

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Revised National Planning Policy Framework – December 2023

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- NPPF was revised on 19th December 2023 with a number of amendments as summarised below. It is important that Planning Committee members are aware of the changes, and the implications in terms of decision making.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The NPPF is the backbone of the planning system – it sets the Framework within which local authorities, the planning inspectorate and applicants to the system must operate. In summary, the new NPPF will: facilitate flexibility for local authorities in relation to local housing need; clarify a local lock on any changes to Green Belt boundaries; safeguard local plans from densities that would be wholly out of character; free local authorities with up-to-date local plans from annual updates to their five-year housing land supply; limit the practice of housing need being exported to neighbouring authorities without mutual agreement; bolster protections from speculative development for neighbourhoods that develop their own plans; support self-build, custom-build and community-led housing; and cement the role of beauty and placemaking in the planning system.

Implications for Development Management

Planning Committee Decision Making

Planning Committee reports published in January 2024 will reflect the new NPPF with updated paragraph numbers and consideration for updated requirements. Members should note the new NPPF and consider this when making decisions at Planning Committee. Particularly when attaching conditions or reasons for refusal by ensuring due consideration is given to updated requirements and reference is made to the updated paragraph numbers when required. Key updates to the NPPF for Development Management purposes place emphasis on beauty, placemaking and preservation of local character.

Delegated Decision Making

Changes to delegated planning reports and decisions have been dealt with to ensure minimal delays to applications for members of the public where possible.

Planning Appeals

The Planning Inspectorate have issued a statement advising appellants that they are now able to submit additional representations where it is considered that the updated NPPF has implications. Officers have also been requested to do the same in order to defend the Council's position on any pending planning appeals.

Implications for North Lincolnshire Local Plan

Housing Supply, Need, Delivery & Buffers

The requirement for Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to maintain a rolling 5-year housing land supply has been removed, but crucially not in all circumstances.

In order to benefit from the change, an LPA must:

- Have an adopted plan that is less than five years old;
- Have had that adopted plan examined by PINS; and
- Have identified in that local plan at least a 5-year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time the examination concluded.

In short, to be exempt from the requirement to annually demonstrate a 5-year land supply, a plan must be examined and adopted every 5 years and have identified at least a 5-year supply of land at the time its examination concluded.

Importantly for North Lincolnshire there is now only a 4 year housing land supply target for LPAs with a local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19 stages including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need.

The Housing Delivery Test is remaining, unaltered, and whilst some changes are being made to the 'buffer' requirements they are not going completely. Instead, the 5% and 10% buffers have been removed, with the 20% buffer being left in place. This 20% buffer is the penalty applied to LPAs who have failed to meet the Housing Delivery Test. Its application is, however being narrowed to those Councils that have underdelivered against the Housing Delivery Test and do not have a plan in place that has identified at least a 5-year supply of land at the time its examination concluded.

The proposed changes to the tests of soundness for local plans have been abandoned for now - so 'justified' is to remain. The proposed consultation wording relating to the use of the standard method has, however, been adopted in full.

It now reads as follows:

"To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. The outcome of the standard method is an advisory starting-point for establishing a housing requirement for the area (see paragraph 67 below). There may be exceptional circumstances, including relating to the particular demographic characteristics of an area which justify an alternative approach to assessing housing need; in which case the alternative approach

should also reflect current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.”

We do also have additional wording in relation to the calculation of need

Paragraph 63 of the Framework now reads:

“Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing; families with children; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers²⁸; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes²⁹.”

The Urban Uplift element of the standard method remains. This is more relevant to large cities and urban centres.

The document sets out the government’s aim to prioritise brownfield and higher-density development in inner-city areas and also ensures greater promotion of small sites for community-led development for housing and self-build, custom build housing and upward extensions.

Green Belt

Revisions have been proposed in relation to Green Belt, however these are not relevant for North Lincolnshire as we have no formal Green Belt designation. The amended wording on Green Belt protection has softened considerably since the consultation draft was published.

Beauty

The public consultation made reference to ‘beauty’ and that it should be included throughout the NPPF. DLUHC has decided to implement this element and include the word beauty throughout the document.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Planning Committee members now need to be aware of the revised NPPF in terms of decision making.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 N/A

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

5.1 N/A

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

6.1 N/A

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

7.1 N/A

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

8.1 N/A

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 That the Planning Committee note the revised amendments made by the NPPF on 19th December 2023.

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