

Microgeneration – A New Business Opportunity

‘How Building Regulations and Planning guidance affect microgeneration’

1. Planning

1.1 Planning Policy Statement 22: ‘Renewable Energy’

“The policies set out in this statement will need to be taken into account by local planning authorities in preparation of local development documents”.

1.1.1 Some of the ‘Key Principles’ (page 7):

“Regional spatial strategies and local development documents should contain policies designed to promote and encourage, rather than restrict, the development of renewable energy resources”.

“At local level, planning authorities should set out criteria that will be applied in assessing applications for planning permission for renewable energy projects”.

“The Government may intervene in the plan making process where it considers that the constraints being proposed by local authorities are too great or have been poorly justified”.

1.1.2 ‘Policies In Regional Spatial Strategies And Local Development Documents’

“Local planning authorities may include policies in local development documents that require a percentage of the energy to be used in new residential, commercial or industrial developments to come from on-site renewable energy developments”.
(item 8, page 10)

1.1.3 ‘Small Scale Renewable Energy Developments’

“Local planning authorities and developers should consider the opportunity for incorporating renewable energy projects in all new developments. Small scale renewable energy schemes utilising technologies such as solar panels, Biomass heating, small scale wind turbines, photovoltaic cells and combined heat and power schemes can be incorporated both into new developments and some existing buildings. Local planning authorities should specifically encourage such schemes through positively expressed policies in local development documents”.
(item 18, page 12)

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1.2 Local Development Documents

1.2.1 Many local authorities have now produced a response to PPS 22 as part of their ‘Local Development Framework’

1.2.2 Using Chichester District Council’s ‘Core Strategy Submission’ as an example

1.2.3 ‘Policy Sus7: Sustainable Energy’

“Small scale renewable energy generation, including solar power, micro wind power, biomass and ground source heat pumps, will be encouraged. The local planning authority will require a defined proportion of the energy used in the operation of a development to be from on-site renewable sources. The proportion of on-site renewable generation required is set out in the table below. The requirement varies according to the type of development and in the case of dwellings, the size of development.”

Table (part):

| | | | | |
|------------------------|-------------|-----|-------------|-----|
| Housing 1-9 dwellings | 2007 – 2013 | 15% | 2013 – 2018 | 30% |
| Housing 10 + dwellings | 2007 – 2013 | 30% | 2013 – 2018 | 50% |

(see page 21 of the Core Strategy Submission)

1.3 Other factors to consider

1.3.1 Listed Buildings

1.3.2 Special areas of conservation

1.3.3 AONB – National Parks etc.

1.3.4 Permitted Development Rights (withdrawn ?)

1.3.5 If in doubt write to the local planning authority for guidance

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2. Building Regulations

2.1 Part A – ‘Structure’

2.1.1 Dead Loads e.g. Solar thermal panels; Solar PV panels; Hot water cylinder

2.2 Part B – ‘Fire Safety’

2.2.1 Services through compartment and other fire resisting floors

2.3 Part C – ‘Site preparation and resistance to contaminants and moisture’

2.3.1 Fixings through roof coverings

2.4 Part E – ‘Resistance to the passage of sound’

2.4.1 Services through sound resistant floors and walls

2.5 Part G – ‘Hygiene’

2.5.1 Unvented hot water cylinders to be installed by a competent person

2.6 Part J – ‘Combustion appliances and fuel storage systems’

2.6.1 Installation of biomass boilers, air supply, flues, fire protection of building

2.7 Part L1A/L2A – ‘Conservation of fuel and power’

2.7.1 ‘The Government’s Standard Assessment Procedure for Energy Rating of Dwellings’

2.7.2 Heat pumps, biomass boilers, biomass stoves, solar thermal, solar PV

2.7.3 SAP scale now 1 to 100. “It can be above 100 for dwellings that are net exporters”.

2.8 Part P – ‘Electrical safety – dwellings’

2.8.1 ‘Special locations and installations’ – solar PV – notification to Building Control Body or installation undertaken by an installer registered with a Part P competent person self-certification scheme.

Conclusion

Legislation, regulation, financial incentive either punitive by way of tax on fossil fuel or encouragement by way of grants and tax breaks are all leading one way –

Massive potential for microgeneration – an exciting business opportunity

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