



The Planning
Inspectorate

PINS NOTE 25/2013r1

To: All Inspectors (England)

Date of Issue: 12 August 2013

Last Updated: 09 July 2014 – paragraphs 2 to 5 amended following the publication of responses to the government's consultation on allowable solutions for zero-carbon homes.

Currency: review at 6 months after issue

Next Steps to Zero Carbon Homes

Action

1. In Budget 2013, the government reaffirmed its commitment to zero carbon homes and announced that there would be a consultation on next steps on zero carbon.

2. A [consultation](#) was launched on 6 August 2013 which set out and sought views and further evidence on the main principles, price cap and processes for the delivery of 'allowable solutions' - the carbon offsetting process and measures that house builders may support to achieve the zero carbon homes standard from 2016. A [development stage impact assessment](#) was also published alongside the consultation.

3. Inspectors should note that the [government response and summary of responses](#) to the consultation was published on 8 July 2014.

4. The document outlines a number of steps that will be taken to take forward the policy, which will include bringing forward legislation as announced in the [Queen's Speech](#), to enable the framework for allowable solutions.

5. The consultation applied to England only and closed on **15 October 2013**.

Background

6. The government is committed to implementing zero carbon homes from 2016. The zero carbon homes standard will require house builders to decrease all carbon emissions from energy arising from fixed heating and lighting, hot water and other fixed building services (e.g. ventilation) in new homes. (This does not include carbon emissions from appliances or 'white goods'.)

7. The government recognises that it will not always be cost-effective, affordable or technically feasible for house builders to reduce all carbon emissions through on-site measures, like fabric insulation, energy efficient services, and/or renewable energy generation (e.g. solar panels). Therefore the government proposes that house builders can achieve the zero carbon standard by mitigating the remaining emissions 'off-site', in effect a kind of carbon offsetting or abatement (which may involve payments by house builders to third parties who would provide the necessary carbon abatement.)

8. 'Allowable Solutions' is the overarching term for the carbon offsetting process and the various measures which house builders may support to achieve the zero carbon standard from 2016.

9. The government intends as far as possible to design 'Allowable Solutions' to ensure that they can be delivered through the legislative framework of the Building Act 1984 and related secondary legislation such as the Building Regulations 2010 (the 'Building Regulations'). This may require changes to the related secondary legislation in due course. Depending on design decisions changes to primary legislation may also be needed. Any such changes would be subject to the Parliamentary time being available.

10. Please contact XXXX if you have any queries on this Note.

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Acting Chief Planning Inspector