Henfield Parish Council

Climate Change: Planning Application Assessment Guidance

Henfield Parish Council’s Climate and Environment Emergency Declaration, adopted in June 2019.

*“Henfield Parish Council joins the UK Government, and many other parish, town and county councils in declaring a Climate and Environment Emergency. This will mean we always consider the climate and environmental impact of our decisions in the Parish Council’s areas of operation and influence”.*

The Council, through its Carbon Reduction Plan, is committed to supporting the community to reduce Henfield’s carbon footprint with the goal to become a carbon-neutral.

The following guidance will be applied in most cases (exceptions below) by Henfield Plans Advisory Committee when considering its views on planning applications that may have an impact on the environment or carbon emissions. This is expected to be most planning applications. The decision authority on planning applications is Horsham District Council and Henfield Parish’s view is advisory only.

This Planning Advisory Committee may decide not to apply this guidance where it considers an application:

• to have low or zero environmental impact or carbon emissions, or

• to cover a site plot area less than 2000 sq. ft.

For planning applications involving existing buildings (retrofitting), listed buildings or traditional buildings, addressing all the assessment criteria may be more complex than for applications for new builds. It is recognized that adapting old buildings to address climate change can be complex and, in some cases, expensive.

The Planning Advisory Committee may wish to make allowances for applications for existing buildings where reasonable efforts have been made to investigate the costs of adaption or where evidence is provided that the adaptions have at least been considered.

**Assessment Criteria**

The Planning Advisory Committee will use the following criteria for assessing planning applications with respect to environmental impact and climate change:

1. **Design and materials.** The application makes clear that the design aims to minimize energy requirements in the design phase (eg. it fulfils Passivhaus standards (see section 8)) and also justifies the use of carbon-intensive materials such as steel, brick and cement where these have been included in the design. The general waste reduction principles of ‘reduce, reuse and recycle’, with use of reclaimed or recycled materials where this is possible should also be apparent in the application.  
2. **Energy efficiency.** The application addresses standards for energy efficiency, for example by specifying a high standard of insulation, with an estimated EPC level of C or above.  
3. **Renewable energy.** Homes should be fitted with a source of renewable energy, such as solar thermal or heat pump heating, or photovoltaics. Applications or homes with fossil fuel boilers should not be supported.  
4. **Accessibility.** Sites allocated for new housing should be easily accessible by walking, cycling and public transport links to the town centre and local amenities including schools and sports facilities. Specifying in the application any locations for cycle storage is to be encouraged.  
5. **Green space.** The application avoids loss of local nature sites and green spaces and includes plans for their maintenance where relevant (eg. tree watering). Significant developments should include areas that enhance local nature, through allowing habitats to establish, creating corridors between existing areas of habitat.  
6. **Tree coverage.** Where the application includes a new open space, it should include sufficient new native tree coverage and other plant life. Where existing trees need to be felled, native species replacements should be planted.  
7. **Low-carbon vehicles.** Applications should support low-carbon vehicles, for example, with EV charging points easily accessible.  
8. **Lighting.** The application specifies where appropriate that LED lights are to be used.  
9. **Resilience to climate impacts.** Building should not be built in flood plains nor otherwise contribute to significantly changing surface or sub-surface hydrology, including impacting on other homes and buildings. Buildings should be well-insulated and may contain features such as green roofs that contribute passively to summer cooling.  
10. **Water saving.** Applications for new builds or substantial extensions should include water saving measures such as greywater recycling, rainwater capture and and runoff water in concrete areas.