

PAS 2080 and project decisions

Put carbon evidence into decisions while design and procurement choices are still open.

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Status: Voluntary specification; a client, contract or framework may require its use or verification.

Audience: Asset owners, infrastructure and building contractors, designers and suppliers.

Executive summary

PAS 2080:2023 is the British Standards Institution's Publicly Available Specification for managing carbon in buildings and infrastructure. It helps owners, designers, contractors and suppliers put carbon evidence into decisions throughout an asset's life. Its value comes from the choices it changes, including whether new construction is needed. Check the client's requirements and your role, then assign responsibility for an upcoming decision. Applying PAS 2080, calculating whole-life carbon and obtaining independent verification are distinct activities. ^{[1][2]}

Start here. Choose one upcoming project decision, name its owner and agree what carbon evidence they need before approval.

In plain terms. Carbon management gives people responsibility for reducing emissions through design, procurement, construction and operation. PAS 2080 connects the organisations making those decisions across new work and existing assets. A calculation supplies evidence; the management process ensures someone uses it. ^{[1][2]}

Avoid, switch, improve

Avoid unnecessary construction or demand where the required service can be met through existing assets. Switch to an alternative solution or approach. Improve the efficiency and performance of the chosen solution. Test practicable options against safety, cost, programme and performance as well as carbon. ^[2]

Who influences the decision

Role	Influence and evidence needed
Owner and operator	Service need, asset life and operating requirements before the brief closes.
Designer	Retention, layout and technical options before design approval.
Contractor	Construction methods, quantities and logistics before procurement.
Supplier	Product and production evidence before substitution or purchase.

Set and agree the baseline

A baseline is the defined reference against which change is measured. Agree its boundary, assumptions and calculation method with the technical team. Set reduction objectives and keep an approved change record. An unexplained change of baseline cannot demonstrate an achieved reduction. ^[2]

Verification checks whether PAS 2080 requirements are met within a stated scope. Record the organisation, activities, boundaries and period covered. A supplier's verification does not automatically cover the project or mean zero emissions. ^{[1][3]}

Recommended actions

A practical way to start, with suggested owners and timing:

- 1. Confirm the requirement.** Keep the client brief, required edition, value-chain role and any verification requirement. *Project sponsor, at appointment.*
- 2. Map decisions and roles.** Add named evidence owners, approvers and deadlines to the existing project process. *Project manager, before design gateways.*
- 3. Agree the baseline.** Keep the assessment brief, methods, assumptions, reduction objectives and change-control rules. *Technical lead, before option comparison.*
- 4. Try it on a live decision.** Keep the options, safety, cost, programme, performance, carbon method, chosen option and approval. *Design and commercial leads, next live decision.*
- 5. Check delivery and handover.** Check delivered evidence against the plan; record changes, lessons and handover responsibilities. *Project manager, at gateways and handover.*

Example in practice

Illustrative example: before replacing a structure, the owner and designer compare repair, partial retention and replacement. The decision record brings together carbon estimates, safety, service life, cost and programme. The approver records the choice and remaining uncertainty.

Common mistakes and what to do instead

- Carbon assessed after choices close: request evidence before design and procurement approval.
- One specialist owns every decision: assign responsibilities to the people who control the work.
- Implementation presented as certification: state the actual service and verification scope.

How Reinventives can help

Our project and ongoing support can begin with a role map and a record for one live decision. We organise information, review points and responsibilities around your delivery process. Engineering, lifecycle assessment and independent PAS 2080 verification need the appropriate specialist appointments.

Book a construction reporting conversation: reinventives.co.uk/construction/book

Related briefing notes: [BN005 Embodied carbon](#) | [BN006 EPDs](#) | [BN011 Reliable carbon data](#)

Sources and review dates

[1] BSI, PAS 2080:2023 Carbon management in buildings and infrastructure, publisher overview.

[2] ICE / PAS 2080 technical author team, Guidance Document for PAS 2080, April 2023.

[3] BSI, How to embed carbon management excellence throughout your value chain, 2024.

Source scope: BSI publisher guidance and ICE implementation guidance were reviewed; the full PAS specification was not accessed.

Correct as of and sources accessed 9 September 2026 | Next review 9 March 2027

Review on a specification amendment, new client requirement, major design change or change in verification scope.

This briefing is general information, not legal, procurement, engineering or assurance advice. Check requirements for the specific organisation, project and contract.