

NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COUNCIL

13 JULY 2020

Question submitted to Councillor J Kenyon, Portfolio Holder for Transformation and Climate Change from Anne Thoday:-

Our UK Government has made a commitment in legislation to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 (1). If we are to meet this target we need a rapid reduction in the carbon emissions associated with household energy consumption. In a report last year The Committee on Climate Change warned that the UK's legally-binding climate change targets will not be met without the near-complete elimination of greenhouse gas emissions from UK buildings.

'New homes should be built to be low-carbon, energy and water efficient, and climate resilient. The costs of building to tight specifications are not prohibitive, and getting the design right from the outset is far cheaper than retrofitting later. From 2025 at the latest, no new homes should be connected to the gas grid. They should be heated using low-carbon energy sources, have ultra-high levels of energy efficiency alongside appropriate ventilation, and be timber-framed where possible. (2)

The key role of planning in reducing greenhouse gas emissions is acknowledged in North East Derbyshire Climate Change Action Plan 2019-2030, (Theme 5) states:

'Local authority planning functions are a key lever in reducing emissions and tackling the effects of climate change. The planning process can make a major contribution by shaping new and existing developments in ways that reduce carbon emissions.'

This plan goes on to highlight a new development at The Avenue, Clay Cross as a case study in sustainable living 'The Avenue is the creation of a new sustainable community balancing urban and environmental design.'

North East Derbyshire Local plan 2014- 2034 includes a requirement that new developments promote energy efficiency to a sustainable level.

Policy SDC12: 'High Quality Design and Place-Making 'proposals for development will only be permitted provided that they . . . j. Include measures to promote environmental sustainability, including those which address energy and water efficiency where practicable and viable to do so;

And 'Increasing GHG emissions and energy consumption. Use of renewable energy and recycled materials will be encouraged at new development at all stages. New developments will also be more likely to be energy efficient and sustainably designed.'

The Sustainability Appraisal of the North East Derbyshire Local Plan Feb 2018 includes a statement on the role of local authorities in reducing greenhouse gas emissions,

'10.1.2 Mitigating climate change is a priority in the UK and it is necessary for local authorities to help minimise their contribution to its causes, such as by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption.

The national and local documents quoted above all include statements on the role planning must play in reducing the production of greenhouse gases through minimising energy consumption. North East Derbyshire Council currently have plans in place for large areas of future new housing development including in the Clay Cross area up to 824 dwellings on the Biwater site and up to 700 on the Avenue site by 2034.

On average, the generally expected and acceptable lifespan of a new house is at least 60 years and some sources believe should be up to 100 years; in practice it is frequently much longer. If houses currently in the planning stage (including those in North East Derbyshire), are likely to last towards the end of this century and some of them well beyond, they need to be achieving zero carbon or passive house standards if they are to meet the requirements of the UK net zero greenhouse gas targets.

Given that houses built now are unlikely to undergo substantial refurbishment before 2050 it is imperative they are built to a zero carbon standard now.

With this in mind, can the Councillor please describe the following:-

- 1) What efforts have been made to engage, and work with local housing developers of zero carbon homes, and can the Councillor explain exactly what percentage of the housing currently planned for the Biwater and Avenue sites will achieve net zero carbon emissions (level 6) using the standard set in The Code for Sustainable Homes, or be built to Passive House standard? (3)
- 2) What efforts have been made to ensure the highest possible levels of on-site energy production (electrical and thermal) on new buildings? (4)

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents>

<https://www.theccc.org.uk/2019/02/21/uk-homes-unfit-for-the-challenges-of-climate-change-ccc-says/>

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5976/code_for_sustainable_homes_techguide.pdf

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/633442/upgrading-our-energy-system-july-2017.pdf