

Central Lincolnshire
Policy S18
Fossil Fuel Exploration, Extraction,
Production or Energy Generation
Evidence Report

June 2021



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan is being updated since the first Local Plan for Central Lincolnshire, an area covering the districts of City of Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey, was adopted in April 2017.
- 1.2. This Evidence Report (which is one of a collection) provides background information and justification for Policy S18, which relates to fossil fuel exploration, extraction, production or energy generation.

2. Policy Context

National Policy and Guidance

- 2.1. Since the Central Lincolnshire Plan was adopted the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was updated in July 2018 with subsequent additional changes being published in February 2019.
- 2.2. Chapter 2 of the NPPF sets out national policy for achieving sustainable development, which separates it out into three objectives – economic, social and environmental. Within the environmental objective, “*mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy*” forms a key part of achieving sustainable development – a key goal of the planning system.
- 2.3. At paragraph 20 of the NPPF sets out the strategic matters that should be addressed through strategic policies, including “*planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.*”
- 2.4. Chapter 14 of the NPPF provides national planning policy relating to climate change. It provides some clarity for the expectations of how Local Plans should address the challenges of climate change in paragraph 148 where it says:
“The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.”
- 2.5. Paragraph 151 of the NPPF goes on to state that to increase the use and supply of renewable energy, plans should:
*“a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
b) consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.”*
- 2.6. This all makes it clear that there is a duty for Local Plans to proactively plan to deliver a renewable and low carbon energy future.

- 2.7. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was first introduced in 2014 which offers 'live' government guidance. The PPG provides guidance to help in the implementation of policy in the NPPF.
- 2.8. The PPG includes a section of guidance titled [Renewable and low carbon energy](#). In this section it provides guidance for how Local Planning Authorities should plan for renewable and low carbon energy including setting out its importance:

“Increasing the amount of energy from renewable and low carbon technologies will help to make sure the UK has a secure energy supply, reduce greenhouse gas emissions to slow down climate change and stimulate investment in new jobs and businesses. Planning has an important role in the delivery of new renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure in locations where the local environmental impact is acceptable.”¹

Local Policy

- 2.9. The current Local Plan does not include any policy specifically relating to fossil fuel exploration, extraction, production or energy generation.

3. Context and Evidence

- 3.1. Consultants were appointed in July 2020 to investigate the scale of Central Lincolnshire's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and climate change, and the opportunities that exist to tackle these problems locally, including through the Local Plan.
- 3.2. This work set out the overarching context for Central Lincolnshire identifying what would need to be done in order to achieve a carbon neutral Central Lincolnshire by 2050 (and 2041 to align to the science-based approach) to accord with the Paris Agreement. This research painted a very challenging picture to achieve these goals.
- 3.3. The Central Lincolnshire Local Plan is striving to deliver a carbon neutral Central Lincolnshire: policy S18 is essential as part of the areas commitment to a net zero-carbon society and economy.

4. Issues and Options Consultation

- 4.1. The Issues and Options Consultation in 2019 did not include any specific question around fossil fuel exploration, extraction, production or energy generation, however in relation to the questions about whether respondents supported our Climate Change objective, and about other climate change matters, responses included a desire to ban all fossil fuel exploration and extraction from Lincolnshire and a complete ban on fossil fuels.

5. Proposed Approach in Draft Local Plan

- 5.1. The policy presented in the Draft Local Plan provides that, in a situation where a proposal for fossil fuel-based exploration, extraction, production or energy generation is received for the determination by a Central Lincolnshire authority, the proposal will be refused, in line with the commitment to a new zero-carbon society and economy.

¹ PPG Reference ID: 5-001-20140306

- 5.2. The policy recognises that such applications are unlikely to be dealt with by a Local Planning Authority, rather they are likely to be determined by the County Council or national government, however the policy is included for such event.

6. Reasonable Alternative Options

- 6.1. One alternative policy approach was considered: the option of not having a local level policy, and instead relying on national level policy and guidance.
- 6.2. This alternative policy approach- 'option 2'- was discounted in favour of policy option 1 (the preferred policy approach taken forward in the Draft Local Plan) because option 1 offers greater certainty and likelihood of more positive sustainability outcomes.
- 6.3. When considered as part of the sustainability appraisal, both policy options 1 and 2 are likely to have neutral effects in relation to many of the Objectives. However, Option 1 scores notably better in relation to certain sustainability Objectives, namely: 2 Health and Wellbeing; 4 Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure; 5 Landscape and Townscape; 8 Pollution; 9 Natural Resources; and 11 Climate Change Effects and Energy.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1. This Evidence Report demonstrates the rationale for the proposed policy as contained in the Draft Central Lincolnshire Local Plan January 2021. This report will be updated following responses received during the Regulation 18 consultation prior to finalising the Local Plan for submission. This helps bring together relevant evidence that has informed this policy and how we have responded to comments received during the plan making process, as well as how the latest evidence and national guidance has been taken into account.