

Appendix 7: LHEES Rural Proofing Checklist

Consider all the questions below. Will your initiative encounter the challenges presented by rural circumstances? Some potential solutions are indicated to help you consider appropriate adjustments.

Name of policy/ strategy: Scottish Borders Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy

Date checklist completed: 2nd November 2023

Completed by: Housing Strategy, Policy, and Development

Steps to take.

1. Ensure you are clear about the objectives of the proposed policy, its intended impacts, or outcomes (including which areas, groups or organisations should benefit) and the means of delivery.
2. Run through each question in the checklist, identifying where the proposed policy is likely to have a different impact in rural areas.
3. Where there is uncertainty or a potentially different (worse) impact, this should be investigated further (and included in the overall assessment of the costs and benefits of the policy).
4. Where the impact in rural areas will be significantly different, explore policy options to produce the desired outcomes in rural areas or avoid/ reduce any undesirable impacts. This exercise may also highlight opportunities to maximise positive impacts in rural areas.
5. Feed the results of your appraisal, including solutions, into the decision-making process and ensure a record is kept, to be included in your department's annual proofing report.

RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
1. Will LHEES have a negative effect on the availability or delivery of services for people living in rural areas?		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts: It is envisaged the LHEES will have a positive effect. There will be a wide range of positive outcomes through the implementation of the LHEES for rural communities, including improvements in health, fuel poverty levels, energy efficiency across all tenures and buildings and helping towards housing costs (helping with rising energy costs). There will be opportunities in the LHEES to help support rural areas.</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p>

			The core “considerations” within LHEES specifically target “off gas” areas which are typically the more remote or rural areas within the region. Ensure identified delivery areas and considerations are also aligned with rural needs and focus.
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
2. Will access to the service be restricted for people living in rural areas? (If yes, how will the service be made available to people living in rural areas?)			Not applicable.
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
3. Will the cost of delivery be higher in rural areas (where customers are more widely dispersed, or it is hard to be cost-effective)? (If yes, how will this extra cost be met or lessened)?	✓		<p>Summary of likely impacts: Yes, in respect to delivery of energy efficiency measures for housing there are increased building and management costs due to housing being located near to rural populations.</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made: Projects within the LHEES will allow for higher unit delivery costs when calculating costs or when specifying cost-efficiency criteria and encourage joint provision to reduce costs.</p> <p>Schemes such as EES:ABS specifically targeting rural or remote areas can often benefit from a remote rural uplift.</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
4. Will the LHEES have a negative effect on the availability of affordable housing in rural areas?		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts: The LHEES will have a positive outcome on affordable housing in rural areas as the ambition applies to all buildings in the Scottish Borders.</p> <p>With all buildings in scope, domestic and non-domestic, opportunity to improve energy efficiency and decarbonise heat in both domestic and buildings and communal buildings in rural communities.</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT

5. Will the LHEES be delivered by the private sector, or through a public-private partnership or local institution that may limit provision in rural areas?			<p>Summary of likely impacts: The LHEES will be delivered through Scottish Borders Councils and partners. The ambition of LHEES applies to all buildings in the Scottish Borders area thus the LHEES is a shared vision of how all building owners can retrofit their properties. The private sector will have a significant role in meeting the ambitions, vision and actions of LHEES.</p>
			<p>Summary of adjustments made: Some aspects of the LHEES may have to be delivered through public/private partnerships – this will not limit impact in rural areas. SBC will look to work with social housing or other developers to align any proposed works to benefit from these happening in parallel. Represent a bigger project for utilities or wider support.</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
6. Does the LHEES rely on infrastructure for delivery (e.g., mobile phone coverage, broadband ICT, main roads, utilities) that may be limited in rural areas?	✓		<p>Summary of likely impacts: Decarbonising heat in buildings and improving their energy efficiency across the Scottish Borders area could be impacted as a result of infrastructure restraints which can affect development opportunities and timings of delivery.</p>
			<p>Summary of adjustments made: Utility companies and other infrastructure companies have been consulted throughout the development of the LHEES and will continue to be involved to ensure the delivery of LHEES. Infrastructure constraints will be considered in the Delivery Plan and Action Plan. SBC will look to work with social housing or other developers to align any proposed works to benefit from these happening in parallel. Represent a bigger project for utilities or wider support.</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
7. Will the LHEES have a negative impact on rural businesses, or land-based businesses, (including the self-employed) and therefore, on rural economies and environments?		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts: It is likely that the LHEES would have a positive impact as it helps sustain rural communities and energy efficiency priorities will have positive environmental impacts.</p>
			<p>Through LHEES, there will be opportunities to rural business and self-employed business.</p>
			<p>Summary of adjustments made: Through work in the LHEES, local business's will be supported and provided with advice and training where possible (looking at the local supply chain and providing opportunities for businesses to retrain for example).</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT

<p>8. Will the policy have a negative impact on employment in rural areas?</p>			<p>Summary of likely impacts: LHEES should have a positive impact on employment in rural areas, creating rural jobs and opportunities for rural businesses. The LHEES will aim to remove poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty.</p> <p>✓ By improving the energy efficiency of all buildings more people will be able to afford to live in rural areas – in terms of housing costs.</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
<p>9. Will the LHEES have a negative impact on people who are disadvantaged in rural areas? (If the policy is targeted at addressing disadvantage, how will it target rural disadvantage, which is not usually concentrated in neighbourhoods?)</p>			<p>Summary of likely impacts: The vision for the LHEES is <i>‘Increase the energy efficiency of our homes and buildings, offer affordable warmth via zero emission heat, and deliver this as a just transition which tackles fuel poverty and builds community wealth’</i>. The priorities that will help to achieve this vision are:</p> <p>Cost of heating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackle poor energy efficiency as a driver of fuel poverty by focusing on areas with high fuel poverty, leveraging EES:ABS and social landlord commitments and regulations. • Drive energy efficiency to make warmth affordable for all. <p>✓ Heat Decarbonisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the electrification of heat and renewable installation across buildings in the region. • Support the development of zero emission heat networks, communal heating & renewables. • Target “low-regrets” heating opportunities in off-gas areas. <p>Just Transition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the local economy and improve the regional skills, employment and supply chain. • Utilise procurement, delivery models, planning, regulation, and other powers to make this transition work for the people. <p>These priorities are represented significantly by rural communities and supporting those identified as being disadvantaged through residing in a rural area. Data analysis will identify</p>

			<p>delivery areas, often this will prioritise rural areas as they can be impacted more by energy inefficient buildings and fuel poverty</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made: The LHEES covers all buildings in the Scottish Borders. The Delivery Plan, which is developed in partnership with key stakeholders will set out the actions, initiatives, and programmes to support the delivery of this strategy, including rural areas.</p>
RURAL ISSUE	YES	NO	POTENTIAL IMPACT/ ADJUSTMENT
10. Does the LHEES assume 'one size fits all', and fail to take into account the different size and specific circumstances of smaller rural schools and other isolated rural service facilities?		✓	<p>Summary of likely impacts: The LHEES covers all buildings in the Scottish Borders, taking into account the different challenges within rural areas. There will not be one approach to covering all buildings in the Scottish Borders and a wide range of options and opportunities will be considered.</p> <p>The LHEES aligns with other plans and policies.</p> <p>Summary of adjustments made:</p>