



National Planning Framework 4 Early Engagement – Policies

CLIMATE CHANGE – Greenhouse Gas emissions Reduction

Scottish Planning Policy (2014):

Paragraph 11 sets out SPP's overall vision:

We live in a Scotland with a growing, low-carbon economy with progressively narrowing disparities in well-being and opportunity. It is growth that can be achieved whilst reducing emissions and which respects the quality of environment, place and life which makes our country so special. It is growth which increases solidarity – reducing inequalities between our regions. We live in sustainable, well-designed places and homes which meet our needs. We enjoy excellent transport and digital connections, internally and with the rest of the world.

The need to consider and address climate change is articulated clearly in the second of the four outcomes that set out how the planning system should support SPP's overall vision:

Outcome 2: A low carbon place – reducing our carbon emissions and adapting to climate change.

NPF3 will facilitate the transition to a low carbon economy, particularly by supporting diversification of the energy sector. The spatial strategy as a whole aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and facilitate adaptation to climate change.

The Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 sets a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050, with an interim target of reducing emissions by at least 42% by 2020. Annual greenhouse gas emission targets are set in secondary legislation. Section 44 of the Act places a duty on every public body to act:

- in the way best calculated to contribute to the delivery of emissions targets in the Act;*
- in the way best calculated to help deliver the Scottish Government's climate change adaptation programme; and*
- in a way that it considers is most sustainable.*

The SPP sets out how this should be delivered on the ground. By seizing opportunities to encourage mitigation and adaptation measures, planning can support the transformational change required to meet emission reduction targets and influence climate change. Planning can also influence people's choices to reduce the environmental impacts of consumption and production, particularly through energy efficiency and the reduction of waste.

How this should be done is set out in the Principal Policy on sustainability which includes supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation as guiding principles, and where relevant, individual subject policies.

What has changed since 2014

- The signing of the Paris Agreement in 2015.
- The First Minister's declaration of a global climate emergency and the passage of the Climate Change (Emissions Reductions Targets) (Scotland) 2019 Act¹ which increases the ambition of the targets for Scotland, including a net-zero emissions target date of 2045. The Scottish Government is now updating its 2018 Climate Change Plan, which covers policies to reduce emissions over the period to 2032, to reflect the ambition of the new targets.
- The Scottish Government's Climate Change Plan: third report on proposals and policies 2018-2032, published February 2018, sets out the path to a low carbon economy while helping to deliver sustainable economic growth and secure the wider benefits to a greener, fairer and healthier Scotland. Ministers have committed to updating this plan, in light of the increased target ambition of the 2019 Act, by April 2020.
- The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019, introduced a number of new provisions relating to climate change, including the provision of a statement from the Scottish Government on how the NPF will contribute to meeting any targets relating to the reduction of emissions of greenhouse gases, and for an assessment of the lifecycle greenhouse gas emissions of each national development on achieving emissions reduction targets.
- Protecting Scotland's Future: the Government's Programme for Scotland 2019-2020 sets out actions that the Scottish Government will take to end Scotland's contribution to global climate change. The includes a commitment that NPF4 will help to radically accelerate reduction of emissions.

Proposed key objective of NPF4: to ensure planning policy results in spatial and land use change that facilitates Scotland's ambition to have net-zero emissions by 2045 and other statutory emissions reduction targets whilst supporting communities and businesses in making the changes needed to meet the targets.

Issues to consider:

- How best to ensure that our national planning policies respond to the new and urgent context of the global climate emergency and associated national strategies?
- The policy criteria needed to ensure that new developments contribute as far as possible to emission reduction targets. In particular, how can NPF 4 policies on topics such as placemaking, housing, transport, green infrastructure, energy, waste and flooding deliver emissions reduction objectives?
- The associated long term need to minimise vulnerability and improve the resilience of places and communities to anticipated effects of climate change?
- The need for policies to maximise the use of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings and to support retro-fit development related to energy efficiency for existing buildings?
- How can our policies support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure, including a response to on-site renewable energy generation?

¹ [Climate Change \(Emissions Reductions Targets\) \(Scotland\) Act 2019](#)

Get Involved

For more information and other resources



www.transformingplanning.scot



<https://blogs.gov.scot/planning-architecture/>



@ScotGovPlanning



scotplan@gov.scot