Appendix C – National Planning Policies

National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework, revised on 20th July 2021 sets the direction for development in England and contains planning policies which inform both plan-making and decision-making at local authority level.

The following policy / guidance documents prepared at the national level are of relevance to the determination of the application.

Chapter 2: Achieving sustainable development

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF emphasises the role of the planning system in achieving sustainable development. The three overarching objectives for the planning system to achieve include:

- *"an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time… and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*
- *a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces …; and*
- *an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment;…"*

Within the NPPF paragraph 11 highlights that plans and decisions should apply *'a presumption in favour of sustainable development.* For plan-making this means that *"plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area"* whereas, crucially, for decision-taking, this means '*approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay*'.

Chapter 5: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

Paragraph 62 of the NPPF states: *"the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes)."*

Paragraph 65 of the NPPF states, "*where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership, unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. Exemptions to this 10% requirement should also be made where the site or proposed development:*

a) provides solely for Build to Rent homes;
b) provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose-built accommodation for the elderly or students);
c) is proposed to be developed by people who wish to build or commission their own homes; or
d) is exclusively for affordable housing, an entry-level exception site or a rural exception site"

Paragraph 78 of the NPPF sets out, "In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites

that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this"

Paragraph 79 emphasises, "To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby"

Chapter 8: Promoting healthy and safe communities

Paragraph 92 states that "*planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:*

a) *promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;*

b) *are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example, through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and*

c) *enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example, through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling."*

Paragraph 100 of the NPPF states, "planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks including National Trails"

Chapter 9: Promoting sustainable transport

Paragraph 104 states that: "*Transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that:*

a) the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed;

b) opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated;

c) opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued;

d) the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and taken into account – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and

e) patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes, and contribute to making high quality places."

Chapter 11: Making effective use of land

Paragraph 199 states that "*planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions*."

Chapter 12: Achieving well-designed places

Paragraph 126 of the NPPF notes that "*the creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities. Being clear about design expectations, and how these will be tested, is essential for achieving this. So too is effective engagement between applicants, communities, local planning authorities and other interests throughout the process*".

Paragraph 130 of the NPPF declares that *"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:*

- *will function well and add to the overall quality of the area…;*
- *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting…;*
- *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being… and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience."*

Chapter 14: Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

Paragraph 154 states *"New development should be planned for in ways that:*

a) avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure; and

b) can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through its location, orientation and design. Any local requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards"

Paragraph 157 states *"In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should expect new development to:*
a) comply with any development plan policies on local requirements for decentralised energy supply unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, that this is not feasible or viable; and

b) take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption"

Paragraph 167 states: *"When determining any planning applications, local planning authorities should ensure that flood risk is not increased elsewhere. Where appropriate, applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment. Development should only be allowed in areas at risk of flooding where, in the light of this assessment (and the sequential and exception tests, as applicable) it can be demonstrated that:*

a) within the site, the most vulnerable development is located in areas of lowest flood risk, unless there are overriding reasons to prefer a different location;

b) the development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient such that, in the event of a flood, it could be quickly brought back into use without significant refurbishment;

c) it incorporates sustainable drainage systems, unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate;

d) any residual risk can be safely managed; and

e) safe access and escape routes are included where appropriate, as part of an agreed emergency plan"

Paragraph 169 states: *"major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate. The systems used should:*

a) take account of advice from the lead local flood authority;

b) have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards;

c) have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetime of the development; and

d) where possible, provide multifunctional benefits"

Chapter 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Paragraph 174 asserts: "Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

a) *protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
b) *recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;*
c) *maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
d) *minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;*

e) *preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*

f) *remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate"*

Paragraph 180 states: "*When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:*

a) if significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;

b) development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special scientific interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;

c) development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and

d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.

Paragraph 183 states: *"Planning policies and decisions should ensure that:*

a) a site is suitable for its proposed use taking account of ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination. This includes risks arising from natural hazards or former activities such as mining, and any proposals for mitigation including land remediation (as well as potential impacts on the natural environment arising from that remediation);

b) after remediation, as a minimum, land should not be capable of being determined as contaminated land under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990; and

c) adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is available to inform these assessments"

Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Paragraph 197 states: *"In determining applications, local planning authorities should*

take account of:

a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;

b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and

c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."