

(d) locating potential nuisance or pollution activities onto the least sensitive parts of the site or where the impacts can be best contained by physical or other appropriate measures.

1.12.10 The Council will consult closely with the various pollution control agencies and environmental health services when considering proposals for potentially polluting developments, and other development near to a source of pollution.

NOISE POLLUTION

1.12.11 Noise can be a major 'nuisance'. Certain types of development are particularly sensitive to noise, for example housing, schools and hospitals. The background levels of noise in residential areas and the countryside are often low. The introduction of noisy activities into such areas can therefore be especially disruptive. The Council will pay particular attention to any likely increase in 'ambient' noise levels when considering planning applications. PPG24 gives advice on how the planning system can be used to reduce the impact of noise on people. It also introduces the concept of 'noise exposure categories' to assist in the appraisal of noise sensitive developments near to existing noise sources.

Policy OVS.6 The Council will require appropriate measures to be taken in the location, design, layout and operation of development proposals in order to minimise any adverse impact as a result of noise generated. Special consideration is required where noisy development is proposed in or near Sites of Special Scientific Interest or which would harm the quiet enjoyment of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Proposals for noise sensitive developments should have regard to the following:

- (a) existing sources of noise e.g. from roads, railways and other forms of transport, industrial and commercial developments, sporting, recreation and leisure facilities; and
- (b) the need for appropriate sound insulation measures; and
- (c) the noise exposure levels outlined in Annex 1 of PPG24. In the context of this policy noise sensitive uses are housing, schools and hospitals.

HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES

1.12.12 Local planning authorities have been able to exercise a degree of control over the presence of hazardous substances through the development control system, where such substances have been directly associated with a proposed development. There are situations, however, in which hazardous substances may be introduced into a site, or used differently within it, without there being any associated development requiring planning permission. Circular 11/92(4) fills the gap by enabling specific control to be exercised over the presence of hazardous substances whether or not associated development is involved. The Health and Safety Executive will need to be consulted on every application for 'hazardous substances consent'.

1.12.13 Annex B (paragraph B7) of Circular 11/92 states that local planning authorities should formulate, as appropriate, policies and proposals for the development and use of land at or near to hazardous installations and for the siting of future hazardous developments.

Policy OVS.7 The Council will not permit development which on advice from the Health and Safety Executive would cause unacceptable risk or harm to personal safety due to the presence of hazardous substances on the site or other land in the vicinity.

Policy OVS.8 Hazardous Substances Consent will not be granted where on advice from the Health and Safety Executive the risk arising to persons in the vicinity from the presence of a hazardous substances would be unacceptable.

1.12.14 The Council has accepted as valid a number of applications for deemed consent under the Hazardous Substance Regulations, these are listed in Appendix 11.

1.13 RENEWABLE ENERGY AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY

RENEWABLE ENERGY

1.13.1 Renewable energy is the term used to cover those continuous energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment - from the sun, the wind and oceans, and from plants and the flow of water. It also refers to energy available in waste (Department of Trade and Industry definition).

1.13.2 Government policy is to stimulate the development of new renewable energy sources, where ever they have the prospect of being economically attractive and environmentally acceptable, in order to contribute to:

- diverse, secure and sustainable energy sources;
- a reduction in the emission of pollutants;
- the encouragement of competitive renewable industries.

1.13.3 In February 1993, the Government published PPG22 on Renewable Energy. This guidance note provides advice to local planning authorities on including renewable energy policies in their plans and sets out the Government's commitment towards encouraging renewable energy supplies. It is acknowledged that the development of renewable energy schemes will also have some local environmental effects. However, the guidance goes on to state that in determining the suitability of sites it will always be important that a particular proposal should cause minimum harm to the countryside.

1.13.4 The former County Council prepared The Berkshire Renewable Energy Strategy (October 1995) which was presented in two parts:

- (i) a renewable energy guide and
- (ii) encouragement of renewable energy schemes.

The purpose of the Strategy was to provide a positive framework for appropriate renewable energy projects within the County.

1.13.5 The Council has accepted and endorsed the general approach to renewable energy projects as set out in the Strategy, which seeks to reconcile global environmental issues with local environmental concerns. Policy RE1 of the Structure Plan indicates that development proposals which attempt to harness renewable energy sources will generally be given favourable consideration provided there is no overriding adverse environmental impact.

1.13.6 It is also stated in the Strategy that proposals which help to conserve energy by means of layout, design, orientation and landscaping of buildings will generally be encouraged, subject to detailed policies contained in local plans. This approach is set out in policy LD1 of the Structure Plan where renewable energy and energy conservation are confirmed as one of the cornerstones of sustainable development.

1.13.7 The Strategy also confirms the need to monitor the development and operation of renewable energy schemes; to provide information and assist local authorities to identify suitable locations for such provision. The viability of renewable energy schemes is supported by NFFO (Non Fossil Fuel Obligation) which is in the form of a grant subsidy on a project basis. In the longer term there is always the possibility that such renewable energy schemes may not remain viable. In these circumstances the Council will normally impose conditions and seek