

Examination of the Climate Emergency Review of the Lancaster District Strategic Policies and Land Allocation Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Development Management DPD

Inspector: Joanna Gilbert MA (Hons) MTP MRTPI

Programme Officer: Carole Crookes

Mr Maurice Brophy
Service Manager – Planning and Housing Strategy
Lancaster City Council

By email

18 December 2023

Dear Mr Brophy

Inspector's Letter regarding the Planning – Local Energy Efficiency Standards Update and Wind Energy

1. On 13 December 2023, the Government issued a Planning – Local Energy Efficiency Standards Update (Statement UIN HCWS123). This Written Ministerial Statement supersedes the section of the 25 March 2015 Written Ministerial Statement entitled 'Housing standards: streamlining the system', sub-paragraph 'Plan making' in respect of energy efficiency requirements and standards only.
2. In a context of the uplift to energy efficiency standards in the 2021 Part L of Building Regulations and further planned changes to energy efficiency standards within Building Regulations in 2025, the Government does not expect plan-makers to set local energy efficiency standards for buildings that go beyond current or planned Building Regulations. The newly issued Written Ministerial Statement also confirms that any planning policies that propose local energy efficiency standards for buildings that go beyond current or planned Building Regulations should be rejected at Examination if they do not have a well-reasoned and robustly costed rationale that ensures:
 - That development remains viable, and the impact on housing supply and affordability is considered in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.
 - The additional requirement is expressed as a percentage uplift of a dwelling's Target Emissions Rate (TER) calculated using a specified version of the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP).

3. The Council has previously carried out consultation on Main Modifications as part of the Examination. However, I have not yet issued my Report. In light of the newly issued Written Ministerial Statement, I would appreciate the Council's views as to how it would affect the content of Policy DM30a: Sustainable Design and Construction, Main Modification MM14, and any other consequential Main Modifications to associated areas of the Plans.
4. I would be grateful if the Council could provide the Programme Officer with their initial response on this matter by Friday 12 January 2024. This should include the following information or a timetable for the provision of that information:
 - Any suggested alterations to Policy DM30a and its supporting text;
 - Any necessary and up to date supporting evidence.
5. Having read through all the representations submitted as part of the Main Modifications consultation, I note the content of the representations (518.1 – 518.3) made by CBRE Limited on behalf of Lancaster University. With regard to these representations relating to wind energy, I ask the Council to provide me with a full written response to these representations, including any necessary mapping.
6. Once I have received the Council's response to this letter, I will confirm how the Examination will proceed. However, I am not seeking the views of other parties at this point.
7. If you have any questions or queries about the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me via the Programme Officer. Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Joanna Gilbert

INSPECTOR