotments for food production; opportunities for sustainable energy / heat networks at scale; level of demand required to sustain public transport routes; district centres within walkable distances to provide for day to day needs on foot; and so on.

### Development management policies

The Draft Plan (2020) contained numerous draft policies which set out the direction of travel with regards to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The below table provides a brief summary of the main policies which were proposed to ensure delivery of sustainable development and highlights how they would contribute, either directly or

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<sup>5</sup> For the Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment relating to the Issues and Options consultation (2016) see here: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=400046>

<sup>6</sup> For the Sustainability Appraisal of the Revised Growth Strategy (2021) see here: <https://www.wokingham.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=609635>

indirectly, to various key priorities and specific actions within the CEAP (taken from the September 2022 CEAP Progress Report). It should be noted that the policies are summarised as drafted in 2020. Ongoing research, comments raised through consultation, and developments in best practice and guidance will allow the draft policies to be further reviewed and updated. Likewise, the CEAP targets will be reviewed and updated as necessary through future Progress Reports.

Policy	Summary	Relevant key priorities / actions from CEAP
Policy SS8: Climate Change	Overarching principles policy which summarises the wide range of actions to be taken to mitigate and adapt to climate change. This includes implementing a sustainable spatial strategy, prioritising sustainable travel modes, maximising carbon capture, establishing the principle of a carbon offset fund to be used as a last resort if on site net zero is demonstrably unachievable.	Key priority 1. Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action T1 - 50% Reduction in internal combustion engine internal combustion engine (ICE) private car mileage</li> </ul> Key priority 2. Renewable energy generation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action 3.2 - support the generation of renewable energy in the Borough to generate the equivalent of approx. 1550 kWh per household</li> </ul> Key priority 3. Retrofitting domestic and commercial buildings Key priority 4. Carbon sequestration Key priority 7. New development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action 8.3 - Establish a spatial strategy and design framework which promotes active and sustainable travel, sustainable design and construction and enables biodiversity gain.</li> <li>- Action 8.3.4 - Provide positive policy framework for retrofitting existing buildings.</li> <li>- Action 8.4 - Support low carbon and renewable energy generation.</li> </ul>
Policy SS9: Adaptation to Climate Change	Requires development proposals to incorporate adaptive measures including: orientation to maximise natural heating and ventilation; design measures to facilitate resilience to high temperatures; use of trees and vegetation to provide nature shading habitat connections; and measures to minimise risk from flooding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action 8.3.3 - Require allocations for major development to secure smart and sustainable approaches that champion climate change resilience and adaptation.</li> </ul>
Policy C1: Active and Sustainable Transport and Accessibility	Seeks to promote active modes of transport and the principle of connectivity within and between developments in the borough. It requires proposals to demonstrate their compliance with the objectives and policies of the Local Transport Plan (or any successor strategy), with the two plans intended to reinforce one another.	Key priority 1. Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action T1 - 50% Reduction in internal combustion engine internal combustion engine (ICE) private car mileage</li> </ul>
Policy C2: Mitigation of Transport Impacts	Requires, amongst other matters, that developments are designed in accordance with the user hierarchy which first prioritises pedestrian	Key priority 1. Transport <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Action T1 - 50% Reduction in internal combustion engine internal</li> </ul>

and Highways Safety and Design	movements, then cycling, public transport, specialist vehicles, and other motor traffic last.	combustion engine (ICE) private car mileage
Policy C3: Cycling and Walking	Mandates that development proposals promote active transport modes.	Key priority 1. Transport - Action T1 - 50% Reduction in internal combustion engine internal combustion engine (ICE) private car mileage  Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.3.2 - Require development, including the public realm, to be accessible to all and prioritise walking, cycling and other sustainable modes of transport.
Policy C4: Vehicle and Cycle Parking	Requires developments to provide appropriate parking arrangements which include cycles and electric vehicle charging facilities.	Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.5 - From 2023, all new residential and non-residential buildings to be designed and built to be EV ready.
Policy C5: Technology and Innovation in Transport	Requires major development proposals to submit an Electric Vehicle Charging Strategy to demonstrate suitable provision of electric vehicle charge points.	Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.5 - From 2023, all new residential and non-residential buildings to be designed and built to be EV ready.
Policy DH1: Place Making and Quality Design	Overarching design principles policy which requires adaptable, accessible, well landscaped and attractive developments.	Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.3.2 - Require development, including the public realm, to be accessible to all and prioritise walking, cycling and other sustainable modes of transport.
Policy DH7: Energy	Requires development to follow the energy hierarchy: It is supportive of development proposals that are 'lean' (take a fabric first approach), 'clean' (maximise use of low-carbon local energy sources), and 'green' (reduce on-site energy demands and maximise on-site generation).	Key priority 3. Retrofitting domestic and commercial buildings Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.3.4 - Provide positive policy framework for retrofitting existing buildings. - Action 8.4 - Support low carbon and renewable energy generation.
Policy DH8: Environmental Standards for non-residential development	Requires BREEAM 'Excellent' standard to be achieved for major development and 'very good' for minor developments. Requires water conservation measures to be achieved.	Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.2 - From 2023, major non-residential development to be designed and built to achieve the BREEAM excellent standard.
Policy DH9: Environmental Standards for residential development	Requires major developments to be built to carbon neutral and minor developments to exceed Building Regulations requirements.	Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.1 - Towards the end of 2023, major residential development to be designed and built to achieve zero carbon.
Policy DH10: Low carbon and	Provides a positive framework for renewable energy generating schemes.	Key priority 2. Renewable energy generation - Action 3.2 - support the generation of renewable energy in the Borough to

renewable energy generation		generate the equivalent of approx. 1550 kWh per household Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.4 - Support low carbon and renewable energy generation.
Policy NE1: Biodiversity and Nature Conservation	Requires minimum 10% biodiversity net gain. Makes clear the need for development proposals to align with the objectives and requirements within any adopted Biodiversity Action Plan or conservation plan, as well as spatial designations, such as Biodiversity Opportunity Areas, Sites of Urban Landscape Value or Local Nature Recovery Networks.	Key priority 4. Carbon sequestration - Action 5.1 - Cover 170 hectares with new trees in the form of woodlands, hedgerows and orchards - Action 5.2 - Carbon sequestration by design - improving carbon sequestration rates in future land management decisions (particularly sub-action 5.2.2) Key priority 7. New development - Action 8.3 - Establish a spatial strategy and design framework which promotes active and sustainable travel, sustainable design and construction and enables biodiversity gain.
Policy NE3: Trees, woodland and hedgerows	Requires that trees, woodland and hedgerows are appropriately protected and enhanced through development proposals.	Key priority 4. Carbon sequestration - Action 5.1 - Cover 170 hectares with new trees in the form of woodlands, hedgerows and orchards - Action 5.2 - Carbon sequestration by design - improving carbon sequestration rates in future land management decisions (particularly sub-action 5.2.2)
Policy NE4: Development and existing trees, woodland and hedgerows	Provides additional requirements for how existing trees should be incorporated into, and protected through development.	Key priority 4. Carbon sequestration - Action 5.1 - Cover 170 hectares with new trees in the form of woodlands, hedgerows and orchards - Action 5.2 - Carbon sequestration by design - improving carbon sequestration rates in future land management decisions (particularly sub-action 5.2.2)
Policy NE8: Development and Flood Risk (from all sources)	Ensures that all sources of flood risk are assessed, with proposals in Flood Zones 2 or 3 required to take into account the vulnerability of proposed development. A sequential approach is taken, although in exceptional circumstances new development in areas of flood risk will be supported if wider benefits that outweigh flood risk.	- Action 8.3.3 - Require allocations for major development to secure smart and sustainable approaches that champion climate change resilience and adaptation.
Policy NE9: Sustainable Drainage	Ensures that surface water arising from proposed development and the impacts of climate change is managed in a sustainable manner through the use of SuDs all sources of flood risk are assessed appropriately.	- Action 8.3.3 - Require allocations for major development to secure smart and sustainable approaches that champion climate change resilience and adaptation.
Policy MW1: Sustainable Waste	Requires strategic development to provide on-site recycling and waste management facilities and implementation of the waste	Key Priority 6. Waste and Recycling



Management	hierarchy. Safeguards existing and planned waste management facilities from non-waste related development.	
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It is clear from that table above that the consultative stage of the LPU contained a suite of policies capable (once adopted) of providing a comprehensive framework for new development to help mitigate and adapt to climate change, consistent with key aims and actions within the CEAP.

### Evidence base

The LPU is supported by a range of evidence based studies. Of principal importance to the climate emergency is the ‘Local Plan Update Climate Change Evidence Base’ produced by Arup and published in September 2022. The report makes the case for climate change policy by identifying local climate hazards. It provides a review of best practice local plan policy and applies this to critique how the Draft Local Plan (2020) policies could be improved further. It also provides a recommended definition of net zero, being centred on reducing regulated operational<sup>7</sup> energy use to a minimum, with renewable energy being used to supply the remaining demand and carbon offsetting used as a last resort.

The ‘Local Plan Update Climate Change Evidence Base’ also recommends a requirement for Whole Life Cycle Assessments to support planning applications. This would allow quantification and scrutiny of embodied impacts<sup>8</sup> associated with development. Finally, the Evidence Base provides a high level renewable energy capacity analysis for the borough. This report is heavily predicated on the CEAP and the Council’s declaration of a climate emergency, and has also been referred to and informed the CEAP in turn.

Additionally, the LPU process continues to be supported by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). A key aspect is the appraisal of the strategic site options and reasonable alternative growth options (i.e. a combination of site allocations to meet growth). The SA methodology has involved an assessment of growth options against 13 sustainability topics. This includes areas such as accessibility, biodiversity, economy. It is important to note that two of these topics involve climate change, namely climate change mitigation and climate change adaptation.

### Collaborative working

The CEAP is supported by a series of monitoring groups covering each chapter who meet roughly every 6 weeks. The New Development monitoring group comprises officers from both the Climate Emergency and Planning Policy teams with the meetings facilitating the exchange of ideas, sharing of best practice, and updates towards the achievement of the

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<sup>7</sup> “Operational impacts” and “operational carbon” refer to the environmental impacts and carbon emissions respectively caused by the running of buildings during their occupation. Operational carbon emissions are caused by the use of operational energy, which is made up from regulated energy use – energy used to power ‘built-in’ features of a building such as heating and lighting, and unregulated energy use – energy used to power plug-in appliances. A proposed building’s predicted regulated operational energy use is controlled by the building regulations while unregulated energy use is not legally controlled.

<sup>8</sup> “Embodied impacts” and “embodied carbon” refer to the environmental impacts and carbon emissions respectively caused by the construction of the proposed building. This includes everything that happens before the building is occupied, such as excavation and transport of raw materials, manufacture of products, transport of materials to site, removal of waste from site, and the construction processes themselves.

relevant actions from the CEAP. This reflects the necessity for the LPU to reflect the CEAP and vice versa.

At the member level, the Executive Member for strategic planning has re-established a cross party Planning Policy Member Working Group to provide a sounding board for him and officers in the preparation of planning policy. The Executive member for Climate Emergency and Resident Services, has attended a meeting of this group where an initial discussion on environmental matters took place.

### Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement

The Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement (CCIPPS) was published in January 2023. This is a separate, but related, document to the LPU. The CCIPPS formally confirms that the Climate Emergency and the delivery of higher sustainability standards will be material when assessing planning applications. Until new policy is adopted via the LPU, the Council can only mandate that new development meets environmental standards set out in the existing Core Strategy and MDD plans. However, the CCIPPS also acts to formally encourage better sustainability standards from development proposals in the interim period until adoption of the LPU.

Section 2 of the CCIPPS introduces and summarises the key priorities in the CEAP, recognising that all to a greater or lesser degree are impacted by decisions on planning proposals. The key message of this section is that the Climate Emergency and CEAP are material considerations for planning purposes and should be recognised by applicants and decision makers.

The document now forms part of responses to requests for sustainability consultation and has recently supported the Council's position in advocating for stronger sustainability provision at planning appeals.

The CCIPPS bridges the period to adoption of the new plan and as such steers application of existing policy in the direction the LPU is likely to take.

### Next steps

The Council will shortly be commissioning whole plan viability evidence to support the LPU. A key part of this evidence will be to test the viability of all relevant policy proposals which includes affordable housing, infrastructure requirements, biodiversity net gain, as well as climate change requirements. This will allow for a range of climate change ambitions to be tested, costed and compared with the cost implications of other policy requirements. Robust testing of a range of scenarios will allow for conclusions to be drawn on the development strategy and policies proposed in the LPU are deliverable from an economic viability perspective and be sufficiently robust to withstand scrutiny at Examination. It will also give a steer towards any review to be made to infrastructure funding through the Community Infrastructure Levy and s106.

Ongoing technical sustainability research is being prepared to inform the development of LPU, taking into account both the conclusions of the 'Local Plan Update Climate Change Evidence Base' produced by Arup and the targets of the CEAP. Recently this has included evaluation of best practice climate action in local plans prepared by other local authorities, as well as detailed research on the potential for sustainability certification programmes such as Passivhaus to assist built environment climate action in the

borough. This research process includes the development of knowledge-sharing relationships with other local authorities.

### Conclusion and summary

Noting the 2050 legal target to achieve net zero referenced in this report, work to prepare the LPU to date and through the CCIPPS has sought to elevate the visibility of the Climate Emergency declared in the borough. The LPU, once adopted provides the opportunity to formally apply new and upgraded planning policies directed at helping mitigate climate change when facilitating new development. Those policies will be further supplemented by updated planning policy guidance in due course. Individual policies in the emerging LPU, and its spatial strategy continue to be developed in a way that fully embeds climate action and the targets of the CEAP. The development CEAP and LPU has, and continues to be, a two-way process.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

**The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the Covid-19 crisis. It is, therefore, imperative that Council resources are focussed on the vulnerable and its highest priorities.**

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A

### **Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision**

This report carries no financial implications itself. The costs associated with preparing and adopting the LPU are accounted for within the appropriate budget.

### **Cross-Council Implications**

The LPU will contain planning policies which manage the development of land. This may impact on capital projects proposed by service areas. In addition, the spatial strategy proposed will influence the geographical distribution of future service needs, particularly those linked to housing.

### **Public Sector Equality Duty**

Equalities Impact Assessments have been undertaken for all consultative stages of the LPU. An assessment has not been undertaken for the purpose of this report given its nature of being an update and not considering policy direction.

**Climate Emergency – The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham borough by 2030**

The Draft Local Plan (2020) included policies intended to ensure the majority of development was directed to locations where people would have the opportunity to walk and cycle, reducing the need to travel by private car unnecessarily. The plan also included a range of policies which sought to improve the environmental performance of buildings, including the achievement of carbon neutrality. These principles were retained within the recommended revised growth strategy which continues to propose a spatial strategy which embeds sustainability principles.

**List of Background Papers**

[Draft Local Plan \(2020\)](#)

[Revised Growth Strategy \(2021\)](#)

[Climate Change Interim Policy Position Statement \(December 2022\)](#)

[Local Plan Update Climate Change Evidence Base \(September 2022\)](#)

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