

Planning for Zero Carbon



Context

Planning plays an important role in ensuring that developments minimise their contributions towards climate change as well as adapt to and be more resilient to its impacts.

Islington has implemented ambitious and robust planning policies over recent years to minimise the contribution of development to climate change.

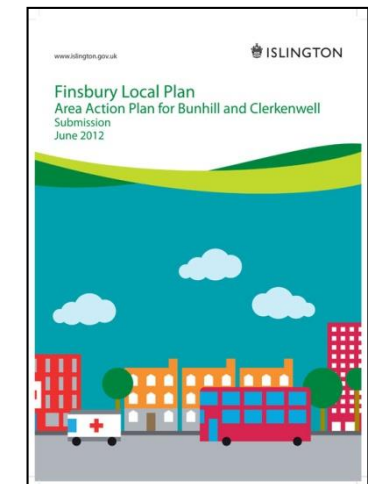
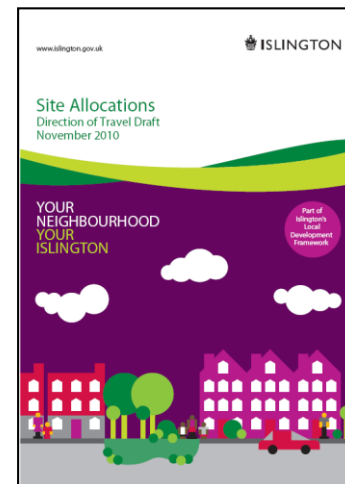
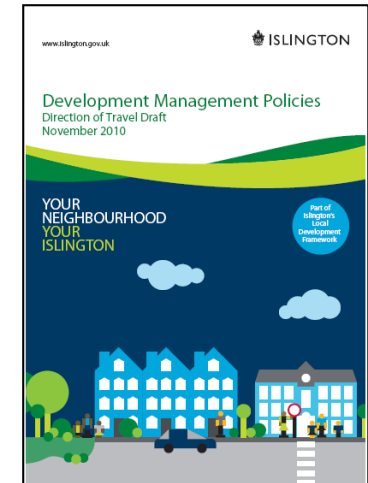
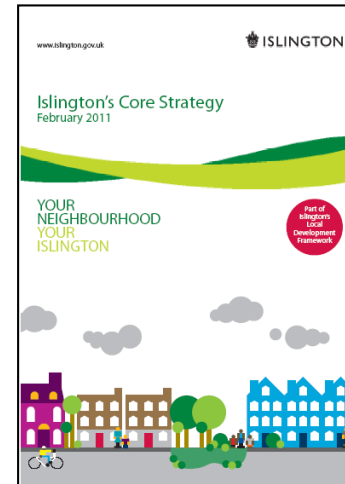


What we have done – current Local Plan

- Developments required to minimise their carbon emissions on site, including through energy efficiency.
- One of the first to councils to require Carbon Offset payments as part of net zero approach, which is then used to fund projects that reduce carbon emissions.
- Planning policies to promote and develop decentralised energy networks.
- One of the first to implement a car free policy for all new development.



ISLINGTON



New Local Plan

Approach to net zero emissions

- Commits the council to ensuring all buildings in Islington will be net zero carbon by 2050, consistent with the London Plan.
- The Council has declared a climate and environment emergency and will strive to achieve net zero carbon by 2030, ahead of the formal 2050 target.
- Planning policy plays a critically important role as part of moving towards net zero carbon emissions from buildings in the borough. Planning is, however, only part of meeting the net zero carbon target.
- The council's planning policies can only reduce carbon emissions through the design and construction of new and refurbished buildings that require planning permission.
- The ambitious planning policies in the Local Plan must be accompanied by a range of other interventions – as set out in the councils net zero carbon strategy.

Trajectory to net zero

- Achieving net zero carbon from all buildings in Islington will require significant retrofitting of the existing building stock to ensure that it meets the highest possible energy efficiency standards.
- Decarbonisation of the electricity grid and a move away from gas boilers is also required.
- This is outside the current scope of the planning system and would require significant changes to national policy and legislation.

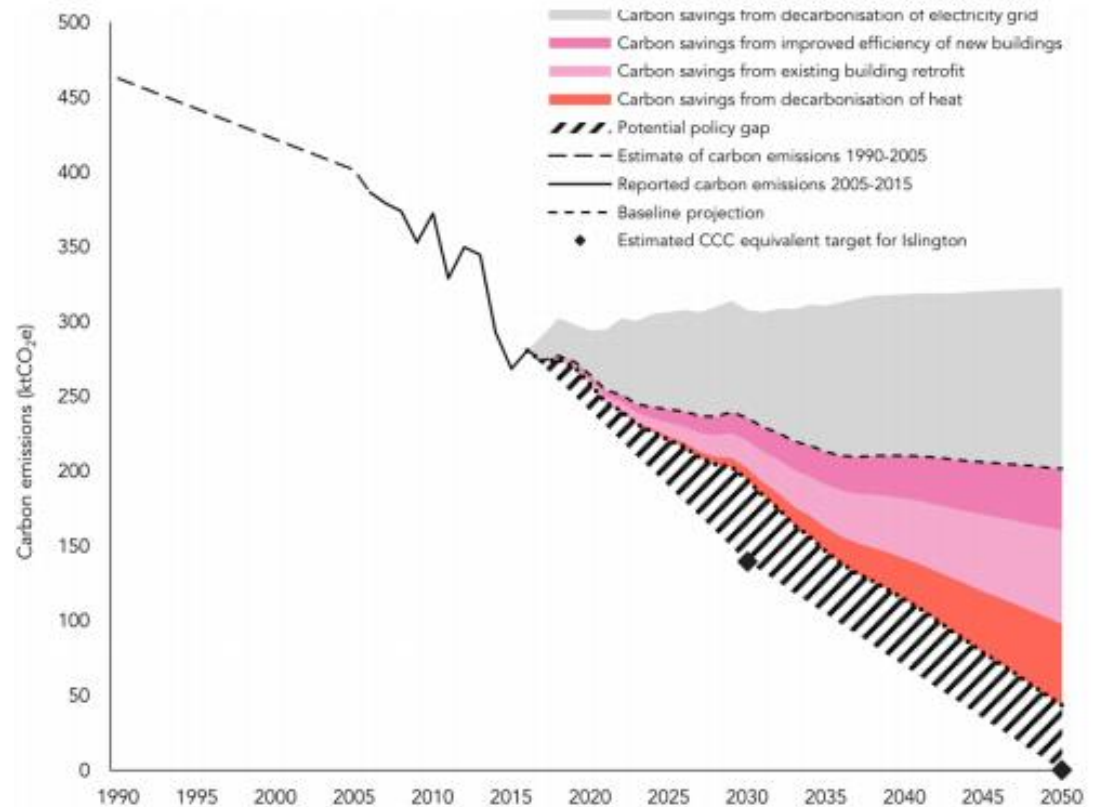


Figure 1.05 – Estimated carbon emissions from dwellings 1990-2050 in the London Borough of Islington showing the projected impact of potential policy

Source: Islington Energy Evidence Base, Etude, 2017

New Local Plan: Approach to net zero for new development



- All developments of 1 unit or more must be net zero carbon – achieving minimum on-site reductions through clear targets and providing offset contributions where zero carbon cannot be fully achieved on-site.
- Ensure development proposals reduce energy demand through energy efficiency, before reducing emissions through low-carbon energy sources and renewables (consistent with the London Plan energy hierarchy).
- Approach requires compliance with Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard (FEES) – this will ensure the design of more energy efficient residential buildings that minimise emissions by reducing energy demand as far as possible.
- Major development proposals should calculate and demonstrate actions to reduce whole life-cycle carbon emissions – this captures not only a building’s operational emissions from energy consumption, but also captures its embodied emissions (i.e. those associated with raw material extraction, manufacture and transport of building materials, and construction), emissions associated with maintenance and eventual material disposal.



New Local Plan: Energy infrastructure

- Selection of heat sources in line with policy will ensure developments prioritise low and zero carbon heating options to contribute towards decarbonisation of heat and reduction in emissions.
- Major developments required to have communal low temperature heating system.
- Heat sources for communal systems selected in accordance with heating hierarchy.
- Connection to heat networks prioritised

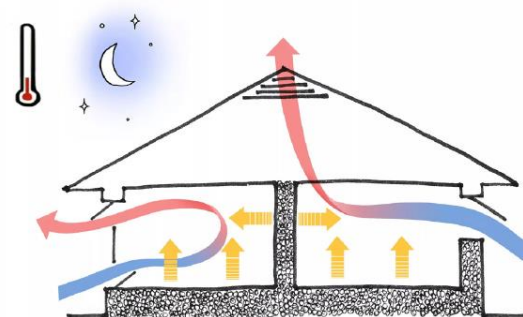


(Bunhill Heat Pump)

New Local Plan: other climate change policies

The zero carbon and energy policies are supported by other policies which are important in building climate resilience. This includes:

- Policies on thermal comfort – so new buildings are designed to be well insulated and ventilated, manage heat risk and have passive design measures (avoiding energy intensive measures such as air conditioning)
- Policies to protect and enhance green infrastructure and maximise biodiversity benefits.
- An integrated approach to water management (sustainable drainage, water efficiency, water quality and biodiversity considered holistically).
- A requirement for site specific flood risk assessments on certain developments.
- Continuing commitment to reducing car use and promoting walking and cycling



Source: Good Homes Alliance



Islington SUDs example.
Source: Edie

There is a commitment to delivering a Net Zero Carbon Supplementary Planning Document in the Local Plan and Zero Carbon Strategy. This will assist with the implementation of policy and provide practical guidance. The indicative timings for this are set out below:

- Preliminary work with partners, and commissioning additional technical evidence if considered necessary (spring 2021).
- Preliminary public consultation on the scoping paper and key issues, and drafting of the SPD (early 2022).
- Formal public consultation on the full draft (spring/summer (2022)).
- Revising the SPD draft in response to comments received during the consultation, and then formal adoption by the Executive (end of 2022).
- Will learn from ongoing work with Housing Associations to retrofit energy efficiency measures to street properties.

Planning reform

- Currently undergoing an unprecedented period of planning reform.
- Significant increase in permitted development rights mean planning permission is not required and planning policies cannot be applied.
- Further significant permitted development rights proposed.
- This will erode ability to achieve net zero and further increase costs of retrofit.
- Due to the deregulation of planning controls the Government is placing greater reliance on building control to secure energy efficiency measures.