

## **ENVIRONMENT POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

**24 SEPTEMBER 2019**

### **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMY AND REGENERATION**

#### **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS AND ONSITE SOLAR PV IN NEW DEVELOPMENTS**

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Graeme Barnell, Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Regeneration

**Responsible Officer:** Mrs Jenny Clifford, Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration

#### **Reason for Report:**

To provide an update on how the provision of solar panels and home electric car charging points in all new developments across the district for all new properties may be achieved through the planning policy process.

#### **RECOMMENDATION(S):**

**That the contents of this report be noted.**

#### **Relationship to Corporate Plan:**

Priority 4: Environment Aim 2

#### **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications as a direct result of this report.

#### **Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications as a direct result of this report.

#### **Risk Assessment:**

The risk is deemed to be low. This report provides an overview of the planning policy options available to consider in relation to solar panels and electric vehicle charging points in new development. Further evidence and analysis will be required to inform any future changes to the Council's planning policies.

**Equality Impact Assessment:** No equality issues anticipated. A full Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared as part of the Local Plan Review Evidence Base.

**Impact on Climate Change:** No impact on climate change is anticipated at this stage. However, imposition of higher standards for home electric charging points and solar panel requirements through the planning policy process would have a significant positive impact on Mid Devon's ability to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030. Means of measuring this are currently being investigated.

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1. Mid Devon District Council declared a climate emergency at its meeting of Full Council on 26 June 2019. This included a pledge for Mid Devon to be carbon neutral by 2030. Clearly this is a challenging and ambitious target and one which requires the Council to take a lead in rapidly changing the way in which housing and commercial development comes forward in the district. This report provides an update on how the provision of home electric car charging points and solar pv on new housing and commercial development may be achieved through the planning policy process.

## **2.0 Electric Vehicle Charging Points in New Developments**

- 2.1. A report to the Environment Policy Development Group on 11 June 2019 outlined how the provision of home electric car charging points in all new developments across the district for all new properties may be achieved through the planning policy process. This concluded that the most suitable option in terms of expediency and efficacy was to explore electric vehicle charging points through the emerging Greater Exeter Strategic Plan. Officers from Mid Devon District Council are working closely with Greater Exeter partners to facilitate the appropriate provision of electric vehicle infrastructure.
- 2.2. At the time of writing the 11 June report, it was envisaged that the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) would be subject to a draft policies and site options consultation. The Local Planning Authorities are currently taking stock of the progress made on the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan to date and undertaking a review of the timetable is needed. A revised Local Development Scheme will be considered by each GESP council in due course. Notwithstanding this, the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan remains the most suitable opportunity to achieve district-wide policy coverage as quickly as possible.
- 2.3. Notwithstanding the provisions of local planning policy, the government has recently launched a consultation into electric vehicle charging in residential and non-residential buildings. This proposes a series of amendments to Buildings Regulations with the intention of ensuring that all new homes are electric vehicle (EV) ready. In summary, the government's proposed policy positions are as follows:

<b>Policy Position: Residential Buildings</b>
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The government proposes every new residential building with an associated car
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parking space to have a chargepoint. We proposed this requirement applies to buildings undergoing a material change of use to create a dwelling.

The government proposes requiring every residential building undergoing major renovation with more than 10 car parking spaces to have cable routes for electric vehicle chargepoints in every car parking space.

**Policy Position: New Non-Residential Buildings**

The government proposes every new non-residential building and every non-residential building undergoing a major renovation with more than 10 car parking spaces to have one chargepoint and cable routes for an electric vehicle chargepoint for one in five spaces.

**Policy Position: Existing Non-Residential Buildings**

The government proposes a requirement of at least one chargepoint in existing non-residential buildings with more than 20 car parking spaces, applicable from 2025.

2.4. The deadline for comments is 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019.

**3.0 Planning policy requirements for solar pv.**

3.1. As above, it is considered that the most expedient and effective option for planning policy requirements in relation to solar pv on new housing and commercial development is the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan. Any policy requirements must be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence which should be adequate and proportionate, focussed tightly on the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals.

3.2. The Greater Exeter partner councils have already published a low carbon and climate change evidence base for the emerging Greater Exeter Strategic Plan. This sets out a wide range of policy options and recommendations for consideration as draft GESP policies are prepared. This sets out that the order in which the carbon and energy impacts of strategic new developments are considered has a key impact on their eventual emissions and a number of potential policies could be enacted to promote an 'energy hierarchy'. In summary, the recommended order is as follows:

Priority	Measure	Key aspects
1	Development location	Reduces transport need and gives access to sustainable transport
2	Site masterplanning	Solar master planning optimises use of natural light and heat
3	Building fabric	High performance fabric gives maximum thermal efficiency
4	Building services	Low carbon building services support fabric measures
5	Clean onsite energy	Low carbon / renewable energy reduces unavoidable emissions
6	Offsite measures	Developer contributions finance offsite carbon reduction where onsite measure are not practical/viable.
7	In-use performance	To ensure actual performance aligns with design intent.

- 3.3. Solar PV would evidently form part of the mix of policy considerations (Clean onsite energy), should the GESP progress policies that align with this hierarchy.
- 3.4. Notwithstanding any planning policy provisions, active solar technology (photovoltaic and solar water heating) on or related to a particular building is often permitted development (which does not require a planning application) provided the installation is not of an unusual design, or does not involve a listed building, and is not in a designated area. Therefore, owners of existing homes or commercial properties often have the ability to install appropriate solar pv should they wish to do so.

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**List of Background Papers:**

[Environment PDG Report 11 June 2019 – Electric Vehicle Charging Points in New Developments](#)

[Electric Vehicle Charging in Residential and Non-Residential Buildings. July 2019.](#)

[Low Carbon and Climate Change Evidence Base for the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan](#)