

## Appendix 1

### National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, March 27 2012) Summary

#### General points

- Establishes a more balanced concept of sustainable development. Not only about economic growth but balanced with seeking improvements to social and natural environments (see para.7-9, page 3 of NPPF)
- A presumption in favour of sustainable development should be the basis for every plan and planning decision but clarifies where development should be restricted.

#### Plan-making:

- Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.
- Local plans should meet objectively assessed needs unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the framework as a whole.
- Planning should involve local people in plan-making and be less about 'scrutiny' and more about 'collective enterprise' with local people and communities.
- Plans should be based on a 'proportionate evidence base' – but requirements are comprehensive and fairly specific.
- Plans should be deliverable and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities.
- Duty to Cooperate on cross boundary issues (eg. meeting housing requirements across housing market areas) now part of 'soundness' tests at Examination.

#### Decision-making:

- NPPF does not change statutory status of development plan as starting point for decision making.
- Development/proposals should be approved if in accordance with the development plan.
- Where a plan is absent, silent or out of date, permission should be granted unless adverse impacts of doing so outweigh the benefits, when assessed against policies in the framework as a whole.
- For 12 months, full weight can be given to policies in local plans adopted since 2004. After that, due weight will depend upon degree of consistency with NPPF.
- Emerging plans will also have weight according to stage of preparation – the more advanced the plan , the greater the weight.
- Guidance emphasises the important role of pre-application engagement to resolve issues and improve development outcomes.
- Acknowledges that right information is crucial to good decision taking

## Housing

- Local authorities should plan to meet in full their assessed needs for market and affordable housing, so far as is consistent with policies set out in the framework.
- They must identify, and update annually, a five year supply of specific deliverable sites to provide 5 years worth of housing against requirements with an additional buffer of 5%. Where there is persistent under-delivery, then buffer should be 20%.
- Identify sites or broad locations for growth, for years 6-10 and, where possible for years 11-15.
- Set out a Housing Implementation Strategy to manage housing delivery over plan period.
- Local Authorities should set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances.
- Plan for a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends, market trends and the housing needs of different community groups.
- Affordable housing policies should be sufficiently flexible to take account of changing market conditions over time.
- Encourages the effective use of previously developed land (brownfield sites) but is not a 'brownfield first' policy.
- Allow changes of use from B uses to residential if there is a need in area and provided no strong economic reasons why any such development would be inappropriate.

## Economy

- LPA should be pro-active in driving forward sustainable economic development and set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area.
- Set criteria or identify strategic sites to meet anticipated needs over plan period
- Avoid long term protection of employment sites where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purposes.
- Promote mixed use development
- Strengthens the 'town centre first' policy and now includes offices as a town centre use
- LPAs to allocate sites to meet retail, leisure, office, commercial, cultural and community needs in town centres.
- Identify priority areas for economic regeneration

## Transport

- Strong focus on sustainable transport.
- Patterns of development should support and facilitate the use of sustainable modes of transport.
- Work with neighbouring authorities to ensure sustainable travel and transport infrastructure (ties in with Duty to Co-operate approach)

- Promote mixed use development on large scale residential sites to encourage day-to-day activities on the one site by providing key facilities such as schools, employment and local shops.
- Plans should promote the sustainable movement of goods and people. Strong emphasis on infrastructure e.g. electric vehicle charging points
- Defines the factors that will need to be taken into account when setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development.

### **Countryside, Open Space and Natural Environment**

- Recognises the 'intrinsic character and beauty' of the countryside but no longer requires the 'protection of the countryside for all'.
- Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land should not be built on unless surplus to requirements; to be replaced or for alternative recreational provision where need outweighs the loss.
- Plans should set out a strategic approach for the creation, protection and enhancement of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure.
- Plan for bio-diversity at a landscape-scale across local authority boundaries and map local ecological networks reflecting a hierarchy of designations and areas for habitat creation/ restoration.
- Introduces Local Green Space and Nature Improvement Area designations.

### **Heritage and design**

- A better balance between local context and innovation in design
- Prominence given to heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource
- Acknowledges the contribution that design makes to sustainable communities
- Emphasis on finding viable new uses for vacant or neglected heritage assets
- Where proposals would lead to some harm to a heritage asset, then harm to be weighed against public benefits of the proposal, including securing its optimum viable use.

### **Sustainability**

- Supports the move towards a low carbon future
- Plans to identify development areas or sites which can deliver enhanced levels of renewables and energy infrastructure
- Adopt nationally described standards for buildings sustainability.
- Food production is recognised as one of the multiple benefits of mixed use development.
- Evidence should be gathered which assesses the needs of the food production industry and planning should attempt to address any barriers to investment.

### **Travellers (separate new National Policy Guidance)**

- LPAs to assess the accommodation needs for both permanent and transit site provision over the lifespan of the plan.

- Requirement to identify a five year supply of sites to meet identified needs and also to identify sites to meet needs over the first 10 years of the plan.