


Oxford Core Strategy Examination Statement of Oxford City Council		 www.oxford.gov.uk
C/M9/2	Matter 9 – Climate Change Issue 2 – Energy and Natural Resources	

i) Should policy CS10 itself set out targets for energy use and carbon emissions?

The requirement that the South East Plan (CD10/1) imposed on Local Authorities – i.e., that Local Authorities must include any targets for renewable energy in a DPD was included at a late stage in the South East Plan process – the Proposed Modifications to the South East Plan (CD10/2). A renewable energy target that exceeds the South East Plans minimum requirement (10%) was considered for the Core Strategy. Given the late stage in the production of the Core Strategy that the South East Plan’s requirements were introduced, insufficient evidence existed to have any meaningful renewable energy targets within the Core Strategy. Any renewable energy targets within a Core Strategy have the potential to become out of date quickly. As such, any renewable energy targets for the Oxford City Council LDF will be included in the Development Management (DM) DPD. The viability testing, which will act as the evidence base, to accompany a renewable energy target is being undertaken as part of the Development Management DPD.

Oxford City Council is in a favourable position, in that we have an adopted SPD, which sets out a renewable energy target (20% from qualifying developments) as well as other energy efficiency measures (the Natural Resources Impact Analysis SPD) (CD/7/10). This SPD was introduced at a time prior to the mandatory thresholds that are now a part of the Code for Sustainable Homes. The NRIA SPD has been very successful since its introduction in 2006. All qualifying developments are required to conform to these minimum standards.

ii) Should specific targets be identified here for the larger scale developments, such as the strategic locations?

It is worth noting first of all, that the City Council’s adopted NRIA SPD (CD7/10) already contains renewable energy targets for larger developments. All of the strategic sites trip the NRIA thresholds and as such the supplementary policy provided in the SPD should be adhered to when considering these developments.

Particular opportunities for achieving energy efficiency measures do exist across the strategic sites. The West End Area Action Plan (CD7/7) already contains a policy on District Heating, and the City Council has embarked on a project to bring forward a District Heating scheme in the West End Area. This project is at an advanced stage

with financial and technical modelling complete, as well as monies secured to procure an Energy Services Company (ESCo).

It was not considered appropriate for the Core Strategy to set a renewable energy target for the proposed strategic site of Barton. Any specific targets would be more appropriately identified through the AAP process. At the AAP stage, the precise mix and quantum of development will have been established, and more detailed technical work can be undertaken with regard to calculating heat and power loads. Once heat and power loads have been established, it will be possible to set a site based renewable energy target, if one is appropriate.

The Northern Gateway will be a modern, high technology development and as such should be capable of meeting the targets set out in the NRIA. For the reasons established above at Barton with regard to calculating heat and power loads for the site, it is considered more appropriate to investigate potentially higher renewable energy targets through the proposed AAP for the site.

iii) Could the policy be more helpful and explicit as to where and when renewable energy developments would be permitted?

As a small and compact city, Oxford has lots of potential for small renewable energy developments. The policy text mentions the strategic sites as potential developments, but locations for most renewable/ low carbon developments are suitable across Oxford. In general, it is therefore difficult to distinguish between particular areas of the city in terms of potential for renewable energy developments. The main larger scale renewable energy development type that is location specific and suitable for Oxford is the wind turbine. Oxford City Council is currently investigating the potential for wind turbines on City Council owned land within, and outside the administrative boundary. So far, a number of locations within the City have proved to have sufficient wind speed. Since the policy supports the provision of renewable technologies in appropriate locations, that is sufficient.