



ST HELENS
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**ST HELENS BOROUGH
LOCAL PLAN 2020-2035**

**CLIMATE CHANGE BACKGROUND
PAPER**

OCTOBER 2020

Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. Policy Context.....	4
National.....	4
National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019).....	4
Planning Practice Guidance, Climate Change (March 2019).....	5
Sub-Regional Policy.....	5
Liverpool City Region, Combined Authority Transport Plan:.....	6
Facilitating Inclusive Economy (June 2019).....	6
Liverpool City Region Local Journeys Strategy (2017)	7
Liverpool City Region Freight and Logistics Strategy	7
Liverpool City Region Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP 2019-2029)	7
Liverpool City Region Growth Deal (2014)	8
Liverpool City Region Sustainable Energy Action Plan (October 2014).....	8
Local Policy	8
St Helens Plan 2017-2020	8
St Helens Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (September 2014)	9
Sankey Catchment Action Plan (June 2018)	9
Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Study (2009/10): Focus on St Helens	9
3. How the St Helens Local Plan will contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, Climate Change.....	11
Policy LPA04.1 and LPA05.1	11
Policy LPA07, Transport and Travel	12
Policy LPA09, Green Infrastructure	12
Policy LPA10, Parkside East	12
Policy LPA11, Health and Wellbeing	13
Policy LPC05, Open Space	13
Policy LPC07, Greenways	13
Policy LPC10, Trees and Woodland	13
Policy LPC12, Flood Risk and Water Management.....	14
Policy LPC13, Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments.....	14
Policy LPD01, Ensuring Quality Development.....	14
Policy LPD09, Air Quality.....	14
4. Conclusion.....	16

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Background Paper is one of several that have been prepared by the Council. It will provide evidence for the forthcoming Examination in Public of the St Helens Borough Local Plan 2020-2035 (the SHBLP).
- 1.2 The purpose of this paper on climate change is twofold. Firstly, it is to set out the background of and approach taken towards climate change within the SHBLP; and secondly to provide an update on the Council's current and future projects which support mitigation and adaptation to climate change.
- 1.3 It is not the purpose of this paper to repeat all the evidence that the Council has relied upon when preparing the SHBLP. This evidence has been separately published and is available on the Council's website. However, where appropriate this document refers to the source of evidence and provides a brief summary or explanation of how the evidence has been considered. Similarly, options which are referred to in the paper are explained further in Developing the Spatial Strategy Background Paper (SD026), and the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal reports.
- 1.4 This paper briefly summarises:
- the policy context relevant to climate change (see Section 2);
 - how the St Helens Local Plan will contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change (see Section 3);
- 1.5 This paper should be read in conjunction with other evidence base documents. These include:
- St Helens Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment¹, (September 2014);
 - Sankey Catchment Action Plan² (June 2018);
 - Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Study Part 1&2³ (2009, 2010);
 - St Helens Transport Impact Assessment Report⁴ (January 2019);
 - St Helens Sustainable Transport Impact Assessment Report⁵ (January 2019); and
 - Parkside Background Paper⁶ (October 2020).

¹ Document reference: FLO001

² Document reference: FLO002

³ Document reference: NAT003

⁴ Document reference: TRA003

⁵ Document reference: TRA004

⁶ Document reference: SD024

2. Policy Context

- 2.1 The following outlines the policy framework at the national, regional and local levels in which the Local Plan is being prepared, in particular, the policy framework that is of relevance to climate change. Key evidence base documents are also summarised.

National

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

- 2.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- 2.3 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that an environmental objective to delivering sustainable developments is to address impacts of climate change through a range of mitigation and adaptation measures. A collective approach to achieving other environmental objectives included in the NPPF, such as the effective use of land, use of renewable energy sources, reducing the use of natural resources, reducing levels of waste and establishing low carbon economies will also help to address climate change impacts.
- 2.4 The importance of achieving these environmental objectives is further illustrated in Paragraph 20 of the NPPF. This paragraph states that "*Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for: ...*
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); ...*
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation*".
- 2.5 Therefore, the above demonstrates that there is an expectation that strategic developments will deliver positive outcomes regarding mitigating and adapting to the challenges and impacts of climate change.
- 2.6 The significance of climate change is further highlighted in Chapter 14 of the NPPF (2019) which is dedicated towards addressing the impacts of climate change, flooding and coastal change.
- 2.7 Paragraph 149 states that "*[Local] Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures*".
- 2.8 It follows on to say that "*Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts*" (Paragraph 149).

- 2.9 Paragraph 150 emphasises the importance of considering design principles for new developments, ensuring that such effectively contribute positively to minimising climate change effects whilst maintaining the highest of building standards in accordance with current building regulations. In addition, the NPPF states that consideration of green infrastructure and the ability to reduce greenhouse gas emission is an integral consideration for the design of new developments.
- 2.10 Paragraph 151 considers how development plans can positively encourage and support the use of renewable and low carbon energy sources. Key mechanisms to support the above is through facilitating behaviours and actions that will led to either a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or promote energy production.
- 2.11 Lastly, paragraph 157 of the NPPF (2019) indicates the importance of considering the effect of climate change in relation to flooding. Paragraph 157 states that *“All plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development – taking into account the current and future impacts of climate change so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property”*.

Planning Practice Guidance, Climate Change (March 2019)

- 2.12 The Planning Practices Guidance (PPG) indicates that the delivery of sustainable developments is heavily interlinked with the ability to address climate change impacts. Climate change must be a fundamental consideration throughout the planning process from planning policy through to decision-making of planning applications.
- 2.13 Indeed, the PPG states that as a statutory duty, Local Authorities should work proactively and work cooperatively with a variety of organisations to address climate change impacts through enabling mitigation and adaptation strategies. The inclusion of policies within a Local Plan is one means by which local authorities should utilise to facilitate climate change issues being addressed. This is supported by Section 19(1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2.14 The PPG also provides more detailed guidance on how Local Authorities can through the creation of a Local Plan ensure that appropriate mitigation and adaptation strategies are encompassed within policies to ensure new developments and the regeneration of existing land use developments address a variety of climate change issues.

Sub-Regional Policy

- 2.15 The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority (LCRCA) declared a Climate Change Emergency in May 2019 and resultantly is developing a Climate Change Action Plan. The LCRCA has also developed several policies that will support the region efforts to address climate change. These policies include a zero-carbon target for the region by 2040, creation of a Clean Air taskforce, commissioning of the Mersey Tidal project, formation of a £10million Green Investment Fund, delivery of improvements to public transport by investing in low emission bus fleets, future-proofing the Mersey Rail network and

developing the cycling and walking network across the region and lastly to utilise a *“Brownfield first approach to development”*.

**Liverpool City Region, Combined Authority Transport Plan:
Facilitating Inclusive Economy (June 2019)**

2.16 The above document, created by the LCRCA in June 2019, outlines the future vision for the Liverpool City Region’s (LCR) transport network in terms of the delivery of short-term projects and expected outcomes.

2.17 Reference to climate change and the contribution that the transport network directly and indirectly has on this issue is one of the main focuses of the report. Indeed, all aspects of the report’s core vision (see below), can be attributed to having an impact on climate change issues across the city region.

“Our core vision is to develop a transport system which:

- is comprehensive, affordable and reliable*
- is integrated and easy to use*
- supports the development of new and existing communities*
- is green, and is healthy” (paragraph 3.4, p.22)*

2.18 Furthermore, strategic objective 4 (see below) of the plan specifically encompasses two issues that are widely recognised as having a negative impact on climate change.

“To develop a mobility system that enhances the health and wellbeing of our citizens. This will include the development of liveable and resilient city region that addresses the challenges of poor air quality and supports the move to a zero carbon LCR by 2040” (paragraph p3.4, p.23)

2.19 Alluded to in this report is the increase in transport emissions since 2013 across the LCR and the necessity for new initiatives to be delivered to revert this incline. The Transforming Cities Fund is one example of how support for initiatives that use alternative, cleaner fuels are being delivered across the LCR.

2.20 The effect of transport emissions on air quality standards is well known and as part of the Air Quality Task Force establish for the LCR region, the combined impact of both an increase in traffic levels and a decrease in air quality standards and the detrimental effects caused by both on other issues including flooding and health is a vital aspect to be addresses. Indeed, a priority for the LCR is to understand the effects of flooding on the transport network and the wider impacts that such can led to. Therefore, the LCR proposes to collate further evidence base documents and implement digital mapping to advance their understanding. The increase in flooding events is one of the main impacts and challenges associated with climate changed, thus work to understand the risk of flooding across the city region is of vital importance.

- 2.21 As part of the wider strategic planning initiatives for the LCR region, a new statutory Transport Plan is to be written. Therefore, this document will in the future be useful in reviewing current approaches and practices towards addressing climate change impacts across the city region.

Liverpool City Region Local Journeys Strategy (2017)

- 2.22 This report signifies the importance of considering short trip travel journeys (defined as those less than 5km) and the implications of modal choice for these journeys due to the economic, social as well as environmental effects these have a direct influence upon.
- 2.23 Evidenced in the report, the preferred modal choice for short journeys is the use of cars however, the importance of influencing changes so that an increase in uptake of sustainable modes of transport specifically walking and cycling occurs is highlighted throughout.
- 2.24 This report covers a broad range of strategies that aims to increase sustainable and active travel modes across the LCR, with the advantages that such produce for the region also included. Advantages such as improvements to air quality, increase health and wellbeing, access to employment opportunities and regeneration of streets and neighbourhoods will all have a direct contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change across the LCR.

Liverpool City Region Freight and Logistics Strategy

- 2.25 A strategy that will have a significant effect on addressing climate change issues is the LCR Freight and Logistics strategy. One of the main aims of the strategy is to reduce the environmental impact of freight and logistics movements through enabling the delivery of goods by bicycle within urban areas, rather than the traditional methods of HGV deliveries, as this will support a reduction in air pollution. Another aim of the strategy is for freight and logistic based developments to be accessible to employees using sustainable travel modes as this too will reduce air pollution issues which is a key issue regarding climate change.

Liverpool City Region Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP 2019-2029)

- 2.26 The LCR Local Journeys Strategy has also led to the development and implementation of LCR Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). This plan is one example of current practices that are helping to steer an uptake in sustainable transport. St Helens Borough Council along with all other Local Authorities in the LCR are taking an active role in the development of this 10-year strategy. The strategy aims to create a high quality, active travel network across the LCR region so that more individuals are encouraged to walk and cycle for short journeys. The advantages of walking and cycling are well documented, and it is widely accepted that by increasing active travel a reduction in transport emissions will help to mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Liverpool City Region Growth Deal (2014)

- 2.27 One of the priority areas included with the LCR Growth Deal (2014) is for the region to be a low carbon economy and area. The geographical location of the LCR has enabled the region to become one of the main areas within the UK to produce renewable coastal energy in the form of off-shore wind energy, hence the commissioning of the Mersey Tidal Project.
- 2.28 Additionally, due to advances in low carbon technologies within the LCR, developing skills for future employment opportunities within this sector is another priority. The creation of a Skills for Growth Action Plan specifically focusing on Low Carbon Economy Action Plan 2018-2020 illustrates this.

Liverpool City Region Sustainable Energy Action Plan (October 2014)

- 2.29 This report further outlines opportunities for the LCR to become a low carbon economy. The report illustrates the importance of proposed major developments across the LCR such as Liverpool SuperPort and Parkside Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) regarding the contribution that such will provide in order to enable sustainable energy practices as well as economic growth for the LCR. It states that major developments must ensure that wider environmental gains including the reduction in carbon emissions and installation of energy efficient practices are achieved as collectively these developments provide an opportunity to enable the whole LCR to become a successful low carbon economy.

Local Policy

- 2.30 Similarly to the LCRCA, St Helens Borough Council also declared a Climate Change Emergency in July 2019. The Council is aware of the vital importance of taking a proactive approach to address issues of climate change as a Borough wide issue as well as adapting the Council's own practices as an organisation.
- 2.31 St Helens Borough Council is aspiring to achieve a zero-carbon target by 2040 and the Council are currently exploring a range of methods in order to achieve its aim. The Council has outlined several priorities to help achieve the above aim, outlined below:
- Increase level of recycling and reduce waste.
 - Encourage use of alternative modes of transport, rather than travelling by private car.
 - Provide infrastructure for electric vehicles.
 - Improve efficiency of Council assets and enable 100% clean energy across all Council functions by 2040.
 - Encourage net-carbon developments and communities.

St Helens Plan 2017-2020

- 2.32 Within this report, there is an awareness from St Helens Council of the need to ensure that sustainable development occurs in order to maintain and

improve the quality of the Borough's environmental condition. Improvement to air quality and a reduction in carbon emissions are targets set by the Council as they are recognised as important factors in helping to sustain the environment. In addition, the adoption of the Bold Forest Area Action Plan and a strategy focusing on the Sankey Catchment is signified as important delivery mechanism to improving the environment of St Helens.

St Helens Council Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (September 2014)

- 2.33 The St Helens Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) 2014 informed the Council's preparation of the SHBLP, as a sequential, risk-based approach was undertaken when proposing the geographical distribution of new developments.
- 2.34 Additionally, the importance of working with stakeholders including United Utilities and the Environment Agency was further emphasised within the report to ensure a coordinated approach to flood risk and water management.

Sankey Catchment Action Plan (June 2018)

- 2.35 This plan outlines an integrated approach to the long-term water management and enhancement of the of the whole Sankey Catchment area. The effects of climate change including drier summers and wetter winters is likely to impact the Sankey Catchment with issues such as flooding, biodiversity and water quality being of vital consideration to how river management techniques are implemented.
- 2.36 One of the objectives of this Plan is to increase water storage capacity within all watercourses within the Sankey Catchment area. This aspires to alleviate the pressures when flooding events occur as well as supporting the maintenance and enhancement of water quality and hydraulic connectivity within the catchment. Furthermore, the biodiversity of many species of flora and fauna will be supported.
- 2.37 To address all the objectives included within the plan, partnership working with a range of organisations including community groups is essential.

Liverpool City Region Renewable Energy Study (2009/10): Focus on St Helens

- 2.38 This report provides an understanding of the issues effecting the integration of low carbon technologies and renewable energy sources across the whole of the LCR. Specific reference to challenges and opportunities for the Borough of St Helens are outlined within the report. St Helens was reference as a potential area for the generation of renewable wind energy (albeit not on a large scale) and geothermal energy. However, a challenge for St Helens relates to the Borough's electricity network.
- 2.39 The report also emphasises a requirement for all LCR authorities to work collaboratively with each other and stakeholders including utility providers to achieve successful renewable energy projects and deliver integrated project outcomes.

- 2.40 Additionally, there is an aspiration for local authorities including St Helens to participate in initiatives that will also introduce low carbon and renewable energy practices within their working environment. A recent example, of St Helens Council establishing energy efficient working practices is the reduction in printing and travelling to work due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

3. How the St Helens Local Plan will contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, Climate Change

- 3.1 For the Borough of St Helens, key planning issues relating to climate change can be categorised into three broad categories;
- Supporting the creation of a low carbon economy;
 - Reduce the use of fossil fuels and emissions from greenhouse gases; and
 - Mitigating and adapting to flood risk.
- 3.2 Within these overarching categories, other planning issues are evident, for examples the need to increase the use of sustainable travel, provision of green spaces within new developments, provision of energy efficient developments and therefore a collective approach must be taken to achieve the Borough aspirations, outlined in section 2.
- 3.3 The importance of addressing climate change is emphasised within the Local Plan, as a strategic objective of the Plan is *“To mitigate the effects and minimise the impacts of land use changes on climate change by requiring well-designed developments in suitable locations”*. Policies included within the SHBLP will support the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change and it is anticipated that a collective approach during the development management process of a planning application will be taken so that new development will assist St Helens Council to achieve their targets in relation to climate change.
- 3.4 Outlined below are policies included the SHBLP that support and enable mitigation and adaption strategies to be delivered.

Policy LPA04.1 and LPA05.1

- 3.5 These policies relate to proposed strategic development sites and due to the scale of these development sites, their ability to facilitate mitigation and adaptation techniques to address climate change impacts is of essential importance, hence the inclusion of clauses 2d-h in both polices (see below).

“d) measures to provide good levels of accessibility to the whole site from the surrounding area by public transport, walking and cycling;

e) indicative layout promoting permeability and accessibility by public transport, cycling and walking;

f) a Green Infrastructure Plan addressing biodiversity, geodiversity, greenways, ecological network, landscape character, trees, woodland and water storage in a holistic and integrated way;

g) measures to address any potential flood risk and surface water drainage issues in accordance with Policy LPC12;

h) measures to promote energy efficiency and generation of renewable or low carbon energy in accordance with Policy LPC13”.

- 3.6 Alongside the support of other policies included in the SHBLP including; LPA07, LPA09, LPC12 and LPC13, these clauses will ensure all proposed strategic developments consider opportunities to integrate and encourage behaviours and actions that will support mitigation and adaption techniques to address climate change impacts.

Policy LPA07, Transport and Travel

- 3.7 One of the most influential policies included within the SHBLP which aims to address the effects of climate change is Policy LPA07: Transport and Travel. Part 1 of the Policy states that the strategic priorities for the transport network are to facilitate economic growth, accessibility between homes, jobs and service, improve air quality and minimise carbon emissions. By collectively working with partners and key stakeholders, planning for the future will encompass a modal shift towards the use of sustainable transport for a variety of purposes.
- 3.8 As an outcome of the Climate Change Emergency declaration made by the Council in 2019, St Helens Borough Council is currently preparing an Electric Vehicles Action Plan. This plan will work alongside the Council's wider policies so that there is a cohesive and integrated approach aimed to address climate change impacts.
- 3.9 In addition, a future review of the 'Ensuring a Choice of Travel' SPD is to be conducted to support Policy LPA07. Active travel provisions and the importance of sustainable modes of transport will be included, as such will ensure future developments provide mitigation and adaptation approaches to climate change through transport related activities.

Policy LPA09, Green Infrastructure

- 3.10 It is increasingly recognised that the provision of green infrastructure is vital towards mitigating climate change impacts, especially to enable a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions therefore improving air quality, contributing towards water management and promoting sustainable travel. This Policy seeks to protect and enhance the Borough's green infrastructure, whilst also increasing the accessibility of such infrastructure. St Helens Council will continue to work with partnership organisations to establish green infrastructure throughout the Borough that will benefit both residents and the environment.

Policy LPA10, Parkside East

- 3.11 SHBLP Policy LPA10 allocates the Parkside East site (7EA) for a SRFI. The development of a SRFI would help meet the Government's objectives of reducing significant volumes of freight off road nationally and moving towards a low carbon economy. See Parkside Strategic Rail Freight Interchange Background Paper (SD024) for more information.

Policy LPA11, Health and Wellbeing

- 3.12 This Policy will have an indirect contribution towards mitigating climate change impacts as one of the Policy's main aims is to promote healthy communities whereby initiatives included increasing levels of active and sustainable travel. Resultantly, this will improve air quality and reduce emissions throughout the Borough therefore this shows a climate change mitigation strategy to be implemented.
- 3.13 Current climate change mitigation stages that are occurring within St Helens is the delivery of Borough-wide annually campaigns such as Cycle to Work day and Clean Air day. These awareness campaigns enable the impacts of climate change to be raised indirectly through public health and environmental initiatives as these both prompt the need for sustainable travel.

Policy LPC05, Open Space

- 3.14 Open spaces have many functions, one of which is helping to improve environmental quality through the reduction of CO₂ emissions, reducing flood risk and enabling supporting biodiversity. The importance of open space provision is outlined within this Policy as it seeks to maintain, protect and enhance the open space situated within the Borough. Therefore, open spaces will continue to have a positive contribution towards mitigating the impacts of climate change. In addition, the provision of additional open spaces within new developments will further contribute positively to mitigating climate change impacts.

Policy LPC07, Greenways

- 3.15 Similarly to green infrastructure, greenways provide areas where further mitigation strategies can be developed to address the impacts of climate change. The Council has aspiration to expand the greenway network through the creation of two new routes at Colliers Moss Common and Sankey Valley.

Policy LPC10, Trees and Woodland

- 3.16 Trees and woodland form part of the wider green infrastructure of St Helens Borough and are valued highly for the multifunctional purposes. Trees and woodlands provide mitigation strategies to address the impacts of climate change through absorbing CO₂ to improve air quality and supporting water management strategies to help prevent flood risk, including surface water flooding.
- 3.17 The local plan will also be fundamental to the creation of the St Helens Woodland Strategy which aims to support the Town in the Forest objective, part of the City Growth Strategy.
- 3.18 St Helens Borough Council has been successful in receiving £118,700 in funding from the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge Fund. This will enable an extensive tree planting programme, across twelve locations including parks and open space sites within the Borough to commence. It is anticipated that 298 trees will be planted, and this will support other actions

taken by the Council to address climate change impacts and to achieve target set as part of the Council Climate Change Emergency.

Policy LPC12, Flood Risk and Water Management

- 3.19 Part 8 of this Policy focuses upon the importance of sustainable urban drainage (SUD) systems. Inclusion of SUD's within new developments enables flood risks particularly those associated with surface water run-off to be managed effectively. SUD's are an example of a mitigation techniques being implemented to reduce the impacts of climate change within St Helens.
- 3.20 Additionally, part 9 of the Policy references the importance of green infrastructure and the contribution of such towards the management of surface water run-off.
- 3.21 Furthermore, the Policy seeks to reduce flood risk through the implementation of measures contained within the Sankey Catchment Action Plan, including "*Slow the Flow*" and "*Urban Intervention Zone*".

Policy LPC13, Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Developments

- 3.22 Part 4 of this Policy states that "*Proposals for new development within a strategic employment site or a strategic housing site (as defined in Policies LPA04.1 and LPA05.1) must, unless this is shown not to be practicable or viable, ensure that at least 10% of their energy needs can be met from renewable and / or other low carbon energy source(s)*". This demonstrates the Council's commitment towards supporting the Borough's aims to become a low carbon economy and support the use of renewable energy.
- 3.23 This Policy also supports developments that will enable the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy, however there is an emphasis that any proposed development should not cause or lead to significant effects for the surrounding local community.

Policy LPD01, Ensuring Quality Development

- 3.24 During the design process of any new developments, consideration should be given to the inclusion of renewable and/or other low carbon technologies. In addition, the overall design of any new developments can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. An awareness of the orientation and layout of sites as well as the proposed use of building materials will be scrutinised during the planning application process to ensure that suitable mitigation and adaptation measures relating to climate change impacts are taken.

Policy LPD09, Air Quality

- 3.25 St Helens Borough Council Environmental Health department continually assesses air quality particularly within the four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA's) located in the Borough and in support of improving air quality in St Helens, an Air Quality Plan is currently being prepared.
- 3.26 Part 2 of this Policy outlines the importance of improving air quality, particularly in locations where major developments are proposed. At these

locations this Policy indicates that a modal shift towards the use of sustainable travel is a desired outcome.

- 3.27 In addition, proposed developments may require mitigation strategies to protect and improve air quality to be submitted alongside an application. This will enable proposals to be assessed thoroughly and ensure that future developments within St Helens have a positive contribution to improving the Borough's air quality standards.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 It is evident that climate change is a key planning issues that requires consideration not only in the near future but long-term as well. Impacts of climate change are becoming increasing prominent and the awareness and acceptance that changes must be adopted is understood. There is national, regional and local policy which supports climate change impacts to be addressed through the planning system.
- 4.2 The SHBLP will provide a policy framework to enable mitigation of and adaption to climate change in the Borough. Various policies within the Plan incorporate aspects that intend to address climate change issues and will enable improvements of the environmental condition of the whole Borough.
- 4.3 Monitoring and reviewing impacts of climate change at a local level will be imperative to ensure St Helens achieve it aims and becomes a sustainable, low carbon Borough.
- 4.4 The Local Plan will be continually monitored throughout its duration and with a formal review occurring every five years, there will be opportunities to assess and evaluate policies to ensure that the Local Plan is contributing positively to adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change.