

Climate Policy – Carolyn Cobbold

Chichester District has one of the most vulnerable, dynamic and environmentally important coastal areas in the south of England. It is vital that a climate change policy is in place during the transition period between Local Plans in order that the district's future resilience to climate change impacts of rising sea levels as well as storms and rainfall events of increasing severity and frequency is not compromised. As a Climate Change Emergency Council, CDC should adhere to the Environment Agency's 2020 guidance of planning NOW for a maximum temperature rise of 4 degrees by 2100.¹

The Manhood Peninsula Partnership has been helping to increase the climate change resilience of Chichester's coastal plain for nearly two decades through the promotion of long-term integrated planning and sustainable flood prevention measures including the creation of wetlands, better drainage and water storage and managed realignment including Medmerry. The MPP strongly recommends CDC adopts the following policy, which is in line with new guidance, as a stand-alone policy as soon as possible.

Climate change resilient planning policy.

Housing applications will only be permitted provided that the developer can demonstrate:

- that the site will be free from flood risk in the event of mean global temperature rise of at least 2 Degree Celsius. For locations within 2 miles of the open coast a maximum temperature increase of 4 Degree Celsius needs to be factored in due to the cataclysmic impact of a coastal breach. This stipulation is in line with recommendations recently published by the Environment Agency and the Committee for Climate Change.¹
- that there has been no flooding of properties near to the site due to natural events (excessive rainfall etc) within the last 10 years.
- that the site does not require material raising to protect new homes from flooding, such as raising the site to a height above existing nearby properties.
- monitoring of water table levels during at least one wet winter for sites where ground water levels are high.
- independent verification/certification of SUD system designs and ongoing maintenance.
- that there are no other alternatives for housing sites in the district if the application site is less than 6 metres above sea level.²

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/environment-agency-chair-calls-for-new-approach-to-flood-and-coastal-resilience>; <https://www.theccc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/2019-Progress-Report-Summary.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/defusing-the-weather-bomb-the-future-of-flood-defence>

² <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/think-the-flooding-is-bad-now-britain-faces-6ft-rise-in-sea-level-warns-dutch-expert-gl6mlvqg> ; <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/sea-level-could-rise-at-least-6-meters/> ; <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/349/6244/aaa4019>

- no disturbance of functionally linked habitat for over-wintering populations of Brent geese and wading bird species. This applies in particular for areas lying in between Chichester Harbour, Medmerry Nature Reserve and Pagham Harbour.