The Carbon Reduction Plan is a pass/fail question

Under PPN 006, a compliant, published Carbon Reduction Plan is a condition of bidding for central government contracts worth more than £5 million a year. Evaluators check it before anyone reads your delivery record. This is the required structure, with the four places bids fall short on page two.

First, the £5 million test is averaged

The threshold is the contract's value **averaged over its life, including VAT**, not the year-one invoice. The government's own example: a four-year contract worth £21 million in total is **in scope**, even if year one alone comes in under £5 million. Framework call-offs and multi-year service contracts cross the line faster than many mid-sized bidders expect. It applies to relevant procurements advertised on or after 24 February 2025.

£21m over four years = £5.25m a year: in scope · yearly split illustrative

01 Commitment & baseline

The plan opens with the commitment and the numbers behind it.

- [ ] **Commit to net zero by 2050 or earlier** for your UK operations, stated plainly up front.
- [ ] **Report current emissions for Scope 1 and 2** in CO_2e, covering the seven Kyoto Protocol gases.
- [ ] **State a baseline year** and change it only with good reason, stated, so progress against it means something year on year.
- [ ] **Show the reporting year alongside the baseline.** GOOD PRACTICE An evaluator should see the trend in one glance.

02 The five required Scope 3 categories

All five are required. This is where plans are thinnest.

- [ ] **Business travel.** Flights, rail, hire cars and grey-fleet mileage on company business.
- [ ] **Employee commuting.** How your people get to work, including home-working if you count it.
- [ ] **Upstream transportation and distribution.** Goods and materials moving to you.
- [ ] **Downstream transportation and distribution.** Your product or service moving to customers.
- [ ] **Waste generated in operations.** Streams and disposal routes, with honest estimates where actuals are missing.

03 Environmental management measures

Describe what you run now and what you will apply in delivering this contract. Generic lines fail.

- [ ] **Name the systems and schemes you operate**, with certification where you hold it, rather than describing intentions.
- [ ] **Tie measures to the contract.** Which sites, which fleet, which processes will these measures apply to when performing the work?
- [ ] **Be specific enough to check.** "We encourage recycling" is not a measure. Name the change, the location and the date it took effect.
- [ ] **Quantify where you can.** A measure with a number attached reads as management; one without reads as marketing.

04 Publication & sign-off

Compliance is checked in minutes. These are the minutes.

- [ ] **Signed off and dated by a director**, and the plan itself states that board (or equivalent) approval has been given.
- [ ] **Published on your UK website** and clearly signposted, not buried in a tender portal or a PDF archive.
- [ ] **Updated within six months of your financial year-end**, and at least annually. Put the refresh in the calendar the day you publish.
- [ ] **Keep the evidence behind every figure.** GOOD PRACTICE If a buyer or auditor asks, the trail from number to source should be short.

Where bids fall short

The four gaps evaluators flag first, and the cheapest to fix.

1. **The plan is stale.** A CRP dated two years ago fails the annual update requirement before anyone reads it.
2. **Scope 3 is missing or partial.** Scope 1 and 2 from energy bills is the easy half. Gaps in the five categories are visible.
3. **It is not really published.** A document in a tender portal but not on your website misses an explicit requirement.
4. **The measures are generic.** Name the systems, the sites and the changes, or expect the evaluator to discount them.

Sources

PPN 006 policy note
gov.uk · Taking account of Carbon Reduction Plans in the procurement of major government contracts

PPN 006 technical standard
gov.uk · Technical standard for the completion of Carbon Reduction Plans

PPN 006 FAQ
gov.uk · Frequently asked questions, including the averaged contract-value example

All three documents live on gov.uk: search "PPN 006". Positions correct as at July 2026. PPN 006 succeeded PPN 06/21 under the Procurement Act 2023 and applies to relevant procurements advertised on or after 24 February 2025.

The five required Scope 3 categories are the slow part. Dashe captures travel, commuting, transport and waste from the systems you already run, so the annual CRP refresh becomes an export, not a scramble.

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