

**Land to the Rear of 96 to 106
High Street, Colney Heath**

**Addendum to Planning Proof of Evidence
Consultation on NPPF Reforms / WMS**

Steven Kosky

September 2024

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Client
Tarmac

Our reference
TARC3006

September 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 My name is Steven Kosky and I appear at this Inquiry on behalf of the Appellant, Tarmac Ltd, to provide planning evidence in relation to the assessment of the overall planning balance for this Appeal. My relevant qualifications and experience are as set out in my main Planning Proof of Evidence.
- 1.2 Pursuant to the resumption of the deferred Inquiry on 29th October 2024, the new Government has, in the interim, launched a consultation on proposed significant reforms to the NPPF, which I consider to be highly material to the Appellant's planning case.
- 1.3 The Appellant understands from PINs that the Inspector has invited consideration as to whether the proposed NPPF reforms and/or the written Ministerial Statement by the Deputy PM have any relevance to the Appeal case, as originally submitted. After due consideration, I conclude that the proposed NPPF reforms and the Ministerial Statement do have a significant bearing on the overall planning balance in this case, with the effect of further strengthening the case in favour of the grant of planning permission.
- 1.4 The following Addendum to my Planning Proof responds to the Inspector's questions on the consultation on these proposed reforms and the Deputy PM and Secretary of State's Ministerial Statement (Building the Homes we Need), both of which were published on 30th July 2024. This Addendum also references the related letter issued by Matthew Pennycook MP to all 'Housing Industry Stakeholders' in parallel with the launch of the NPPF consultation on 30th July.
- 1.5 This Addendum considers the inter-related requirements of Paragraphs 152 and 155 of the consultation draft NPPF and assesses the overall compliance of the Appeal proposals with these emerging new policy tests (including an uplift in affordable housing). This Addendum also assesses whether the Appeal Site meets the definition of 'grey belt', whether the scheme meets the other stipulations of Paragraphs 142 and 155, and therefore whether the Appeal scheme would no longer represent an "*inappropriate development*" in the green belt. The consequence of that change in policy terms would be that the Appeal scheme no longer requires justification with reference to "*very special circumstances*" under what is now Paragraph 153 of the NPPF, and instead the "*tilted balance*" in favour of granting permission is triggered under paragraph 11(d)(ii).
- 1.6 For the avoidance of doubt, my primary planning case and assessment of the planning balance, as originally submitted, continues to remain relevant in the context that, at the time of writing, the proposed changes to the NPPF are yet to be adopted. However, the direction of travel is clear, given the associated Ministerial Statements which accompany the NPPF consultation. This Addendum is therefore intended to assist the Inspector in the event that the changes proposed by the new NPPF, including the changes to the assessment of Green Belt land and the material uplift in the annual housing requirement for St Albans are implemented by the time the Inspector determines this Appeal.

2. Relevance and Implications of Proposed Changes to the NPPF

New 2024 NPPF Consultation

- 2.1 It is common ground amongst the parties that the National Planning Policy Framework, 2023 (the “**2023 NPPF**”) is a material consideration in the determination of this Appeal, to which significant weight should be given. Also of material significance is that the Government intends to replace the existing 2023 NPPF as a matter of urgency. On 30th July 2024, the Government launched a public consultation on proposed reforms to the 2023 NPPF together with detailed wider changes to the planning system, which include new flexibilities for Councils and Housing Associations ([Appendix 1](#)).
- 2.2 In recognition of the urgency of these reforms, the Government will publish a response to the current consultation and a revised NPPF will be issued in autumn 2024 (the “**2024 NPPF**”), so that the proposed national policy changes can take effect as soon as possible. This was confirmed in a letter, by Matthew Pennycook MP, issued to all ‘Housing Industry Stakeholders’ in parallel with the launch of the NPPF consultation ([Appendix 2](#)).
- 2.3 The letter by Matthew Pennycook MP, identifies that the new 2024 NPPF is mainly intended to respond to industry concerns around the existing planning system. The Statement identifies these industry concerns mainly as:

‘that instead of supporting sustainable growth, the planning system presents a barrier to high-quality development, failing to tackle a housing crisis which is crippling the aspirations of young people and leaves some of the most vulnerable without access to a safe and secure home’.

- 2.4 Accordingly, one of the principal remedies proposed by the consultation is to reverse the changes made by the 2023 NPPF which ‘loosened the requirement for local authorities to plan for and meet their housing needs.’ In addition, the overall annual national housebuilding target has been raised from the previous target of 300,000 new homes, to approximately 370,000 net new homes per annum.

The St Albans Draft Local Plan (DLP)

- 2.5 At the local level, this is highly significant, as St Albans are in the process of bringing forward a new emerging Local Plan based on a current annual housing requirement of 885 dwellings per annum (dpa). The proposed new local method of calculation however proposes to substantially raise this annual housing requirement figure in St Albans to **1,544 dpa**, which is an increase of nearly **75%** over that of existing annual housing needs.

- 2.6 My Proof identifies that the 1994 Local Plan period expired in 2001 and there has since been an absence of any plan-led strategy to meet the housing needs of the District.
- 2.7 As such, the Council still relies upon the oldest operative Local Plan in the Country (based on County Structure Plan housing requirements which date from 1986). The Council is therefore attempting to bring forward another emerging Local Plan (the third attempt) and has submitted evidence to this Inquiry that the identified major shortfalls in housing land supply may potentially be remedied upon the adoption of this new Plan. However, the proposed changes in the method of calculation of the annual housing requirement has major implications for the Council, both in terms of its five-year housing land supply calculation and its ability to progress the current emerging Local Plan.
- 2.8 In this regard, Draft Paragraph 142 of the consultation NPPF, inter alia, states:

'Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of plans. Exceptional circumstances include, but are not limited to, instances where an authority cannot meet its identified need for housing, commercial or other development through other means. In these circumstances authorities should review Green Belt boundaries and propose alterations to meet these needs in full, unless the review provides clear evidence that such alterations would fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole' (my underlining).

Anticipated Timelines and Transitional Provisions for the DLP

- 2.9 At the time of writing, the DLP is planned to undergo a final (Regulation 19) consultation prior to the intended submission of the DLP to the Secretary of State in December 2024. In this regard, a meeting of the Planning Policy and Climate (PP&C) Committee will take place on 23rd September 2024, wherein Members will be asked to agree the contents of the DLP for public consultation. This consultation is intended to thereafter run from 26th September to 8th November 2024 and will specifically seek representations on the legal compliance and soundness of the DLP. Depending on what is determined at the meeting on 23rd September 2024, the Appellant requests the opportunity to make further representations, if necessary.
- 2.10 There are several further stages of consideration between the publication of the DLP and the potential adoption of the new Local Plan. These include the consideration of the DLP by Full Council on the 16th of October 2024 and the Regulation 22 submission process, which will require further review by the PP&C Committee on the 28th of November 2024 to consider and agree to the formal submission of the DLP to the Secretary of State.
- 2.11 The PP&C Committee must however also consider the Regulation 19 responses at the same meeting to be held on the 28th of November 2024, as the Regulation 19 consultation will have only recently ended (8th November 2024). Paragraph 3.15 of the

Officer's Report to the PP&C Committee confirms that at the PP&C meeting on the 28th of November 2024, Members will need to consider the Regulation 19 responses, whilst also considering whether to formally submit the DLP at the same time, notwithstanding the lack of any opportunity to modify the DLP prior to submission to the Secretary of State.

- 2.12 This casts considerable doubt on the soundness of the DLP and whether it is appropriate to contemplate the imminent submission of a DLP which will clearly not be informed by the Regulation 19 consultation which immediately precedes it.
- 2.13 The Officer Report clarifies that the Council would Submit the Local Plan as unamended after the 28th of November 2024, *'unless the PP&C Committee considers that there is some overwhelming 'showstopper' that requires the content of the Local Plan to be further considered by full Council at a later meeting'*. This statement strongly suggests that the outcome of the forthcoming Regulation 19 consultation has effectively been prejudged and is not actually intended to influence the submission of the DLP unless there are exceptional circumstances, which require further consideration by full Council.
- 2.14 The reason for this haste to submit the DLP, partly stems from the fact that the Council is at considerable risk of Local Plan intervention, given the lack of progress in bringing forward a replacement Local Plan over many decades. In this regard, the Committee is aware, that the (now former) Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government wrote to the Council on the 23rd of March 2018 in this regard and further letters in the same vein have been received, the most recent being on the 19th of December 2023.
- 2.15 In addition, as set out in the Deputy Prime Minister's letter of 30th July 2024 to all local authority Leaders and Chief Executives in England, Angela Rayner stated: *'I will not hesitate to use my powers of intervention should it be necessary to drive progress'* (see below and [Appendix 3](#)). It is also notable in this regard that St Albans is already partially in special measures, in relation to the determination of minor planning applications, which took effect from April 2024.
- 2.16 However, the primary rationale for the Council in advancing the latest DLP as soon as possible is to avoid the new method of housing need calculation, proposed as part of the NPPF consultation, which clearly requires a significant step change in the number of annual number of new homes to be provided by the Council. This in turn, logically requires a comprehensive new review of the Green Belt in order to meet these needs in full, unless there is clear evidence that so doing would *'fundamentally undermine'* the function of the Green Belt across this area as a whole (importantly, the Council does not have any such evidence to this effect).
- 2.17 At the time of writing, the NPPF consultation will conclude on the 24th of September 2024 and the revised annual requirement has not yet been imposed upon the Council. However, the large disparity between the annual requirement, upon which the spatial strategy of the DLP is currently based and the new local housing requirement is very

significant, with **659** more homes required each year than is currently planned in the DLP.

- 2.18 As part of the wider NPPF consultation, the Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner MP, in a Ministerial Statement, made clear the Government's intentions in a letter to all local authority Leaders and local authority CEO's in England on 30 July 2024 (Playing your part in building the homes we need ([Appendix 3](#)). The letter stated that the Government's goal is for universal coverage of ambitious Local Plans as quickly as possible.
- 2.19 Under transitional arrangements, Local Plans at an advanced stage of preparation can proceed unless there is a significant gap between the plan and the new local housing need figure (more than 200 dpa) in which case local authorities will be asked to rework their plans to take account of the higher figure. Where plans are already at Examination and there is a significant gap between the Plan and the new local housing need figure, the Government expects local authorities to begin a plan immediately in the new system.
- 2.20 For Local Plans at the Regulation 19 stage, which is likely to be the case with St Albans after the 23rd of September 2024, the Government will therefore allow them to continue to the Examination stage unless there is a significant gap between the Plan and the new local housing need figure.
- 2.21 This presents two potential scenarios depending upon the timing of the publication of the new NPPF. The first scenario is that the DLP is submitted for Examination prior to the publication of the NPPF, in which case the Examination may potentially proceed (subject to the satisfactory initial assessment of soundness by the Inspector). The inference being that even if the new Local Plan is capable of adoption, following the Examination, that an immediate review of the Plan would still be automatically triggered.
- 2.22 The second scenario is where the NPPF is published (with the immediate imposition of the higher annual housing requirement) prior to the 28th of November 2024. In the case of St Albans, the gap between the Plan figure and the new local housing need figure is so very significant (the Plan making provision for only **57%** of the requirement) that it renders the emerging Local Plan completely untenable, should the proposed new NPPF and the related housing need figures be adopted, prior to the 28th of November 2024.

Grey Belt Land

- 2.23 The Ministerial Statement from Angela Rayner also addresses the issue of those local authorities which have significant areas of Green Belt within their boundaries and the revised approach to the assessment of such land for the suitability of new housing development. In this regard, the Deputy PM stated, inter alia:

'Brownfield land can only be part of the answer, and will not be enough to meet our housing needs – which is why a Green Belt designed for England in the middle of the twentieth century now must be updated for an England in the middle of the twenty first. The Green Belt today

accounts for more land in England than land that is developed – around 13 per cent compared to 10 per cent. Yet as many assessments show, large areas of the Green Belt have little ecological value and are inaccessible to the public. Much of this area is better described as ‘grey belt’: land on the edge of existing settlements or roads, and with little aesthetic or environmental value’.

- 2.24 The proposed NPPF provides a broad clarification of the term ‘grey belt’ at Annex 2, wherein the new reference to ‘grey belt’ is defined in summary as being:

‘For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, ‘grey belt’ is defined as land in the green belt comprising Previously Developed Land and any other parcels and/or areas of Green Belt land that make a limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes (as defined in para 140 of this Framework), but excluding those areas or assets of particular importance listed in footnote 7 of this Framework (other than land designated as Green Belt).’

- 2.25 Further, more prescriptive, guidance on ‘grey belt’ is provided within the consultation at Chapter 5 (Brownfield, Grey Belt and the Green Belt). In this regard, Paragraph 8 of Chapter 5 reaffirms grey belt land as Green Belt *“land which makes a limited contribution to the Green Belt’s purposes,”* as set out in paragraph 143 of the 2023 NPPF.

- 2.26 Paragraph 10 of Chapter 5 is intended to further assist local planning authorities in judging whether land makes a limited contribution to Green Belt purposes. In this regard, the Government proposes to incorporate the following assessment criteria into the glossary which will be appended to the published version of the new NPPF. Land which makes a limited contribution to the Green Belt purposes will:

‘a) Not strongly perform against any Green Belt purpose; and

b) Have at least one of the following features:

i. Land containing substantial built development or which is fully enclosed by built form.

ii. Land which makes no or very little contribution to preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another.

iii. Land which is dominated by urban land uses, including physical developments.

iv. Land which contributes little to preserving the setting and special character of historic towns.’

Assessment of the Appeal Scheme against Grey Belt Criteria

- 2.27 In the case of the Appeal Site, the “**Landscape and Green Belt evidence**” of Ms Ede (CD.9.3) makes clear that the Appeal Site makes a very limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes (as defined in paragraph 140 of the new Framework) and importantly does not strongly perform against any individual Green Belt purpose.
- 2.28 The Appeal Site is also sustainably located on the edge of an existing settlement to the rear of the High Street and therefore meets the basic premise of ‘grey belt’ as set out by the Secretary of State. As such, criterion a) above is satisfied. “*Land which makes a limited contribution to the Green Belt purposes*” also needs to have at least one of the features identified by criterion b). In this regard, the Appeal Site satisfies **two** of the above ‘grey belt’ tests, as follows:
- 2.29 The first of these is **criterion ii**: “*Land which makes no or very little contribution to preventing neighbouring towns from merging into one another.*” Table 3.2 of the Proof of Ms Ede (CD 9.3) identifies that in relation to Tier One settlements, the sub area does not form part of a gap between the towns of St Albans or Harpenden and other Tier One settlements in neighbouring authorities. The sub-area therefore makes no contribution to preventing these towns from merging with each other.
- 2.30 In relation to Tier Two settlements, the sub-area forms a small part of a ‘less essential gap’ between London Colney and Hatfield. However, the gap is of sufficient scale and character that development would not cause merging between settlements and the Appeal Site forms only a small part of the sub-area; its role and contribution to this purpose is proportionally less than the sub-area as a whole. The Appeal Site therefore makes only a ‘very little contribution’ to preventing these Tier Two towns from merging with each other.
- 2.31 With regard to **criterion iv**: “*Land which contributes little to preserving the setting and special character of historic towns,*” the Appeal Site and local surrounding sub-area do not adjoin an identified historic town or provide views or contribute to the special character of any surrounding historic towns.
- 2.32 Taking the above relevant criteria of Paragraph 10 of Chapter 5 of the NPPF consultation into account, I am satisfied that the Appeal Site therefore makes a limited contribution to Green Belt purposes and so can be considered as being ‘grey belt’ within the context of the NPPF consultation.

Where Grey Belt Land is not Inappropriate

- 2.33 Where ‘grey belt’ land is identified in sustainable locations, as is the case with the Appeal Site (having regard to the tests above), then housing, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate, subject to also meeting the tests of draft Paragraph 152 of the new NPPF, which states:

‘Housing, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate where:

a. The development would utilise grey belt land in sustainable locations, the contributions set out in paragraph 155 below are provided, and the development would not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole; and

b. The local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 76) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years; or there is a demonstrable need for land to be released for development of local, regional or national importance.

c. Development is able to meet the planning policy requirements set out in paragraph 155.’

- 2.34 Whilst it is common ground that under the present 2023 NPPF the Appeal proposals represent “*inappropriate development*,” I have applied the tests of Paragraph 152 of the draft 2024 NPPF and consider that the Appeal proposals meet these new tests in full. Therefore, I judge that the Appeal proposals would no longer be considered as being “*inappropriate development*” at a future time where these proposed changes to the NPPF have been fully implemented. The evidence for this assessment is as follows:
- 2.35 With regard to criterion “a.” of Draft Paragraph 152, there are three limbs to satisfy: the first limb of Paragraph 152 requires that the “*development would utilise grey belt land in a sustainable location*” (my underlining).
- 2.36 As stated above, the Appeal Site comprises a simple arable parcel, which is cohesively located on the edge of the existing settlement to the rear of the High Street, adjacent to a Primary School. Accordingly, I judge the Appeal Site to represent ‘grey belt’ land, having regard to the tests set out in Chapter 5 of the consultation and the landscape and Green Belt evidence of Ms Ede (CD 9.3).
- 2.37 I am also persuaded by the evidence of Mr Tucker (CD 9.4) who has provided technical evidence to this Inquiry to demonstrate that the Appeal Scheme is acceptable in relation to highway and sustainability matters. As such, I concur with Mr Tucker that the Appeal scheme will support modest housing growth in an area with good accessibility to the local facilities available in Colney Heath. Accordingly, I judge the first limb of criterion a. of Draft Paragraph 152 to be fully satisfied.
- 2.38 The second limb of Draft Paragraph 152 requires contributions to be provided, which are in accordance with Draft Paragraph 155 of the new NPPF, which I return to and assess separately in context below.

2.39 The third limb of Paragraph 152 requires that *“the development would not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole.”* In this regard I consider that this third limb of Paragraph 152 is satisfied, having regard to the above tests set out in the consultation, which are corroborated by the **“Landscape and Green Belt evidence”** of Ms Ede (CD9.9.3). In this regard, the Proof of Ms Ede, clearly indicates that the Appeal Site would only have a *“limited and localised”* impact on the openness of the Green Belt. The reasons for Ms Ede’s assessment include:

- The good level of containment.
- No loss of important views across the Green Belt.
- A relatively low density of development (58%).
- Generous areas of open land provision (POS).
- Additional planting to reinforce the existing landscape structure.
- No views (other than glimpsed) of the Appeal Site from the High Street.
- The overarching character of the Colney Heath Farmlands, would be maintained.

2.40 Having regard to the submitted evidence of Ms Ede and Mr Tucker, I therefore consider that the related first and third limbs of criterion “a.” of Draft Paragraph 152 are fully satisfied by the Appeal proposals.

2.41 For clarity, this is because the Appeal proposals would both utilise grey-belt land in a sustainable location and the development would not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole.

2.42 Returning to the second (obligations) limb of criterion “a.” of Draft Paragraph 152 and the new contributions test, Draft Paragraph 155 states:

‘Where major development takes place on land which has been released from the Green Belt through plan preparation or review, or on sites in the Green Belt permitted through development management, the following contributions should be made:

a. In the case of schemes involving the provision of housing, at least 50% affordable housing [with an appropriate proportion being Social Rent], subject to viability;

b. Necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and

c. The provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. Where residential development is involved,

the objective should be for new residents to be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces.'

- 2.43 In this regard, taking each requirement of Draft Paragraph 155 in turn, the Appellant is willing to increase the provision of affordable housing from the emerging Local Plan requirement of 40% to the new NPPF 'grey belt' increased requirement of 50%. This will be confirmed in the S106 presented to the resumed Inquiry. In terms of the second obligations test, the Appeal scheme will also make all the necessary infrastructure improvements to the existing access, where it adjoins the public highway, as set out in the evidence of Mr Tucker.
- 2.44 Finally, with regard to the concluding obligations test set out in Paragraph 155, I am satisfied that the evidence before this Inquiry suitably demonstrates that high quality new green spaces will be made accessible both to new residents and to the public.
- 2.45 New residents of the Appeal Site will therefore be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, through proposed direct on site provision.
- 2.46 Accordingly, on balance, I judge the three new obligations tests of Draft Paragraph 155 to be fully satisfied and so therefore, collectively, I judge all three limbs of criterion "a." of Draft Paragraph 152 to therefore be fully satisfied.
- 2.47 Moving to criterion "b." of Draft Paragraph 152, development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate where, inter alia, *"the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites."* In this regard, the Council have freely acknowledged in their evidence that there are major accrued shortfalls in both market and affordable housing of chronic proportions. It is also common ground that the current five-year housing land supply figure is less than 2 years.
- 2.48 It is important however to consider the implications of the new NPPF local housing need requirement, as the current consensus between the Appellant and the Council is based on an annual housing requirement of 885 dpa plus a 20% buffer, against a housing land supply of only around 40% of this total figure. However, the new five-year housing figure for St Albans proposed by the local housing need calculation would be **7,720** new homes.
- 2.49 Accordingly, as St Albans do not have an up to date Local Plan and the draft allocations in their emerging Local Plan are predicated on a much lower housing figure, there are no immediate additional sources of additional supply. Therefore, in a scenario where the higher figure is potentially adopted later in 2024, the Council's five-year housing land supply is likely to fall much further, realistically to **below 1 year**. This is however largely academic as the Council currently has such a poor supply of deliverable housing land.
- 2.50 Turning to the last criterion of Draft Paragraph 152 (criterion "c.") the final test to qualify development in the Green Belt as not being inappropriate is whether *"development is*

able to meet the new planning policy requirements set out in Paragraph 155,” which I have already undertaken above and concluded that the Appeal proposals are compliant.

Overall Conclusions

- 2.51 Whilst it is acknowledged that the consultation on the new 2024 NPPF has only recently concluded, I consider that moderate weight can still be attributed to the emerging new national guidance at this time. This is because the associated Ministerial Statements set out a clear and unequivocal intended direction of travel, combined with a palpable sense of urgency, in bringing forward these national housing reforms as soon as possible.
- 2.52 On the balance of probability, I consider that these national reforms are likely to be fully enacted in autumn 2024 and so will therefore be material to the determination of this Appeal by the close of the Inquiry in November 2024. The Appellant’s planning case remains as originally submitted but should the new NPPF reforms be adopted in their current form, before the determination of this Appeal, then the applicable planning balance central to this Appeal will change.
- 2.53 This would result in a shift from a starting premise of being inappropriate development in the Green Belt, justified by the suitable demonstration of very special circumstances, as required by the Development Plan to a new balance of being an appropriate (grey belt) development, wherein paragraph 11(d)(ii) is engaged with a presumption in favour of the Appeal proposals as the Council cannot demonstrate a five-year housing land supply for the foreseeable future.
- 2.54 In this regard I have considered the related requirements of Draft Paragraphs 152 and 155 and found overall compliance of the Appeal proposals with these emerging new policy tests (including the uplift in affordable housing) to qualify the Appeal proposals as a ‘grey belt’ development which is not inappropriate development in principle.
- 2.55 On this basis, given that the Council’s five-year housing land supply position is likely to further decline for the foreseeable future, I consider that the Appellant’s planning case is further strengthened by the proposed amendments to the new 2024 NPPF.
- 2.56 Finally, the conclusions of this Addendum are predicated on the definitions of ‘grey belt’ as set out in the current NPPF consultation. Should these definitions change, prior to the determination of the Appeal, the Appellant requests the opportunity to make further representations as required.

Appendix 1



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

National Planning Policy Framework



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1. Introduction

1. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied¹. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for ~~sufficient~~ housing and other development in a sustainable manner. Preparing and maintaining up-to-date plans should be seen as a priority in meeting this objective.
2. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan², unless material considerations indicate otherwise³. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.
3. The Framework should be read as a whole (including its footnotes and annexes). General references to planning policies in the Framework should be applied in a way that is appropriate to the type of plan being produced, taking into account policy on plan-making in chapter 3.
4. The Framework should be read in conjunction with the Government's planning policy for traveller sites, and its planning policy for waste. When preparing plans or making decisions on applications for these types of development, regard should also be had to the policies in this Framework, where relevant.
5. The Framework does not contain specific policies for nationally significant infrastructure projects. These are determined in accordance with the decision-making framework in the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) and relevant national policy statements for major infrastructure, as well as any other matters that are relevant (which may include the National Planning Policy Framework). National policy statements form part of the overall framework of national planning policy, and may be a material consideration in preparing plans and making decisions on planning applications.
6. Other statements of government policy may be material when preparing plans or deciding applications, such as relevant Written Ministerial Statements and endorsed recommendations of the National Infrastructure Commission. ~~This includes the Written Ministerial Statement on Affordable Homes Update (24 May 2021) which contains policy on First Homes.~~

¹ This document replaces the previous version of the National Planning Policy Framework published in ~~September~~ December 2023.

² This includes local and neighbourhood plans that have been brought into force and any spatial development strategies produced by combined authorities or elected Mayors (see Glossary).

³ Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. Achieving sustainable development

7. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs⁴. At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the 17 Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection⁵.
8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):
 - a) **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 to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - b) **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 well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
9. These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** (paragraph 11)

The presumption in favour of sustainable development

⁴ Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly.

⁵ Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For **plan-making** this means that:

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas⁶, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area⁷; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For **decision-taking** this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies for the supply of land⁸ which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁹, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁷; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, in particular those

⁶ As established through statements of common ground (see paragraph 287).

⁷ The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 187) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 742); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

⁸ Policies for the supply of land are those which set an overall requirement and/or make allocations and allowances for windfall sites for the area and type of development concerned.

⁹ This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: ~~(a) the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply (or a four year supply, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 226) of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 7677) and does not benefit from the provisions of paragraph 76;~~ or ~~(b) where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.~~

for the location and design of development (as set out in chapters 9 and 12) and for securing affordable homes.

12. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
13. The application of the presumption has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.
14. In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:
 - a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and
 - b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement (see paragraphs 67-68);

3. Plan-making

15. The planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for meeting housing needs and addressing other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.
16. Plans should:
 - a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development¹⁰;
 - b) be prepared positively, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable;
 - c) be shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement between plan-makers and communities, local organisations, businesses, infrastructure providers and operators and statutory consultees;
 - d) contain policies that are clearly written and unambiguous, so it is evident how a decision maker should react to development proposals;
 - e) be accessible through the use of digital tools to assist public involvement and policy presentation; and
 - f) serve a clear purpose, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policies that apply to a particular area (including policies in this Framework, where relevant).

The plan-making framework

17. The development plan must include strategic policies to address each local planning authority's priorities for the development and use of land in its area¹¹. These strategic policies can be produced in different ways, depending on the issues and opportunities facing each area. They can be contained in:
 - a) joint or individual local plans, produced by authorities working together or independently (and which may also contain non-strategic policies); and/or
 - b) a spatial development strategy produced by an elected Mayor or combined authority, where plan-making powers have been conferred.
18. Policies to address non-strategic matters should be included in local plans that contain both strategic and non-strategic policies, and/or in local or neighbourhood plans that contain just non-strategic policies.
19. The development plan for an area comprises the combination of strategic and non-strategic policies which are in force at a particular time.

¹⁰ This is a legal requirement of local planning authorities exercising their plan-making functions (section 39(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).

¹¹ Section 19(1B-1E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Strategic policies

20. Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places ~~(to ensure outcomes support beauty and placemaking)~~, and make sufficient provision¹² for:
 - a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
 - b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
 - c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
 - d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.
21. Plans should make explicit which policies are strategic policies¹³. These should be limited to those necessary to address the strategic priorities of the area (and any relevant cross-boundary issues), to provide a clear starting point for any non-strategic policies that are needed. Strategic policies should not extend to detailed matters that are more appropriately dealt with through neighbourhood plans or other non-strategic policies.
22. Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption¹⁴, to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure. Where larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescale for delivery¹⁵.
23. Broad locations for development should be indicated on a key diagram, and land-use designations and allocations identified on a policies map. Strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, and at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should include planning for and allocating sufficient sites to deliver the strategic priorities of the area (except insofar as these needs can be demonstrated to be met more appropriately through other mechanisms, such as brownfield registers or non-strategic policies)¹⁶.

Maintaining effective cooperation

¹² In line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

¹³ Where a single local plan is prepared the non-strategic policies should be clearly distinguished from the strategic policies.

¹⁴ Except in relation to town centre development, as set out in chapter 7.

¹⁵ Transitional arrangements are set out in Annex 1.

¹⁶ For spatial development strategies, allocations, land use designations and a policies map are needed only where the power to make allocations has been conferred.

24. Effective strategic planning across local planning authority boundaries will play a vital and increasing role in how sustainable growth is delivered and key spatial issues, including meeting housing needs, delivering strategic infrastructure, and building economic and climate resilience, are addressed. Local planning authorities and county councils (in two-tier areas) are continue to be under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.
25. Strategic policy-making authorities should collaborate to identify the relevant strategic matters which they need to address in their plans. They should also engage with their local communities and relevant bodies including ~~Local Enterprise Partnerships~~, Local Nature Partnerships, the Marine Management Organisation, county councils, infrastructure providers, elected Mayors and combined authorities (in cases where Mayors or combined authorities do not have plan-making powers).
26. Effective and on-going joint working between strategic policy-making authorities and relevant bodies is integral to the production of a positively prepared and justified strategy. In particular, joint working should help to determine where additional infrastructure is necessary, and whether development needs that cannot be met wholly within a particular plan area could be met elsewhere.
27. Once the matters which require collaboration have been identified, strategic policy-making authorities should make sure that their plan policies are consistent with those of other bodies where a strategic relationship exists on these matters, and with the relevant investment plans of infrastructure providers, unless there is a clear justification to the contrary. In particular their plans should ensure that:
- a) a consistent approach is taken to planning the delivery of major infrastructure, such as major transport services/projects, utilities, waste, minerals, environmental improvement and resilience, and strategic health, education and social infrastructure (such as hospitals, universities, major schools, major sports facilities and criminal justice accommodation);
 - b) unmet development needs from neighbouring areas are accommodated in accordance with paragraph 11b; and
 - c) any allocation or designation which cuts across the boundary of plan areas, or has significant implications for neighbouring areas, is appropriately managed by all relevant authorities.
- ~~27-28.~~ In order to demonstrate effective and on-going joint working, strategic policy-making authorities should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these. These should be produced using the approach set out in national planning guidance, and be made publicly available throughout the plan-making process to provide transparency. Plans come forward at different times, and there may be a degree of uncertainty about the future direction of relevant development plans or plans of infrastructure providers. In such circumstances strategic policy-making authorities and Inspectors will need to come to an informed decision on the basis of available information, rather than

Non-strategic policies

- ~~28~~29. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities and communities to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.
- ~~29~~30. Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan. Neighbourhood plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies¹⁷.
- ~~30~~31. Once a neighbourhood plan has been brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a local plan covering the neighbourhood area, where they are in conflict; unless they are superseded by strategic or non-strategic policies that are adopted subsequently.

Preparing and reviewing plans

- ~~31~~32. The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals.
- ~~32~~33. Local plans and spatial development strategies should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements¹⁸. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options which reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered).
- ~~33~~34. Policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary¹⁹. Reviews should be completed no later than five years from the adoption date of a plan, and should take into account changing

¹⁷ Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area.

¹⁸ The reference to relevant legal requirements refers to Strategic Environmental Assessment. Neighbourhood plans may require Strategic Environmental Assessment, but only where there are potentially significant environmental effects.

¹⁹ Reviews at least every five years are a legal requirement for all local plans (Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).

circumstances affecting the area, or any relevant changes in national policy. Relevant strategic policies will need updating at least once every five years if their applicable local housing need figure has changed significantly; and they are likely to require earlier review if local housing need is expected to change significantly in the near future.

Development contributions

~~34~~35. Plans should set out the contributions expected from development. This should include setting out the levels and types of affordable housing provision required, along with other infrastructure (such as that needed for education, health, transport, flood and water management, green and digital infrastructure). Such policies should not undermine the deliverability of the plan.

Examining plans

~~35~~36. Local plans and spatial development strategies are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. Plans are 'sound' if they are:

- a) **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs²⁰; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- b) **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- c) **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

~~36~~37. These tests of soundness will be applied to non-strategic policies²¹ in a proportionate way, taking into account the extent to which they are consistent with relevant strategic policies for the area.

~~37~~38. Neighbourhood plans must meet certain 'basic conditions' and other legal requirements²² before they can come into force. These are tested through an independent examination before the neighbourhood plan may proceed to referendum.

²⁰ Where this relates to housing, such needs should be assessed using a clear and justified method, as set out in paragraph ~~62~~4 of this Framework

²¹ Where these are contained in a local plan.

²² As set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

4. Decision-making

~~38~~39. Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Pre-application engagement and front-loading

~~39~~40. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

~~40~~41. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.

~~41~~42. The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

~~42~~43. The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.

~~43~~44. The right information is crucial to good decision-making, particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations assessment and flood risk assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.

~~44~~45. Local planning authorities should publish a list of their information requirements for applications for planning permission. These requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions, and should be reviewed at least every

two years. Local planning authorities should only request supporting information that is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question.

45.46. Local planning authorities should consult the appropriate bodies when considering applications for the siting of, or changes to, major hazard sites, installations or pipelines, or for development around them.

46.47. Applicants and local planning authorities should consider the potential for voluntary planning performance agreements, where this might achieve a faster and more effective application process. Planning performance agreements are likely to be needed for applications that are particularly large or complex to determine.

Determining applications

47.48. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

48.49. Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)²³.

49.50. However, in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:

- a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and
- b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

50.51. Refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified

²³ During the transitional period for emerging plans, consistency should be tested against the version of the Framework as applicable, as set out in Annex 1.

where a draft plan has yet to be submitted for examination; or – in the case of a neighbourhood plan – before the end of the local planning authority publicity period on the draft plan. Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the local planning authority will need to indicate clearly how granting permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.

Tailoring planning controls to local circumstances

~~51.~~52. Local planning authorities are encouraged to use Local Development Orders to set the planning framework for particular areas or categories of development where the impacts would be acceptable, and in particular where this would promote economic, social or environmental gains for the area.

~~52.~~53. Communities can use Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders to grant planning permission. These require the support of the local community through a referendum. Local planning authorities should take a proactive and positive approach to such proposals, working collaboratively with community organisations to resolve any issues before draft orders are submitted for examination.

~~53.~~54. The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should:

- a) where they relate to change from non-residential use to residential use, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to avoid wholly unacceptable adverse impacts (this could include the loss of the essential core of a primary shopping area which would seriously undermine its vitality and viability, but would be very unlikely to extend to the whole of a town centre)
- b) in other cases, be limited to situations where an Article 4 direction is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area (this could include the use of Article 4 directions to require planning permission for the demolition of local facilities)
- c) in all cases, be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible.

~~54.~~55. Similarly, planning conditions should not be used to restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so.

Planning conditions and obligations

~~55.~~56. Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations. Planning obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through a planning condition.

~~56.~~57. Planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects. Agreeing conditions early is beneficial to all parties involved in the process and can speed up decision-

making. Conditions that are required to be discharged before development commences should be avoided, unless there is a clear justification²⁴.

57:58. Planning obligations must only be sought where they meet all of the following tests²⁵:

1. necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
2. directly related to the development; and
3. fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

58:59. Where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. It is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. All viability assessments, including any undertaken at the plan-making stage, should reflect the recommended approach in national planning guidance, including standardised inputs, and should be made publicly available.

Enforcement

59:60. Effective enforcement is important to maintain public confidence in the planning system. Enforcement action is discretionary, and local planning authorities should act proportionately in responding to suspected breaches of planning control. They should consider publishing a local enforcement plan to manage enforcement proactively, in a way that is appropriate to their area. This should set out how they will monitor the implementation of planning permissions, investigate alleged cases of unauthorised development and take action where appropriate.

²⁴ Sections 100ZA(4-6) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 will require the applicant's written agreement to the terms of a pre-commencement condition, unless prescribed circumstances apply.

²⁵ Set out in Regulation 122(2) of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010.

5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

~~60-61.~~ To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet ~~as much of~~ an area's identified housing need ~~as possible~~, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

~~61-62.~~ 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 area²⁶ which justify an alternative approach which 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 for²⁷.

~~62.~~ ~~The standard method incorporates an uplift which applies to certain cities and urban centres, as set out in national planning guidance. This uplift should be accommodated within those cities and urban centres themselves except where there are voluntary cross boundary redistribution agreements in place, or where it would conflict with the policies in this Framework²⁸.~~

63. 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 (including Social Rent); families with children; looked after children²⁹; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers³⁰; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes³¹.

~~²⁶ Such particular demographic characteristics could, for example, include areas that are islands with no land bridge that have a significant proportion of elderly residents.~~

²⁷ Transitional arrangements are set out in Annex 1

~~²⁸ In doing so, strategic policies should promote an effective use of land and optimise site densities in accordance with chapter 11. This is to ensure that homes are built in the right places, to prioritise brownfield and other under-utilised urban sites, to utilise existing infrastructure, and to allow people to live near the services they rely on, making travel patterns more sustainable.~~

²⁹ Evidence of need for looked after children can be found in the relevant Local Authority's Children's Social Care Sufficiency Strategy.

³⁰ Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.

³¹ Under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough

64. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required (including the minimum proportion of Social Rent homes required)³², and expect it to be met on-site unless:
- a) off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
 - b) the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.
65. Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount³³.
66. Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across both affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures. at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership³⁴; ~~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) a) is exclusively for affordable housing, an entry-level a community-led development exception site or a rural exception site.~~
67. Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. The requirement may be higher than the identified housing need if, for example, it includes provision for neighbouring areas, or reflects growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern

suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.

³² Applying the definition in Annex 2 to this Framework.

³³ Equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings. This does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.

³⁴ ~~As part of the overall affordable housing contribution from the site.~~

and scale of development and any relevant allocations³⁵. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need re-testing at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.

68. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area³⁶, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

69. Mixed tenure sites can provide a range of benefits including creating diverse communities and supporting timely build out rates and local planning authorities should support their development through their policies and decisions. Mixed tenure sites can include a mixture of ownership and rental tenures, including rented affordable housing and build to rent, as well as housing designed for specific groups such as older people's housing and student accommodation, and plots sold for custom or self-build.

Identifying land for homes

69.70. Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:

- a) specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption³⁷; and
- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.

70.71. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

- a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;

³⁵ Except where a Mayoral, combined authority or high-level joint plan is being prepared as a framework for strategic policies at the individual local authority level; in which case it may be most appropriate for the local authority plans to provide the requirement figure.

³⁶ Because a neighbourhood area is designated at a late stage in the strategic policy-making process, or after strategic policies have been adopted; or in instances where strategic policies for housing are out of date.

³⁷ With an appropriate buffer, as set out in paragraph 767. See Glossary for definitions of deliverable and developable.

- b) seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom-build housing;
- c) use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;
- d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and
- e) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.

71.72. Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 710a) suitable for housing in their area.

72.73. Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

73.74. Local planning authorities should support the development of exception sites, or community-led development³⁸ (as defined in Annex 2) on sites that would not otherwise be suitable as rural exception sites. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:

- a) comprise community-led development that includes one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding; and
- b) be adjacent to existing settlements, existing settlements, proportionate in size to them³⁹, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework⁴⁰, and comply with any local design policies and standards.

74.75. The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and

³⁸-This exception site policy does not replace the First Homes exception policy set out in the Affordable Homes Update Written Ministerial Statement, dated 24 May 2021, which remains extant policy.

³⁹ Community-led development exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement, unless specific provision to exceed these limits is made in the development plan.

⁴⁰ i.e. the areas referred to in footnote 7.

designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes). Working with the support of their communities, and with other authorities if appropriate, strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way. In doing so, they should:

- a) consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;
- b) ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access;
- c) set clear expectations for the quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained (such as by following Garden City principles); and ensure that appropriate tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes are used to secure a variety of well-designed and beautiful homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community;
- d) make a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery, given the lead-in times for large scale sites, and identify opportunities for supporting rapid implementation (such as through joint ventures or locally-led development corporations)⁴¹; and
- e) consider whether it is appropriate to establish Green Belt around or adjoining new developments of significant size.

Maintaining supply and delivery

~~75-76.~~ Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should ~~monitor their deliverable land supply against their housing requirement, as set out in adopted strategic policies~~ identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing⁴² against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old⁴³. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

⁴¹ The delivery of large scale developments may need to extend beyond an individual plan period, and the associated infrastructure requirements may not be capable of being identified fully at the outset. Anticipated rates of delivery and infrastructure requirements should, therefore, be kept under review and reflected as policies are updated.

⁴² For the avoidance of doubt, a five year supply of deliverable sites for travellers – as defined in Annex 1 to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites – should be assessed separately, in line with the policy in that document.

⁴³ Unless these strategic policies have been reviewed and found not to require updating. Where local housing need is used as the basis for assessing whether a five year supply of specific deliverable sites exists, it should be calculated using the standard method set out in national planning guidance.

a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or

~~b) 10% where the local planning authority wishes to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites through an annual position statement or recently adopted plan, to account for any fluctuations in the market during that year; or~~
b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply⁴⁴.

~~76. Local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if the following criteria are met:~~

~~a. their adopted plan is less than five years old; and~~

~~b. that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.~~

~~77. In all other circumstances, local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide either a minimum of five years' worth of housing or a minimum of four years' worth of housing if the provisions in paragraph 226 apply. The supply should be demonstrated against either the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against the local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. Where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years the supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period). National planning guidance provides further information on calculating the housing land supply, including the circumstances in which past shortfalls or over supply can be addressed.~~

~~78. Where the criteria in paragraph 76 are not met, a local planning authority may confirm the existence of a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with a 20% buffer, if applicable through an annual position statement which:~~

~~a) has been produced through engagement with developers and others who have an impact on delivery, and been considered by the Secretary of State; and~~

~~b) incorporates the recommendation of the Secretary of State, where the position on specific sites could not be agreed during the engagement process.~~

⁴⁴ This will be measured against the Housing Delivery Test, where this indicates that delivery was below 85% of the housing requirement.

~~79.~~77. To maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences should apply:

- a) where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years;
- b) where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites as set out in paragraph ~~76.~~77 of this framework, in addition to the requirement for an action plan.
- c) where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in footnote ~~98.~~98 of this Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.

~~80.~~78. The Housing Delivery Test consequences set out above will apply the day following the annual publication of the Housing Delivery Test results, at which point they supersede previously published results. Until new Housing Delivery Test results are published, the previously published result should be used.

~~81.~~79. To help ensure that proposals for housing development are implemented in a timely manner, local planning authorities should consider imposing a planning condition providing that development must begin within a timescale shorter than the relevant default period, where this would expedite the development without threatening its deliverability or viability. For major development involving the provision of housing, local planning authorities should also assess why any earlier grant of planning permission for a similar development on the same site did not start.

Rural housing

~~82.~~80. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, including proposals for community-led development for housing. 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.

~~83.~~81. 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.

~~84.~~82. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

6. Building a strong, competitive economy

~~85-83.~~ Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation⁴⁵, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.

~~86-84.~~ Planning policies should:

- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration;
- b) set criteria, ~~or~~ and identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period. Appropriate sites for commercial development which meet the needs of a modern economy should be identified, including suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics.
- c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment; and
- d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.

~~87-85.~~ Planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for:

- a) clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries; and for new, expanded or upgraded facilities and infrastructure that are needed to support the growth of these industries (including data centres and grid connections);
- b) storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations, that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation;
- c) the expansion or modernisation of other industries of local, regional or national importance to support economic growth and resilience.

⁴⁵ ~~The Government's Industrial Strategy sets out a vision to drive productivity improvements across the UK, identifies a number of Grand Challenges facing all nations, and sets out a delivery programme to make the UK a leader in four of these: artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; future mobility; and catering for an ageing society. HM Government (2017) Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future.~~

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

~~88~~-86. Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, ~~beautiful~~ new buildings;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and
- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

~~89~~-87. Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres

~~90~~88. Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should:

- a) define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;
- b) define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;
- c) retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones;
- d) allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary;
- e) where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre; and
- f) recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

~~91~~89. Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.

~~92~~90. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored.

~~93~~91. This sequential approach should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development.

94.92. When assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500m² of gross floorspace). This should include assessment of:

- a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).

95.93. Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the considerations in paragraph 924, it should be refused.

8. Promoting healthy and safe communities

96.94. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places ~~and beautiful buildings~~ 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 ~~beautiful~~, 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.

97.95. To provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

- a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community;
- c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs;
- d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and
- e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

98.96. Planning policies and decisions should consider the social, economic and environmental benefits of estate regeneration. Local planning authorities should use their planning powers to help deliver estate regeneration to a high standard.

99.97. It is important that a sufficient choice of ~~early years, school and post-16~~ places ~~is~~ are available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- a) give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter early years, schools and post 16 facilities through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
- b) work with early years, school and post-16 promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

~~400.98.~~ To ensure faster delivery of other public service infrastructure such as further education colleges, hospitals and criminal justice accommodation, local planning authorities should also work proactively and positively with promoters, delivery partners and statutory bodies to plan for required facilities and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted. Significant weight should be placed on the importance of new, expanded or upgraded public service infrastructure when considering proposals for development.

~~401.99.~~ Planning policies and decisions should promote public safety and take into account wider security and defence requirements by:

- a) anticipating and addressing possible malicious threats and natural hazards, especially in locations where large numbers of people are expected to congregate⁴⁶. Policies for relevant areas (such as town centre and regeneration frameworks), and the layout and design of developments, should be informed by the most up-to-date information available from the police and other agencies about the nature of potential threats and their implications. This includes appropriate and proportionate steps that can be taken to reduce vulnerability, increase resilience and ensure public safety and security; and
- b) recognising and supporting development required for operational defence and security purposes, and ensuring that operational sites are not affected adversely by the impact of other development proposed in the area.

Open space and recreation

~~402.100.~~ Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate.

~~403.101.~~ Existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, including playing fields, should not be built on unless:

⁴⁶ This includes transport hubs, night-time economy venues, cinemas and theatres, sports stadia and arenas, shopping centres, health and education establishments, places of worship, hotels and restaurants, visitor attractions and commercial centres.

- a) an assessment has been undertaken which has clearly shown the open space, buildings or land to be surplus to requirements; or
- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or
- c) the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.

~~404.~~102. 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.

~~405.~~103. The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

~~406.~~104. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

~~407.~~105. Policies for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with those for Green Belts.

9. Promoting sustainable transport

~~408~~.106. 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.

~~409~~.107. The planning system should actively manage patterns of growth in support of these objectives. Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions, and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.

~~440~~.108. Planning policies should:

- a) support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within larger scale sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities;
- b) be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned;
- c) identify and protect, where there is robust evidence, sites and routes which could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development;
- d) provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans);

- e) provide for any large scale transport facilities that need to be located in the area⁴⁷, and the infrastructure and wider development required to support their operation, expansion and contribution to the wider economy. In doing so they should take into account whether such development is likely to be a nationally significant infrastructure project and any relevant national policy statements; and
- f) recognise the importance of maintaining a national network of general aviation airfields, and their need to adapt and change over time – taking into account their economic value in serving business, leisure, training and emergency service needs, and the Government’s General Aviation Strategy⁴⁸.

~~111.109.~~ If setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development, policies should take into account:

- a) the accessibility of the development;
- b) the type, mix and use of development;
- c) the availability of and opportunities for public transport;
- d) local car ownership levels; and
- e) the need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.

~~112.110.~~ Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport (in accordance with chapter 11 of this Framework). In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure, alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

~~113.111.~~ Planning policies and decisions should recognise the importance of providing adequate overnight lorry parking facilities, taking into account any local shortages, to reduce the risk of parking in locations that lack proper facilities or could cause a nuisance. Proposals for new or expanded distribution centres should make provision for sufficient lorry parking to cater for their anticipated use.

Considering development proposals

~~114.112.~~ In assessing sites that may be allocated for development in plans, or specific applications for development, it should be ensured that:

⁴⁷ Policies for large scale facilities should, where necessary, be developed through collaboration between strategic policy-making authorities and other relevant bodies. Examples of such facilities include ports, airports, interchanges for rail freight, public transport projects and roadside services. The primary function of roadside services should be to support the safety and welfare of the road user (and most such proposals are unlikely to be nationally significant infrastructure projects).

⁴⁸ Department for Transport (2015) *General Aviation Strategy*.

- a) ~~appropriate opportunities~~ A vision led approach to promote promoting sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given is taken, taking account of the type of development and its location;
- b) safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;
- c) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code⁴⁹; and
- d) any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision led approach.

113.115. Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, in all tested scenarios.

114.116. Within this context, applications for development should:

- a) give priority first to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and with neighbouring areas; and second – so far as possible – to facilitating access to high quality public transport, with layouts that maximise the catchment area for bus or other public transport services, and appropriate facilities that encourage public transport use;
- b) address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c) create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d) allow for the efficient delivery of goods, and access by service and emergency vehicles; and
- e) be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.

115.117. All developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

⁴⁹ Policies and decisions should not make use of or reflect the former Design Bulletin 32, which was withdrawn in 2007.

10. Supporting high quality communications

~~118~~.116. Advanced, high quality and reliable communications infrastructure is essential for economic growth and social well-being. Planning policies and decisions should support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. Policies should set out how high quality digital infrastructure, providing access to services from a range of providers, is expected to be delivered and upgraded over time; and should prioritise full fibre connections to existing and new developments (as these connections will, in almost all cases, provide the optimum solution).

~~119~~.117. The number of radio and electronic communications masts, and the sites for such installations, should be kept to a minimum consistent with the needs of consumers, the efficient operation of the network and providing reasonable capacity for future expansion. Use of existing masts, buildings and other structures for new electronic communications capability (including wireless) should be encouraged. Where new sites are required (such as for new 5G networks, or for connected transport and smart city applications), equipment should be sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate.

~~120~~.118. Local planning authorities should not impose a ban on new electronic communications development in certain areas, impose blanket Article 4 directions over a wide area or a wide range of electronic communications development, or insist on minimum distances between new electronic communications development and existing development. They should ensure that:

- a) they have evidence to demonstrate that electronic communications infrastructure is not expected to cause significant and irremediable interference with other electrical equipment, air traffic services or instrumentation operated in the national interest; and
- b) they have considered the possibility of the construction of new buildings or other structures interfering with broadcast and electronic communications services.

~~121~~.119. Applications for electronic communications development (including applications for prior approval under the General Permitted Development Order) should be supported by the necessary evidence to justify the proposed development. This should include:

- a) the outcome of consultations with organisations with an interest in the proposed development, in particular with the relevant body where a mast is to be installed near a school or college, or within a statutory safeguarding zone surrounding an aerodrome, technical site or military explosives storage area; and
- b) for an addition to an existing mast or base station, a statement that self-certifies that the cumulative exposure, when operational, will not exceed International Commission guidelines on non-ionising radiation protection; or

- c) for a new mast or base station, evidence that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting antennas on an existing building, mast or other structure and a statement that self-certifies that, when operational, International Commission guidelines will be met.

422.120. Local planning authorities must determine applications on planning grounds only. They should not seek to prevent competition between different operators, question the need for an electronic communications system, or set health safeguards different from the International Commission guidelines for public exposure.

11. Making effective use of land

~~123.~~121. 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. Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land⁵⁰.

~~124.~~122. Planning policies and decisions should:

- a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;
- b) recognise that some undeveloped land can perform many functions, such as for wildlife, recreation, flood risk mitigation, cooling/shading, carbon storage or food production;
- c) give substantial weight to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes and other identified needs, proposals for which should be regarded as acceptable in principle, and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land;
- d) promote and support the development of under-utilised land and buildings, especially if this would help to meet identified needs for housing where land supply is constrained and available sites could be used more effectively (for example converting space above shops, and building on or above service yards, car parks, lock-ups and railway infrastructure)⁵¹; and
- e) support opportunities to use the airspace above existing residential and commercial premises for new homes. In particular, they should allow upward extensions – including mansard roofs – where the development would be consistent with the prevailing ~~height and~~ form of neighbouring properties and the overall street scene, is well- designed (including complying with any local design policies and standards), and can maintain safe access and egress for occupiers. ~~They should also allow mansard roof extensions on suitable properties⁵² where their external appearance harmonises with the original building, including extensions to terraces where one or more of the terraced houses already has a mansard. Where there was a tradition of mansard construction locally at the time of the building's construction, the extension should emulate it with respect to external appearance.~~ A condition of simultaneous development should not be imposed on an application for multiple mansard upward extensions unless there is an exceptional justification.

⁵⁰ Except where this would conflict with other policies in this Framework, including causing harm to designated sites of importance for biodiversity.

⁵¹ As part of this approach, plans and decisions should support efforts to identify and bring back into residential use empty homes and other buildings, supported by the use of compulsory purchase powers where appropriate.

⁵² ~~See glossary for further details.~~

~~425.123.~~ Local planning authorities, and other plan-making bodies, should take a proactive role in identifying and helping to bring forward land that may be suitable for meeting development needs, including suitable sites on brownfield registers or held in public ownership, using the full range of powers available to them. This should include identifying opportunities to facilitate land assembly, supported where necessary by compulsory purchase powers, where this can help to bring more land forward for meeting development needs and/or secure better development outcomes.

~~426.124.~~ Planning policies and decisions need to reflect changes in the demand for land. They should be informed by regular reviews of both the land allocated for development in plans, and of land availability. Where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan:

- a) it should, as part of plan updates, reallocate the land for a more deliverable use that can help to address identified needs (or, if appropriate, deallocate a site which is undeveloped); and
- b) in the interim, prior to updating the plan, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.

~~427.125.~~ Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, they should support proposals to:

- a) use retail and employment land for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework; and
- b) make more effective use of sites that provide community services such as schools and hospitals, provided this maintains or improves the quality of service provision and access to open space.

Achieving appropriate densities

~~428.126.~~ Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account:

- a) the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;
- b) local market conditions and viability;
- c) the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;
- d) the desirability of maintaining an area's prevailing character and setting

(including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and

- e) the importance of securing well-designed ~~and beautiful~~, attractive and healthy places.

~~129.~~ 127. Area-based character assessments, design guides and codes and masterplans can be used to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places. Where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities, and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

- a) plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination, and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;
- b) the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and
- c) local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).

~~130. In applying paragraphs 129a and b above to existing urban areas, significant uplifts in the average density of residential development may be inappropriate if the resulting built form would be wholly out of character with the existing area. Such circumstances should be evidenced through an authority wide design code which is adopted or will be adopted as part of the development plan.~~

12. Achieving well-designed ~~and beautiful~~ places

~~131-128.~~ 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.

~~132-129.~~ Plans should, at the most appropriate level, set out a clear design vision and expectations, so that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. Design policies should be developed with local communities so they reflect local aspirations, and are grounded in an understanding and evaluation of each area's defining characteristics. Neighbourhood planning groups can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development, both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.

~~133-130.~~ To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes consistent with the principles set out in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code, and which reflect local character and design preferences. Design guides and codes provide a local framework for creating beautiful and distinctive places with a consistent and high quality standard of design. Their geographic coverage, level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety.

~~134-131.~~ Design guides and codes can be prepared at an area-wide, neighbourhood or site-specific scale, and to carry weight in decision-making should be produced either as part of a plan or as supplementary planning documents. Landowners and developers may contribute to these exercises, but may also choose to prepare design codes in support of a planning application for sites they wish to develop. Whoever prepares them, all guides and codes should be based on effective community engagement and reflect local aspirations for the development of their area, taking into account the guidance contained in the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. These national documents should be used to guide decisions on applications in the absence of locally produced design guides or design codes.

~~135-132.~~ Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) 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;
- e) 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
- f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users⁵³; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

~~136-133.~~ Trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined⁵⁴, that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards), that appropriate measures are in place to secure the long-term maintenance of newly-planted trees, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible. Applicants and local planning authorities should work with highways officers and tree officers to ensure that the right trees are planted in the right places, and solutions are found that are compatible with highways standards and the needs of different users.

~~137-134.~~ Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussion between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.

~~138-135.~~ Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. ~~The National Model Design Code is~~ the primary ~~basis means of doing so should be through for~~ the preparation and use of local design codes, ~~in line with the National Model Design Code~~. For assessing proposals there is a range of tools including workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life⁵⁵. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning

⁵³ Planning policies for housing should make use of the Government's optional technical standards for accessible and adaptable housing, where this would address an identified need for such properties. Policies may also make use of the nationally described space standard, where the need for an internal space standard can be justified.

⁵⁴ Unless, in specific cases, there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate.

⁵⁵ Birkbeck D and Kruczkowski S et al (2020) *Building for a Healthy Life*

authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.

~~139.~~136. Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design⁵⁶, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes. Conversely, significant weight should be given to:

- a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or
- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.

~~140.~~137. Local planning authorities should ensure that relevant planning conditions refer to clear and accurate plans and drawings which provide visual clarity about the design of the development, and are clear about the approved use of materials where appropriate. This will provide greater certainty for those implementing the planning permission on how to comply with the permission and a clearer basis for local planning authorities to identify breaches of planning control. Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).

~~141.~~138. The quality and character of places can suffer when advertisements are poorly sited and designed. A separate consent process within the planning system controls the display of advertisements, which should be operated in a way which is simple, efficient and effective. Advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

⁵⁶ Contained in the National Design Guide and National Model Design Code.

13. Protecting Green Belt land

~~142.~~139. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

~~143.~~140. Green Belt serves five purposes:

- a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- c) to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- e) to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

~~144.~~141. The general extent of Green Belts across the country is already established. New Green Belts should only be established in exceptional circumstances, for example when planning for larger scale development such as new settlements or major urban extensions. Any proposals for new Green Belts should be set out in strategic policies, which should:

- a) demonstrate why normal planning and development management policies would not be adequate;
- b) set out whether any major changes in circumstances have made the adoption of this exceptional measure necessary;
- c) show what the consequences of the proposal would be for sustainable development;
- d) demonstrate the necessity for the Green Belt and its consistency with strategic policies for adjoining areas; and
- e) show how the Green Belt would meet the other objectives of the Framework.

~~145.~~142. Once established, there is no requirement for Green Belt boundaries should only to be altered reviewed or changed when plans are being prepared or updated. Authorities may choose to review and alter Green Belt boundaries where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified, in which case proposals for changes should be made only through the preparation or updating of plans plan-making process. Exceptional circumstances include, but are not limited to, instances where an authority cannot meet its identified need for housing, commercial or other development through other means. In these circumstances authorities should review Green Belt boundaries and propose alterations to meet these needs in full, unless the review provides clear evidence that such alterations would fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of

the plan as a whole. Strategic policies should establish the need for any changes to Green Belt boundaries, having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so they can endure beyond the plan period. Where a need for changes to Green Belt boundaries has been established through strategic policies, detailed amendments to those boundaries may be made through non- strategic policies, including neighbourhood plans.

~~146.~~143. Before concluding that exceptional circumstances exist to justify changes to Green Belt boundaries, the strategic policy-making authority should be able to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified need for development. This will be assessed through the examination of its strategic policies, which will take into account the preceding paragraph, and whether the strategy:

- a) makes as much use as possible of suitable brownfield sites and underutilised land;
- b) optimises the density of development in line with the policies in chapter 11 of this Framework, including whether policies promote a significant uplift in minimum density standards in town and city centres and other locations well served by public transport; and
- c) has been informed by discussions with neighbouring authorities about whether they could accommodate some of the identified need for development, as demonstrated through the statement of common ground.

~~147.~~144. When drawing up or reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need to promote sustainable patterns of development should be taken into account. Strategic policy-making authorities should consider the consequences for sustainable development of channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt boundary, towards towns and villages inset within the Green Belt or towards locations beyond the outer Green Belt boundary. Where ~~it has been concluded that~~ it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to previously-developed land in sustainable locations, then consider grey belt land in sustainable locations which is not already previously-developed, and only then consider other sustainable Green Belt locations. They should also set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.

~~148.~~145. When defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should:

- a) ensure consistency with the development plan's strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development;
- b) not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open;
- c) where necessary, identify areas of safeguarded land between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period;
- d) make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of

safeguarded land should only be granted following an update to a plan which proposes the development;

- e) be able to demonstrate that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the plan period; and
- f) define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

~~149.~~146. If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.

~~150.~~147. Once Green Belts have been defined, local planning authorities should plan positively to enhance their beneficial use, such as looking for opportunities to provide access; to provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation; to retain and enhance landscapes, visual amenity and biodiversity; or to improve damaged and derelict land. Where Green Belt land is released for development through plan preparation or review, development proposals on the land concerned should deliver the contributions set out in paragraph 155 below.

~~151.~~148. The National Forest and Community Forests offer valuable opportunities for improving the environment around towns and cities, by upgrading the landscape and providing for recreation and wildlife. The National Forest Strategy and an approved Community Forest Plan may be a material consideration in preparing development plans and in deciding planning applications. Any development proposals within the National Forest and Community Forests in the Green Belt should be subject to the normal policies for controlling development in Green Belts.

Proposals affecting the Green Belt

~~152.~~149. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

~~153.~~150. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

~~154.~~151. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in the Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- a) buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- b) the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use) for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments; as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;

- c) the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- e) limited infilling in villages;
- f) limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the development plan (including policies for rural exception sites); and
- g) limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land, whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt.:
 - ~~not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt than the existing development; or~~
 - ~~not cause substantial harm to the openness of the Green Belt, where the development would re-use previously developed land and contribute to meeting an identified affordable housing need within the area of the local planning authority.~~

152. In addition to the above, housing, commercial and other development in the Green Belt should not be regarded as inappropriate where:

- a. The development would utilise grey belt land in sustainable locations, the contributions set out in paragraph 155 below are provided, and the development would not fundamentally undermine the function of the Green Belt across the area of the plan as a whole; and
- b. The local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 76) or where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was below 75% of the housing requirement over the previous three years; or there is a demonstrable need for land to be released for development of local, regional or national importance.
- c. Development is able to meet the planning policy requirements set out in paragraph 155.

455.153. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it. These are:

- a) mineral extraction;
- b) engineering operations;
- c) local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- d) the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and

substantial construction;

- e) material changes in the use of land (such as changes of use for outdoor sport or recreation, or for cemeteries and burial grounds); and
- f) development, including buildings, brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

~~156.~~154. When located in the Green Belt, elements of many renewable energy projects will comprise inappropriate development. In such cases developers will need to demonstrate very special circumstances if projects are to proceed. Such very special circumstances may include the wider environmental benefits associated with increased production of energy from renewable sources.

155. Where major development takes place on land which has been released from the Green Belt through plan preparation or review, or on sites in the Green Belt permitted through development management, the following contributions should be made:

- a. In the case of schemes involving the provision of housing, at least 50% affordable housing [with an appropriate proportion being Social Rent], subject to viability;
- b. Necessary improvements to local or national infrastructure; and
- c. The provision of new, or improvements to existing, green spaces that are accessible to the public. Where residential development is involved, the objective should be for new residents to be able to access good quality green spaces within a short walk of their home, whether through onsite provision or through access to offsite spaces.

156. Regarding the provision of green space, development proposals should meet local standards where these exist in local plans, for example local planning policies on access to green space and / or urban greening factors. Where no locally specific standards exist, development proposals should meet national standards relevant to the development. These include Natural England standards on accessible green space and urban greening factor and Green Flag criteria.

157. Additional guidance on viability considerations for development in the Green Belt is provided in Annex 4.

14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

~~157-158.~~ The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.

Planning for climate change

~~158-159.~~ Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures⁵⁷. Policies should support appropriate measures to ensure the future resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, such as providing space for physical protection measures, or making provision for the possible future relocation of vulnerable development and infrastructure.

~~159-160.~~ 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.

~~160-161.~~ To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should:

- a) provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources, that maximises the potential for suitable development, and their future re-powering and life extension, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed appropriately (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);
- b) ~~consider identifying~~ identify suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
- c) identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

⁵⁷ In line with the objectives and provisions of the Climate Change Act 2008.

~~161. Local planning authorities should support community-led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy, including developments outside areas identified in local plans or other strategic policies that are being taken forward through neighbourhood planning.~~

162. 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.

163. ~~In determining planning applications~~ Local planning authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.

164. ~~In determining planning applications~~ Local planning authorities should support planning applications for all forms of renewable and low carbon development. When determining planning applications⁵⁸ for ~~renewable and low carbon~~ these developments, local planning authorities should:

- a) not require applicants to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low carbon energy, and give significant weight to the proposal's contribution to renewable energy generation and a net zero future;
- b) recognise that even small-scale and community-led projects provide a valuable contribution to significant cutting greenhouse gas emissions;
- c) in the case of applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing renewable sites, give significant weight to the benefits of utilising an established site, ~~and approve the application if its impacts are (or can be made)~~ acceptable⁵⁹.

⁵⁸ ~~Wind energy development involving one or more turbines can also be permitted through Local Development Orders, Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. In the case of Local Development Orders, it should be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been appropriately addressed and the proposal has community support.~~

⁵⁹ ~~Except for applications for the repowering and life-extension of existing wind turbines, a planning application for wind energy development involving one or more turbines should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in the development plan or a supplementary planning document; and, following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been appropriately addressed and the proposal has community support.~~

165. Once suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy have been identified in plans, local planning authorities should expect subsequent applications for commercial scale projects outside these areas to demonstrate that the proposed location meets the criteria used in identifying suitable areas.

Planning and flood risk

165. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (whether existing or future). Where development is necessary in such areas, the development should be made safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere.
166. Strategic policies should be informed by a strategic flood risk assessment, and should manage flood risk from all sources. They should consider cumulative impacts in, or affecting, local areas susceptible to flooding, and take account of advice from the Environment Agency and other relevant flood risk management authorities, such as lead local flood authorities and internal drainage boards.
167. All plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development – taking into account all sources of flood risk and the current and future impacts of climate change – so as to avoid, where possible, flood risk to people and property. They should do this, and manage any residual risk, by:
- a) applying the sequential test and then, if necessary, the exception test as set out below;
 - b) safeguarding land from development that is required, or likely to be required, for current or future flood management;
 - c) using opportunities provided by new development and improvements in green and other infrastructure to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding, (making as much use as possible of natural flood management techniques as part of an integrated approach to flood risk management); and
 - d) where climate change is expected to increase flood risk so that some existing development may not be sustainable in the long-term, seeking opportunities to relocate development, including housing, to more sustainable locations.
168. The aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest risk of flooding from any source. Development should not be allocated or permitted if there are reasonably available sites appropriate for the proposed development in areas with a lower risk of flooding. The strategic flood risk assessment will provide the basis for applying this test. The sequential approach should be used in areas known to be at risk now or in the future from any form of flooding.
169. If it is not possible for development to be located in areas with a lower risk of flooding (taking into account wider sustainable development objectives), the exception test may have to be applied. The need for the exception test will depend on the potential vulnerability of the site and of the development proposed, in line with the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification set out in Annex 3.

170. The application of the exception test should be informed by a strategic or site-specific flood risk assessment, depending on whether it is being applied during plan production or at the application stage. To pass the exception test it should be demonstrated that:
- a) the development would provide wider sustainability benefits to the community that outweigh the flood risk; and
 - b) the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.
171. Both elements of the exception test should be satisfied for development to be allocated or permitted.
172. Where planning applications come forward on sites allocated in the development plan through the sequential test, applicants need not apply the sequential test again. However, the exception test may need to be reapplied if relevant aspects of the proposal had not been considered when the test was applied at the plan-making stage, or if more recent information about existing or potential flood risk should be taken into account.
173. 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 assessment⁶⁰. 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.
174. Applications for some minor development and changes of use⁶¹ should not be

⁶⁰ A site-specific flood risk assessment should be provided for all development in Flood Zones 2 and 3. In Flood Zone 1, an assessment should accompany all proposals involving: sites of 1 hectare or more; land which has been identified by the Environment Agency as having critical drainage problems; land identified in a strategic flood risk assessment as being at increased flood risk in future; or land that may be subject to other sources of flooding, where its development would introduce a more vulnerable use.

⁶¹ This includes householder development, small non-residential extensions (with a footprint of less than 250m²)

subject to the sequential or exception tests but should still meet the requirements for site-specific flood risk assessments set out in footnote ⁵⁹.

175. 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.

Coastal change

176. In coastal areas, planning policies and decisions should take account of the UK Marine Policy Statement and marine plans. Integrated Coastal Zone Management should be pursued across local authority and land/sea boundaries, to ensure effective alignment of the terrestrial and marine planning regimes.
177. Plans should reduce risk from coastal change by avoiding inappropriate development in vulnerable areas and not exacerbating the impacts of physical changes to the coast. They should identify as a Coastal Change Management Area any area likely to be affected by physical changes to the coast, and:
- a) be clear as to what development will be appropriate in such areas and in what circumstances; and
 - b) make provision for development and infrastructure that needs to be relocated away from Coastal Change Management Areas.
178. Development in a Coastal Change Management Area will be appropriate only where it is demonstrated that:
- d) it will be safe over its planned lifetime and not have an unacceptable impact on coastal change;
 - e) the character of the coast including designations is not compromised;
 - f) the development provides wider sustainability benefits; and
 - g) the development does not hinder the creation and maintenance of a continuous signed and managed route around the coast⁶².
179. Local planning authorities should limit the planned lifetime of development in a Coastal Change Management Area through temporary permission and restoration conditions, where this is necessary to reduce a potentially unacceptable level of

and changes of use; except for changes of use to a caravan, camping or chalet site, or to a mobile home or park home site, where the sequential and exception tests should be applied as appropriate.

⁶² As required by the Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009.

future risk to people and the development.

15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- h) 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);
 - i) 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;
 - j) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - k) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - l) 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
 - m) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
181. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework⁶³; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.
182. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks

⁶³ Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. ~~The availability of agricultural land used for food production should be considered, alongside the other policies in this Framework, when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development.~~

and the Broads⁶⁴. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

183. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁵ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:
- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
 - b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
 - c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.
184. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 182), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Habitats and biodiversity

185. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁶⁶; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶⁷; and
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

⁶⁴ *English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010* provides further guidance and information about their statutory purposes, management and other matters.

⁶⁵ For the purposes of paragraphs 182 and 183, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

⁶⁶ Circular 06/2005 provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.

⁶⁷ Where areas that are part of the Nature Recovery Network are identified in plans, it may be appropriate to specify the types of development that may be suitable within them.

186. 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 reasons⁶⁸ 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.
187. The following should be given the same protection as habitats sites:
- a) potential Special Protection Areas and possible Special Areas of Conservation;
 - b) listed or proposed Ramsar sites⁶⁹; and
 - c) sites identified, or required, as compensatory measures for adverse effects on habitats sites, potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation, and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.
188. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not apply where the plan or project is likely to have a significant effect on a habitats site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), unless an appropriate assessment has concluded that the plan or project will not adversely affect the integrity of the habitats site.

⁶⁸ For example, infrastructure projects (including nationally significant infrastructure projects, orders under the Transport and Works Act and hybrid bills), where the public benefit would clearly outweigh the loss or deterioration of habitat.

⁶⁹ Potential Special Protection Areas, possible Special Areas of Conservation and proposed Ramsar sites are sites on which Government has initiated public consultation on the scientific case for designation as a Special Protection Area, candidate Special Area of Conservation or Ramsar site.

Ground conditions and pollution

189. 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.
190. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner.
191. Planning policies and decisions should also ensure that new development is appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) of pollution on health, living conditions and the natural environment, as well as the potential sensitivity of the site or the wider area to impacts that could arise from the development. In doing so they should:
- a) mitigate and reduce to a minimum potential adverse impacts resulting from noise from new development – and avoid noise giving rise to significant adverse impacts on health and the quality of life⁷⁰;
 - b) identify and protect tranquil areas which have remained relatively undisturbed by noise and are prized for their recreational and amenity value for this reason; and
 - c) limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.
192. Planning policies and decisions should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, such as through traffic and travel management, and green infrastructure provision and enhancement. So far as possible these opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage, to ensure a strategic approach and limit the need for issues to be reconsidered when determining individual applications. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.

⁷⁰ See Explanatory Note to the *Noise Policy Statement for England* (Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, 2010).

193. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (such as places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Existing businesses and facilities should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them as a result of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business or community facility could have a significant adverse effect on new development (including changes of use) in its vicinity, the applicant (or 'agent of change') should be required to provide suitable mitigation before the development has been completed.
194. The focus of planning policies and decisions should be on whether proposed development is an acceptable use of land, rather than the control of processes or emissions (where these are subject to separate pollution control regimes). Planning decisions should assume that these regimes will operate effectively. Equally, where a planning decision has been made on a particular development, the planning issues should not be revisited through the permitting regimes operated by pollution control authorities.

16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

195. Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value⁷¹. These assets are an irreplaceable resource, and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations⁷².
196. Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. This strategy should take into account:
- d) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets, and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
 - e) the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
 - f) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
 - g) opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
197. When considering the designation of conservation areas, local planning authorities should ensure that an area justifies such status because of its special architectural or historic interest, and that the concept of conservation is not devalued through the designation of areas that lack special interest.
198. Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:
- h) assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and
 - i) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

⁷¹ Some World Heritage Sites are inscribed by UNESCO to be of natural significance rather than cultural significance; and in some cases they are inscribed for both their natural and cultural significance.

⁷² The policies set out in this chapter relate, as applicable, to the heritage-related consent regimes for which local planning authorities are responsible under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990, as well as to plan-making and decision-making.

199. Local planning authorities should make information about the historic environment, gathered as part of policy-making or development management, publicly accessible.

Proposals affecting heritage assets

200. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.
201. Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.
202. Where there is evidence of deliberate neglect of, or damage to, a heritage asset, the deteriorated state of the heritage asset should not be taken into account in any decision.
203. 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.
204. In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.

Considering potential impacts

205. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
206. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:
- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
 - b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional⁷³.
207. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
208. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
209. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

⁷³ Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

210. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
211. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible⁷⁴. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.
212. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.
213. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph x or less than substantial harm under paragraph x, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.
214. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

⁷⁴ Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.

17. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

215. It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation.
216. Planning policies should:
- a) provide for the extraction of mineral resources of local and national importance, but not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction;
 - b) so far as practicable, take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste would make to the supply of materials, before considering extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously;
 - c) safeguard mineral resources by defining Mineral Safeguarding Areas and Mineral Consultation Areas⁷⁵; and adopt appropriate policies so that known locations of specific minerals resources of local and national importance are not sterilised by non-mineral development where this should be avoided (whilst not creating a presumption that the resources defined will be worked);
 - d) set out policies to encourage the prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, if it is necessary for non-mineral development to take place;
 - e) safeguard existing, planned and potential sites for: the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material;
 - f) set out criteria or requirements to ensure that permitted and proposed operations do not have unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment or human health, taking into account the cumulative effects of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or a number of sites in a locality;
 - g) when developing noise limits, recognise that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction; and
 - h) ensure that worked land is reclaimed at the earliest opportunity, taking account of aviation safety, and that high quality restoration and aftercare of mineral sites takes place.
217. When determining planning applications, great weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy⁷⁶. In considering proposals

⁷⁵ Primarily in two tier areas as stated in Annex 2: Glossary

⁷⁶ Except in relation to the extraction of coal, where the policy at paragraph 223 of this Framework applies.

for mineral extraction, minerals planning authorities should:

- a) as far as is practical, provide for the maintenance of landbanks of non-energy minerals from outside National Parks, the Broads, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and World Heritage Sites, scheduled monuments and conservation areas;
- b) ensure that there are no unacceptable adverse impacts on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety, and take into account the cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality;
- c) ensure that any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions and any blasting vibrations are controlled, mitigated or removed at source⁷⁷, and establish appropriate noise limits for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties;
- d) not grant planning permission for peat extraction from new or extended sites;
- e) provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions. Bonds or other financial guarantees to underpin planning conditions should only be sought in exceptional circumstances;
- f) consider how to meet any demand for the extraction of building stone needed for the repair of heritage assets, taking account of the need to protect designated sites; and
- g) recognise the small-scale nature and impact of building and roofing stone quarries, and the need for a flexible approach to the duration of planning permissions reflecting the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites.

218. Local planning authorities should not normally permit other development proposals in Mineral Safeguarding Areas if it might constrain potential future use for mineral working.

Maintaining supply

219. Minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates by:

- a) preparing an annual Local Aggregate Assessment, either individually or jointly, to forecast future demand, based on a rolling average of 10 years' sales data and other relevant local information, and an assessment of all supply options (including marine dredged, secondary and recycled sources);
- b) participating in the operation of an Aggregate Working Party and taking the advice of that party into account when preparing their Local Aggregate Assessment;
- c) making provision for the land-won and other elements of their Local Aggregate

⁷⁷ National planning guidance on minerals sets out how these policies should be implemented.

Assessment in their mineral plans, taking account of the advice of the Aggregate Working Parties and the National Aggregate Co-ordinating Group as appropriate. Such provision should take the form of specific sites, preferred areas and/or areas of search and locational criteria as appropriate;

- d) taking account of any published National and Sub National Guidelines on future provision which should be used as a guideline when planning for the future demand for and supply of aggregates;
- e) using landbanks of aggregate minerals reserves principally as an indicator of the security of aggregate minerals supply, and to indicate the additional provision that needs to be made for new aggregate extraction and alternative supplies in mineral plans;
- f) maintaining landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock, whilst ensuring that the capacity of operations to supply a wide range of materials is not compromised⁷⁸;
- g) ensuring that large landbanks bound up in very few sites do not stifle competition; and
- h) calculating and maintaining separate landbanks for any aggregate materials of a specific type or quality which have a distinct and separate market.

220. Minerals planning authorities should plan for a steady and adequate supply of industrial minerals by:

- a) co-operating with neighbouring and more distant authorities to ensure an adequate provision of industrial minerals to support their likely use in industrial and manufacturing processes;
- b) encouraging safeguarding or stockpiling so that important minerals remain available for use;
- c) maintaining a stock of permitted reserves to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant, and the maintenance and improvement of existing plant and equipment⁷⁹; and
- d) taking account of the need for provision of brick clay from a number of different sources to enable appropriate blends to be made.

⁷⁸ Longer periods may be appropriate to take account of the need to supply a range of types of aggregates, locations of permitted reserves relative to markets, and productive capacity of permitted sites.

⁷⁹ These reserves should be at least 10 years for individual silica sand sites; at least 15 years for cement primary (chalk and limestone) and secondary (clay and shale) materials to maintain an existing plant, and for silica sand sites where significant new capital is required; and at least 25 years for brick clay, and for cement primary and secondary materials to support a new kiln.

Oil, gas and coal exploration and extraction

221. Minerals planning authorities should:

- a) when planning for on-shore oil and gas development, clearly distinguish between, and plan positively for, the three phases of development (exploration, appraisal and production), whilst ensuring appropriate monitoring and site restoration is provided for;
- b) encourage underground gas and carbon storage and associated infrastructure if local geological circumstances indicate its feasibility;
- c) indicate any areas where coal extraction and the disposal of colliery spoil may be acceptable;
- d) encourage the capture and use of methane from coal mines in active and abandoned coalfield areas; and
- e) provide for coal producers to extract separately, and if necessary stockpile, fireclay so that it remains available for use.

222. When determining planning applications, minerals planning authorities should ensure that the integrity and safety of underground storage facilities are appropriate, taking into account the maintenance of gas pressure, prevention of leakage of gas and the avoidance of pollution.

223. Planning permission should not be granted for the extraction of coal unless:

- a) the proposal is environmentally acceptable, or can be made so by planning conditions or obligations; or
- b) if it is not environmentally acceptable, then it provides national, local or community benefits which clearly outweigh its likely impacts (taking all relevant matters into account, including any residual environmental impacts).

Annex 1: Implementation

For the purposes of decision-making

224. The policies in this Framework are material considerations which should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication⁸⁰. Plans may also need to be revised to reflect policy changes which this Framework has made.
225. However, existing policies should not be considered out-of-date simply because they were adopted or made prior to the publication of this Framework. Due weight should be given to them, according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).
- ~~226. From the date of publication of this revision of the Framework, for decision-making purposes only, certain local planning authorities will only be required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of four years' worth of housing (with a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 77) against the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old⁸⁴, instead of a minimum of five years as set out in paragraph 77 of this Framework. This policy applies to those authorities which have an emerging local plan that has either been submitted for examination or has reached Regulation 18 or Regulation 19 (Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) stage, including both a policies map and proposed allocations towards meeting housing need. This provision does not apply to authorities who are not required to demonstrate a housing land supply, as set out in paragraph 76. These arrangements will apply for a period of two years from the publication date of this revision of the Framework.~~

For the purposes of plan-making

- ~~226. The policies in this Framework (published on [publication date]) will apply for the purpose of preparing local plans⁸² from [publication date + one month] unless one or more of the following apply:~~

~~⁸⁰ As an exception to this, the policy contained in paragraph 76 and the related reference in footnote 8 of this Framework should only be taken into account as a material consideration when dealing with applications made on or after the date of publication of this version of the Framework.~~

~~⁸⁴ Unless these strategic policies have been reviewed and found not to require updating. Where local housing need is used as the basis for assessing whether a four year supply of specific deliverable sites exists, it should be calculated using the standard method set out in national planning guidance.~~

~~⁸² Under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.~~

- a. the emerging annual housing requirement⁸³ in a local plan that reaches or has reached Regulation 19⁸⁴ (pre-submission stage) on or before [publication date + one month] is no more than 200 dwellings below the published relevant Local Housing Need figure⁸⁵;
- b. the local plan is a Part 2 plan that does not introduce new strategic policies setting the housing requirement unless the relevant Local Plan Part 1 has been prepared applying the policies in this version of the Framework;
- c. the local plan is or has been submitted for examination under Regulation 22⁸⁶ on or before [publication date + one month].

Where a, b or c applies, the plan will be examined under the relevant previous version of the Framework⁸⁷

227. Where paragraph 226 c) applies, local plans that reach adoption with an annual housing requirement⁸⁴ that is more than 200 dwellings lower than the relevant published Local Housing Need figure⁸⁶ will be expected to commence plan-making in the new plan-making system at the earliest opportunity to address the shortfall in housing need.

228. After applying the policies of this version of the Framework, local plans that have reached Regulation 19 (pre-submission stage) on or before [publication date + one month] with an emerging⁸⁸ annual housing requirement⁸⁴ that is more than 200 dwellings lower than the relevant Local Housing Need⁸⁶ figure should proceed to examination⁸⁹ within a maximum of 18 months from [publication date].

229. For Spatial Development Strategies, this Framework applies to strategies that reach consultation under section 335(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 on or after [publication date + one month]. Strategies that reach this stage on or before this date will be examined under the relevant previous version of the Framework.

~~229. For the purposes of the policy on renewable and low carbon energy and heat in-plans in paragraph 160 apply to plans that have reached Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (pre-submission) stage, or that reach this stage within three months, of the publication~~

⁸³ Defined as the total housing requirement, divided by the number of years in the plan period. The housing requirement can include any unmet need arrangements. Where a joint local plan is in preparation, to determine whether a shortfall exists between the emerging annual housing requirement and the relevant Local Housing Need figure, any shortfall should be apportioned to each local authority equally to determine whether a shortfall exceeds 200 dwellings per annum. Where there is an operative Spatial Development Strategy (SDS) that is less than 5 years old, the SDS will continue to provide the housing requirement for relevant emerging local plans.

⁸⁴ Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

⁸⁵ As published on [insert date] at [insert web link].

⁸⁶ Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

⁸⁷ The policies in the version of this Framework (published on 19 December 2023) may apply for the purpose of preparing plans that reach or reached Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (pre-submission) stage between 19 March 2024 and [publication date plus one month].

⁸⁸ Set out in the most recent Regulation 19 (pre-submission stage) consultation.

⁸⁹ Meaning the plan has reached Regulation 22 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

~~of the previous version. For Spatial Development Strategies, paragraph to strategies that have reached consultation under section 335(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, or that within three months of the date of publication of the previous version of this Framework published on 5 September 2023.~~

a.

~~226.230.~~ -For the purposes of the policy on larger-scale development in paragraph 22, this applies only to plans that have not reached Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (pre-submission) stage at the point the previous version of this Framework was published on 20 July 2021 (for Spatial Development Strategies this would refer to consultation under section 335(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999).

~~230.~~ The policies in this Framework (published on 19 December 2023) will apply for the purpose of examining plans, where those plans reach regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (pre-submission) stage after 19 March 2024. Plans that reach pre-submission consultation on or before this date will be examined under the relevant previous version of the Framework in accordance with the above arrangements. For Spatial Development Strategies, this Framework applies to strategies that have reached consultation under section 335(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999 after 19 March 2024. Strategies that reach this stage on or before this date will be examined under the relevant previous version of the Framework in accordance with the above arrangements. Where plans or strategies are withdrawn or otherwise do not proceed to become part of the development plan, the policies contained in this Framework will apply to any subsequent plan or strategy produced for the area concerned.

~~227.231.~~ The policies in the original National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012 will apply for the purpose of examining plans, where those plans were submitted on or before 24 January 2019, unless such plans are withdrawn or otherwise do not proceed to become part of the development plan.

~~228.232.~~ Where plans or strategies are withdrawn or otherwise do not proceed to become part of the development plan, the policies contained in this Framework will apply to any subsequent plan or strategy produced for the area concerned.

~~229.233.~~ The Government will continue to explore with individual areas the potential for planning freedoms and flexibilities, for example where this would facilitate an increase in the amount of housing that can be delivered.

Annex 2: Glossary

Affordable housing: housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions⁹⁰:

a) **Affordable housing for rent:** meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).

b) **First Homes:** is as set out in the 'Affordable Homes Update' Written Ministerial Statement dated 24 May 2021. First Homes come forward through the First Homes exception sites and through developer contributions.

~~**Starter homes:** is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.~~

b)c) **Discounted market sales housing:** is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.

e)d) **Other affordable routes to home ownership:** is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Air quality management areas: Areas designated by local authorities because they are not likely to achieve national air quality objectives by the relevant deadlines.

Ancient or veteran tree: A tree which, because of its age, size and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. All ancient trees are veteran trees. Not

⁹⁰ This definition should be read in conjunction with relevant policy contained in the Affordable Homes Update Written Ministerial Statement published on 24 May 2021.

all veteran trees are old enough to be ancient, but are old relative to other trees of the same species. Very few trees of any species reach the ancient life-stage.

Ancient woodland: An area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS).

~~**Annual position statement:** A document setting out the 5-year housing land supply position on 1st April each year, prepared by the local planning authority in consultation with developers and others who have an impact on delivery.~~

Archaeological interest: There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.

Article 4 direction: A direction made under [Article 4 of the Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) Order 2015](#) which withdraws permitted development rights granted by that Order.

Best and most versatile agricultural land: Land in grades 1, 2 and 3a of the Agricultural Land Classification.

Brownfield land: See Previously developed land.

Brownfield land registers: Registers of previously developed land that local planning authorities consider to be appropriate for residential development, having regard to criteria in the Town and Country Planning (Brownfield Land Registers) Regulations 2017. Local planning authorities will be able to trigger a grant of permission in principle for residential development on suitable sites in their registers where they follow the required procedures.

Build to Rent: Purpose built housing that is typically 100% rented out. It can form part of a wider multi-tenure development comprising either flats or houses, but should be on the same site and/or contiguous with the main development. Schemes will usually offer longer tenancy agreements of three years or more, and will typically be professionally managed stock in single ownership and management control.

Climate change adaptation: Adjustments made to natural or human systems in response to the actual or anticipated impacts of climate change, to mitigate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.

Climate change mitigation: Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Coastal change management area: An area identified in plans as likely to be affected by physical change to the shoreline through erosion, coastal landslip, permanent inundation or coastal accretion.

Community forest: An area identified through the England Community Forest Programme to revitalise countryside and green space in and around major conurbations.

Community Right to Build Order: An Order made by the local planning authority (under

the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a site-specific development proposal or classes of development.

Community-led developments: A development instigated and taken forward by a not-for-profit organisation ~~set up and that is~~ primarily for the purpose of meeting the housing needs of its members and the wider local community, rather than being a primarily commercial enterprise. The organisation is created, managed and democratically controlled by its members. It may take any one of various legal forms including a community land trust, housing co-operative and community benefit society. Membership of the organisation is open to all beneficiaries and prospective beneficiaries of that organisation. The organisation should own, manage or steward the homes in a manner consistent with its purpose, for example through a mutually supported arrangement with a Registered Provider of Social Housing. The benefits of the development to the specified community should be clearly defined and consideration given to how these benefits can be protected over time, including in the event of the organisation being wound up.

Competent person (to prepare site investigation information): A person with a recognised relevant qualification, sufficient experience in dealing with the type(s) of pollution or land instability, and membership of a relevant professional organisation.

Conservation (for heritage policy): The process of maintaining and managing change to a heritage asset in a way that sustains and, where appropriate, enhances its significance.

Decentralised energy: Local renewable and local low carbon energy sources.

Deliverable: To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years. In particular:

- a) sites which do not involve major development and have planning permission, and all sites with detailed planning permission, should be considered deliverable until permission expires, unless there is clear evidence that homes will not be delivered within five years (for example because they are no longer viable, there is no longer a demand for the type of units or sites have long term phasing plans).
- b) where a site has outline planning permission for major development, has been allocated in a development plan, has a grant of permission in principle, or is identified on a brownfield register, it should only be considered deliverable where there is clear evidence that housing completions will begin on site within five years.

Design code: A set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. The graphic and written components of the code should build upon a design vision, such as a masterplan or other design and development framework for a site or area.

Design guide: A document providing guidance on how development can be carried out in accordance with good design practice, often produced by a local authority.

Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation.

Designated rural areas: National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and areas designated as 'rural' under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985.

Developable: To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

Development plan: Is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and includes adopted local plans, neighbourhood plans that have been made and published spatial development strategies, together with any regional strategy policies that remain in force. Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Edge of centre: For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

Environmental impact assessment: A procedure to be followed for certain types of project to ensure that decisions are made in full knowledge of any likely significant effects on the environment.

Essential local workers: Public sector employees who provide frontline services in areas including health, education and community safety – such as NHS staff, teachers, police, firefighters and military personnel, social care and childcare workers.

General aviation airfields: Licenced or unlicenced aerodromes with hard or grass runways, often with extensive areas of open land related to aviation activity.

Geodiversity: The range of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils and landforms.

Green infrastructure: A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.

Grey belt: For the purposes of plan-making and decision-making, 'grey belt' is defined as land in the green belt comprising Previously Developed Land and any other parcels and/or areas of Green Belt land that make a limited contribution to the five Green Belt purposes (as defined in para 140 of this Framework), but excluding those areas or assets of particular importance listed in footnote 7 of this Framework (other than land designated as Green Belt).

Habitats site: Any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites.

Heritage asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Heritage coast: Areas of undeveloped coastline which are managed to conserve their natural beauty and, where appropriate, to improve accessibility for visitors.

Historic environment: All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.

Historic environment record: Information services that seek to provide access to comprehensive and dynamic resources relating to the historic environment of a defined geographic area for public benefit and use.

Housing Delivery Test: Measures net homes delivered in a local authority area against the homes required, using national statistics and local authority data. The Secretary of State will publish the Housing Delivery Test results for each local authority in England annually.

International, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity: All international sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, and Ramsar sites), national sites (Sites of Special Scientific Interest) and locally designated sites including Local Wildlife Sites.

Irreplaceable habitat: Habitats which would be technically very difficult (or take a very significant time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, taking into account their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.

Local Development Order: An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) that grants planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Local Enterprise Partnership: A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, established for the purpose of creating or improving the conditions for economic growth in an area.

Local housing need: The number of homes identified as being needed through the application of the standard method set out in national planning guidance ~~(or, in the context of preparing strategic policies only, this may be calculated using a justified alternative approach as provided for in paragraph 61 of this Framework).~~

Local Nature Partnership: A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, established for the purpose of protecting and improving the natural environment in an area and the benefits derived from it.

Local planning authority: The public authority whose duty it is to carry out specific

planning functions for a particular area. All references to local planning authority include the district council, London borough council, county council, Broads Authority, National Park Authority, the Mayor of London and a development corporation, to the extent appropriate to their responsibilities.

Local plan: A plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

Major development⁹¹: For housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. For non-residential development it means additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or a site of 1 hectare or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Major hazard sites, installations and pipelines: Sites and infrastructure, including licensed explosive sites and nuclear installations, around which Health and Safety Executive (and Office for Nuclear Regulation) consultation distances to mitigate the consequences to public safety of major accidents may apply.

Mansard roof: A type of roof that is characterised by two slopes, the lower steep and the upper shallow. It is generally regarded as a suitable type of roof extension for buildings which are part of a terrace of at least three buildings and at least two stories tall, with a parapet running the entire length of the front façade (reference: Create Streets, 2021, *Living Tradition*).

Minerals resources of local and national importance: Minerals which are necessary to meet society's needs, including aggregates, brickclay (especially Etruria Marl and fireclay), silica sand (including high grade silica sands), coal derived fly ash in single use deposits, cement raw materials, gypsum, salt, fluorspar, shallow and deep-mined coal, oil and gas (including conventional and unconventional hydrocarbons), tungsten, kaolin, ball clay, potash, polyhalite and local minerals of importance to heritage assets and local distinctiveness.

Mineral Consultation Area: a geographical area based on a Mineral Safeguarding Area, where the district or borough council should consult the Mineral Planning Authority for any proposals for non-minerals development.

Mineral Safeguarding Area: An area designated by minerals planning authorities which covers known deposits of minerals which are desired to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.

⁹¹ Other than for the specific purposes of paragraphs 182 and 183 in this Framework.

National trails: Long distance routes for walking, cycling and horse riding.

Natural Flood Management: managing flood and coastal erosion risk by protecting, restoring and emulating the natural 'regulating' function of catchments, rivers, floodplains and coasts.

Nature Recovery Network: An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is coordinated action for species and habitats.

Neighbourhood Development Order: An Order made by a local planning authority (under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) through which parish councils and neighbourhood forums can grant planning permission for a specific development proposal or classes of development.

Neighbourhood plan: A plan prepared by a parish council or neighbourhood forum for a designated neighbourhood area. In law this is described as a neighbourhood development plan in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Non-strategic policies: Policies contained in a neighbourhood plan, or those policies in a local plan that are not strategic policies.

Older people: People over or approaching retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly; and whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing through to the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open space: All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Original building: A building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.

Out of centre: A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town: A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

Outstanding universal value: Cultural and/or natural significance which is so exceptional as to transcend national boundaries and to be of common importance for present and future generations. An individual Statement of Outstanding Universal Value is agreed and adopted by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee for each World Heritage Site.

People with disabilities: People have a disability if they have a physical or mental impairment, and that impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. These persons include, but are not limited to, people with ambulatory difficulties, blindness, learning difficulties, autism and mental health needs.

Permission in principle: A form of planning consent which establishes that a site is suitable for a specified amount of housing-led development in principle. Following a grant of permission in principle, the site must receive a grant of technical details consent before development can proceed.

Planning condition: A condition imposed on a grant of planning permission (in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) or a condition included in a Local Development Order or Neighbourhood Development Order.

Planning obligation: A legal agreement entered into under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 to mitigate the impacts of a development proposal.

Playing field: The whole of a site which encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.

Previously developed land: Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or was last occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill, where provision for restoration has been made through development management procedures; land in built-up areas such as residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape.

Primary shopping area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated.

Priority habitats and species: Species and Habitats of Principal Importance included in the England Biodiversity List published by the Secretary of State under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

Ramsar sites: Wetlands of international importance, designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention.

Renewable and low carbon energy: Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural exception sites: Small sites used for affordable housing in perpetuity where sites would not normally be used for housing. Rural exception sites seek to address the needs of the local community by accommodating households who are either current residents or have an existing family or employment connection. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding.

Recycled aggregates: aggregates resulting from the processing of inorganic materials previously used in construction, e.g. construction and demolition waste.

Safeguarding zone: An area defined in Circular 01/03: *Safeguarding aerodromes, technical sites and military explosives storage areas*, to which specific safeguarding provisions apply.

Secondary aggregates: aggregates from industrial wastes such as glass (cullet), incinerator bottom ash, coal derived fly ash, railway ballast, fine ceramic waste (pitcher), and scrap tyres; and industrial and minerals by-products, notably waste from china clay, coal and slate extraction and spent foundry sand. These can also include hydraulically bound materials.

Self-build and custom-build housing: Housing built by an individual, a group of individuals, or persons working with or for them, to be occupied by that individual. Such housing can be either market or affordable housing. A legal definition, for the purpose of applying the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended), is contained in section 1(A1) and (A2) of that Act.

Setting of a heritage asset: The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.

Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset's physical presence, but also from its setting. For World Heritage Sites, the cultural value described within each site's Statement of Outstanding Universal Value forms part of its significance.

Special Areas of Conservation: Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.

Special Protection Areas: Areas classified under regulation 15 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds.

Site investigation information: Includes a risk assessment of land potentially affected by contamination, or ground stability and slope stability reports, as appropriate. All investigations of land potentially affected by contamination should be carried out in accordance with established procedures (such as BS10175 Investigation of Potentially Contaminated Sites – Code of Practice).

Site of Special Scientific Interest: Sites designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

Spatial development strategy: A plan containing strategic policies prepared by a Mayor or a combined authority. It includes the London Plan (prepared under provisions in the Greater London Authority Act 1999) and plans prepared by combined authorities that have been given equivalent plan-making functions by an order made under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 (as amended).

Stepping stones: Pockets of habitat that, while not necessarily connected, facilitate the movement of species across otherwise inhospitable landscapes.

Strategic environmental assessment: A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Strategic policies: Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with the requirements of Section 19 (1B-E) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Strategic policy-making authorities: Those authorities responsible for producing strategic policies (local planning authorities, and elected Mayors or combined authorities, where this power has been conferred). This definition applies whether the authority is in the process of producing strategic policies or not.

Supplementary planning documents: Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainable transport modes: Any efficient, safe and accessible means of transport with overall low impact on the environment, including walking and cycling, ultra low and zero emission vehicles, car sharing and public transport.

Town centre: Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Transport assessment: A comprehensive and systematic process that sets out transport issues relating to a proposed development. It identifies measures required to improve accessibility and safety for all modes of travel, particularly for alternatives to the car such as walking, cycling and public transport, and measures that will be needed deal with the anticipated transport impacts of the development.

Transport statement: A simplified version of a transport assessment where it is agreed the transport issues arising from development proposals are limited and a full transport assessment is not required.

Travel plan: A long-term management strategy for an organisation or site that seeks to deliver sustainable transport objectives and is regularly reviewed.

Wildlife corridor: Areas of habitat connecting wildlife populations.

Windfall sites: Sites not specifically identified in the development plan.

Annex 3: Flood risk vulnerability classification

ESSENTIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- Essential transport infrastructure (including mass evacuation routes) which has to cross the area at risk.
- Essential utility infrastructure which has to be located in a flood risk area for operational reasons, including infrastructure for electricity supply including generation, storage and distribution systems; and water treatment works that need to remain operational in times of flood.
- Wind turbines.
- Solar farms

HIGHLY VULNERABLE

- Police and ambulance stations; fire stations and command centres; telecommunications installations required to be operational during flooding.
- Emergency dispersal points.
- Basement dwellings.
- Caravans, mobile homes and park homes intended for permanent residential use.
- Installations requiring hazardous substances consent. (Where there is a demonstrable need to locate such installations for bulk storage of materials with port or other similar facilities, or such installations with energy infrastructure or carbon capture and storage installations, that require coastal or water-side locations, or need to be located in other high flood risk areas, in these instances the facilities should be classified as 'Essential Infrastructure'.)

MORE VULNERABLE

- Hospitals
- Residential institutions such as residential care homes, children's homes, social services homes, prisons and hostels.
- Buildings used for dwelling houses, student halls of residence, drinking establishments, nightclubs and hotels.
- Non-residential uses for health services, nurseries and educational establishments.
- Landfill* and sites used for waste management facilities for hazardous waste.
- Sites used for holiday or short-let caravans and camping, subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan.

LESS VULNERABLE

- Police, ambulance and fire stations which are not required to be operational during flooding.

- Buildings used for shops; financial, professional and other services; restaurants, cafes and hot food takeaways; offices; general industry, storage and distribution; non-residential institutions not included in the 'more vulnerable' class; and assembly and leisure.
- Land and buildings used for agriculture and forestry.
- Waste treatment (except landfill* and hazardous waste facilities).
- Minerals working and processing (except for sand and gravel working).
- Water treatment works which do not need to remain operational during times of flood.
- Sewage treatment works, if adequate measures to control pollution and manage sewage during flooding events are in place.
- Car parks.

WATER-COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT

- Flood control infrastructure.
- Water transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sewage transmission infrastructure and pumping stations.
- Sand and gravel working.
- Docks, marinas and wharves.
- Navigation facilities.
- Ministry of Defence installations.
- Ship building, repairing and dismantling, dockside fish processing and refrigeration and compatible activities requiring a waterside location.
- Water-based recreation (excluding sleeping accommodation).
- Lifeguard and coastguard stations.
- Amenity open space, nature conservation and biodiversity, outdoor sports and recreation and essential facilities such as changing rooms.
- Essential ancillary sleeping or residential accommodation for staff required by uses in this category, subject to a specific warning and evacuation plan.

* Landfill is as defined in Schedule 10 of the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010.

Annex 4: Viability in relation to Green Belt release

- 1) To determine land value for a viability assessment, a benchmark land value should be established on the basis of the existing use value (EUV) of the land, plus a reasonable and proportionate premium for the landowner. For the purposes of plan-making and decision-taking, it is considered that a benchmark land value of [xxxx] allows an appropriate premium for landowners. Local planning authorities should set benchmark land values informed by this, and by local material considerations.
- 2) When determining planning applications, if land released from Green Belt is transacted above the benchmark land value and cannot deliver policy-compliant development, then planning permission should not be granted, subject to other material considerations.
- 3) Where policy compliant development can be delivered, viability assessment should not be undertaken, irrespective of the price at which land is transacted, and higher levels of affordable housing should not be sought on the grounds of viability.
- 4) Where land is transacted below the benchmark land value but still cannot deliver policy-compliant development, it is up to the applicant to demonstrate whether particular circumstances justify the need for a viability assessment at the application stage. The weight to be given to a viability assessment is a matter for the decision maker, having regard to all the circumstances in the case, including whether the plan and the viability evidence underpinning it is up to date, and any change in site circumstances since the plan was brought into force. Where a viability negotiation to reduce policy delivery has been undertaken, a late-stage review should be conducted to assess whether further contributions are required.

Appendix 2



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Matthew Pennycook MP
Minister of State

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To: Housing Industry Stakeholders

30 July 2024

Building the homes we need

Today, the Deputy Prime Minister set out to the House of Commons this Government's plan to build the homes this country needs.

Planning reform

The Government has been clear that the only route to improving the prosperity of our country and the living standards of working people is through sustained economic growth. We have also been clear that this will not happen without radical and decisive reform to our planning system, and reversing the decline in social and affordable housing.

That is why today the Government has launched a consultation on proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), detailed wider changes to the planning system, and announced new flexibilities for councils and housing associations. Recognising the urgency of these reforms, the Government will publish a response to the consultation and a revised NPPF in the autumn, so that policy changes can take effect as soon as possible – alongside taking further action on social and affordable housing.

The consultation on the NPPF and other changes to the planning system is open for eight weeks. I strongly encourage you to submit a response by the deadline. The proposals it sets out speak to concerns that many of you have raised directly with me: that instead of supporting sustainable growth, the planning system presents a barrier to high-quality development, failing to tackle a housing crisis which is crippling the aspirations of young people and leaves some of the most vulnerable without access to a safe and secure home. We said during the campaign that we would not duck the tough choices – I hope you will agree that today we are delivering on that promise by getting on with fixing the foundations of our housing system.

Housing targets

We cannot meet our housing needs without identifying enough land through local plans. We are therefore reversing last year's changes which loosened the requirement for local authorities to

plan for and meet their housing needs and mandating that the standard method is used as the basis for determining local authorities' housing requirements in all circumstances.

Under these changes, local authorities will be able to justify a lower housing requirement than the standard method figure only on the basis of hard constraints, such as flood risk areas. They will need to demonstrate to the Planning Inspectorate that they have taken all possible steps – including optimising density, sharing need with neighbouring authorities and (as I will come onto explain) reviewing Green Belt boundaries – before a lower housing requirement will be considered.

In keeping with the scale of our ambition, we are going further and revising the existing standard method, raising the overall level of these targets from around 300,000 to approximately 370,000. The new method provides a stable and balanced approach. It requires local authorities to plan for numbers of homes that are proportionate to the size of existing communities, by taking 0.8 per cent of existing stock as a floor, which is broadly consistent with the average rate of housing growth over recent years; and it then incorporates an uplift based on how out of step house prices are with local incomes, using an affordability multiplier of 0.6 per cent, up from 0.25 per cent in the previous method. The new method drives a distribution of numbers that matches our ambition to drive growth across all corners of the country.

Along with the new method, the wider reversals we are making to last December's planning changes will have the effect of bringing more authorities under 'the presumption' in favour of sustainable development. Given the scale of the housing crisis, we must allow development to come forward where local plans lag behind local needs, but we are clear that this cannot mean lower standards. We are setting out new safeguards that mean that schemes that rely on the presumption to secure approval will meet the high standards we expect of all development.

Green Belt and grey belt

The Government is clear that we must take a brownfield first approach, and the consultation seeks views on proposals to support such development. This includes broadening the existing definition of brownfield land and setting a strengthened expectation that applications on brownfield land will be approved. However, brownfield development alone will not be enough to meet our housing needs, which is why we are consulting on changes that would see councils required to review boundaries and release Green Belt land where necessary to meet unmet housing or commercial need.

I want to be clear that this Government is committed to protecting nature. That is why land safeguarded for environmental reasons will maintain its existing protections. But we know that large parts of the Green Belt have little ecological value and are inaccessible to the public, and that the development that happens under the existing framework can be haphazard – too often lacking the affordable homes and wider infrastructure that communities need. Meanwhile, low quality parts of the Green Belt, like disused car parks and industrial estates, remain undeveloped.

We will therefore ask local authorities to prioritise sustainable development on previously developed land and other low quality 'grey belt' sites, before looking to other sustainable locations

for meeting this need. We are defining grey belt land through reference to the specific reasons for which the Green Belt exists, so that it captures sites that are making a limited contribution to the Green Belt's purposes, with additional guidance set out in the consultation.

We want decisions on where to release land to remain locally led, as we believe that local authorities are in the best position to judge what land within current Green Belt boundaries will be most suitable for development. But we also want to ensure enough land is identified in the planning system to meet housing and commercial need, and so we have proposed a clear route to bringing forward schemes on 'grey belt' land outside the plan process where delivery falls short of need.

To make sure development on the Green Belt truly benefits your communities, we are also establishing firm golden rules, with a target of at least 50% of the homes onsite being affordable, and a requirement that all developments are supported by the infrastructure needed – including GP surgeries, schools and transport links – as well as greater provision of accessible green space.

Social and affordable housing

Although increasing supply will be an essential part of improving affordability, we must also go further in building a greater share of genuinely affordable homes. This is vital to help local authorities manage local pressures, including tackling and preventing homelessness.

We are therefore proposing a number of changes in planning policy designed to support the delivery of affordable homes. It is also evident that mixed use sites, which can comprise a variety of ownership and rental tenures including rented affordable housing and build to rent, provide a range of benefits – creating diverse communities and supporting timely build out rates. Our changes today mean that local authorities will need to take a positive approach to mixed tenure sites through both plans and decisions.

Alongside our reforms to the planning system, the Government has today confirmed a range of new flexibilities for councils and housing associations, with more to follow in the coming months.

Within the current Affordable Homes Programme, we know that particularly outside London, almost all of the funding for the 2021-2026 programme is contractually committed. The Deputy Prime Minister has confirmed that the Government will press Homes England and the Greater London Authority to maximise the number of Social Rent homes in allocating the remaining funding in the current Affordable Homes Programme.

In addition to this, she has confirmed that we will also bring forward details of future Government investment in social and affordable housing at the Spending Review, so that social housing providers can plan for the future and help deliver the biggest increase in affordable housebuilding in a generation. We will work with Mayors and local areas to consider how funding can be used in their areas and support devolution and local growth.

The Deputy Prime Minister has also confirmed that the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) 3 will be going ahead, with £450 million provided to councils to acquire and create homes for families at risk of homelessness. This will create over 2,000 affordable homes for some of the most vulnerable families in society.

We recognise that councils and housing associations need support to build their capacity if they are to make a greater contribution to affordable housing supply. We will set out plans at the next fiscal event to give councils and housing associations the rent stability they need to be able to borrow and invest in both new and existing homes, while also ensuring that there are appropriate protections for both existing and future social housing tenants.

The Deputy prime Minister has announced three updates on the Right to Buy scheme, recognising that as we work to build more homes, we also need to do better at maintaining our existing stock:

- first, we have started to review the increased Right to Buy discounts introduced in 2012, and we will bring forward secondary legislation to implement changes in the autumn;
- second, we will review Right to Buy more widely, including looking at eligibility criteria and protections for new homes, bringing forward a consultation also in the autumn; and
- third, we are increasing the flexibilities that apply to how councils can use their Right to Buy receipts.

We have also confirmed that this Government will introduce Awaab's Law into the social rented sector. We will set out more detail and bring forward the secondary legislation to implement this in due course and we will bring forward more detail in the autumn on our plans to raise standards and strengthen resident voice.

Building infrastructure to grow the economy

Building more homes is fundamental to unlocking economic growth, but we must also build the critical infrastructure aligned with the Government's industrial strategy, future local growth plans, and commitment to zero carbon electricity generation by 2030.

First, the Government is determined to do more to support those sectors which will be the engine of the UK's economy in the years ahead. We will therefore change policy to make it easier to build growth-supporting infrastructure such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, electricity grid and the networks that support freight and logistics, and we are seeking views on whether we should expand the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime to include these types of projects.

Second, we are proposing to: boost the weight that planning policy gives to the benefits associated with renewables; bring larger scale onshore wind projects back into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime; and change the threshold for solar development to reflect developments in solar technology.

Third, in recognition of the desperate need to renew our water infrastructure, we are testing whether to bring a broader definition of water infrastructure into the scope of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects process.

Finally, recognising the role that planning plays in delivering the broader needs of communities, we are proposing a number of changes to support important public services infrastructure, including hospitals and educational facilities, a more progressive approach to transport planning, and promoting healthy communities.

Supporting local planning

Local plans must be at the centre of delivering these changes. They are the right way to plan for growth and environmental enhancement, ensuring local leaders and their communities come together to agree the future of their areas. Once in place, and kept up to date, local plans provide the stability and certainty that local people and developers want to see our planning system deliver. That is why the Government's goal is for universal coverage of local plans as quickly as possible.

We know that this is an ambitious goal: less than a third of local authorities currently have up-to-date plans. And so we are setting out a pragmatic approach to applying our reforms changes to plans already in progress.

- For plans at examination, this means allowing them to continue, although where there is a significant gap between the plan and the new local housing need figure, we will expect authorities to begin a plan immediately in the new system.
- For plans at an advanced stage of preparation (Regulation 19), it means allowing them to continue to examination unless there is a significant gap between the plan and the new local housing need figure, in which case we propose to ask authorities to rework their plans to take account of the higher figure.
- Areas at an earlier stage of plan development should prepare plans against the revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework and progress as quickly as possible.

This will delay the adoption of some plans, but the Government wants to balance keeping plans flowing to adoption with making sure they plan for sufficient housing. I also know that going back and increasing housing numbers will create additional work, which is why we will provide financial support to those authorities asked to do this. The Government is committed to taking action to ensure authorities have up-to-date local plans in place, supporting local democratic engagement with how, not if, necessary development should happen. While I hope the need will not arise, the Deputy Prime Minister will not hesitate to use her powers of intervention should it be necessary to drive progress – including taking over an authority's plan making directly. The consultation we have published today sets out corresponding proposals to amend the local plan intervention criteria.

We will also empower Inspectors to be able to take the tough decisions they need to at examination, by being clear that they should not be devoting significant time and energy during an examination to 'fix' a deficient plan – in turn allowing Inspectors to focus on those plans that are capable of being found sound and can be adopted quickly.

More broadly, the Government knows how important it will be to bolster capacity and capability in planning departments up and down the country. In addition to recruiting 300 new planning officers, we are therefore consulting on increasing fees for householder applications, which for too long have been held well below cost recovery levels, constraining planning departments in the process. Moving to a cost recovery level of £528 would still be low when compared to other professional fees associated with an application, and is estimated to represent less than 1 per cent of the average overall costs of carrying out a development, with homeowners also benefiting from a range of permitted development rights which allow them to improve and extend their homes without the need to apply for planning permission.

In the medium term, the Government wants to see planning services put on a more sustainable footing, which is why we are consulting on whether to use the Planning and Infrastructure Bill to allow local authorities to set their own fees, better reflecting local costs and reducing financial pressures on local authority budgets.

Strategic planning

We know however that whilst planning at the local authority level is critical, it is not enough to deliver the growth we want to see. That is why our manifesto was clear that housing need in England cannot be met without planning for growth on a larger than local scale, and that it will be necessary to introduce effective new mechanisms for cross-boundary strategic planning.

This will play a vital role in delivering sustainable growth and addressing key spatial issues – including meeting housing needs, delivering strategic infrastructure, building the economy, and improving climate resilience. Strategic planning will also be important in planning for local growth and Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

We will therefore take the steps necessary to enable universal coverage of strategic planning within this Parliament, which we will formalise in legislation. This model will support elected Mayors in overseeing the development and agreement of Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) for their areas. The Government will also explore the most effective arrangements for developing SDSs outside of mayoral areas, in order that we can achieve universal coverage in England, recognising that we will need to consider both the appropriate geographies to use to cover functional economic areas, and the right democratic mechanisms for securing agreement.

Across all areas, these arrangements will encourage partnership working but we are determined to ensure that, whatever the circumstances, SDSs can be concluded and adopted. The Government will work with local leaders and the wider sector to consult on, develop and test these arrangements in the months ahead before legislation is introduced, including consideration of the capacity and capabilities needed such as geospatial data and digital tools.

While this is the right approach in the medium-term, we do not want to wait where there are opportunities to make progress now. We are therefore also taking three immediate steps.

- First, in addition to the continued operation of the duty to cooperate in the current system, we are strengthening the position in the NPPF on cooperation between authorities, in order to ensure that the right engagement is occurring on the sharing of unmet housing need and other strategic issues where plans are being progressed in the short-term.
- Second, we will work in concert with Mayoral Combined Authorities to explore extending existing powers to develop an SDS.
- Third, we intend to identify priority groupings of other authorities where strategic planning – and in particular the sharing of housing need – would provide particular benefits, and engage directly with the authorities concerned to structure and support this cooperation, using powers of intervention as and where necessary.

Next phase of reform

As the Deputy Prime Minister set out to the House, these reforms are just a first step to deliver on our ambitious growth mission.

As announced in the King's Speech, we will introduce a Planning and Infrastructure Bill later in the first session. This will: modernise planning committees by introducing a national scheme of delegation that focuses their efforts on the applications that really matter, and places more trust in skilled professional planners to do the rest; enable local authorities to put their planning departments on a sustainable footing; further reform compulsory purchase compensation rules to ensure that what is paid to landowners is fair but not excessive; streamline the delivery process for critical infrastructure; and provide any necessary legal underpinning to ensure we can use development to fund nature recovery where currently both are stalled.

We will consult on the right approach to strategic planning, in particular how we structure arrangements outside of Mayoral Combined Authorities, considering both the right geographies and democratic mechanisms.

We will say more imminently about how we intend to deliver on our commitment to build a new generation of new towns. This will include large-scale new communities built on greenfield land and separated from other nearby settlements, but also a larger number of urban extensions and urban regeneration schemes that will work with the grain of development in any given area.

And because we know that the housing crisis cannot be fixed overnight, the Government will in the coming months publish a long-term housing strategy alongside the Spending Review which the Chancellor announced yesterday.

I know you recognise that all of us have a part to play in delivering the safe, high quality, and affordable homes and infrastructure our country needs. I welcome the industry's commitments today to work in partnership with the Government to deliver this historic housebuilding ambition.

I look forward to seeing faster delivery, more affordable housing, and increased investment in training as well as fair, secure work for all. I look forward to receiving your consultation responses and working together going forwards.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matthew Pennycook', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Matthew Pennycook MP
Minister of State

Appendix 3



Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Rt Hon Angela Rayner MP

*Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for
Housing, Communities & Local Government*
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

To: all local authority Leaders in England
Cc: all local authority Chief Executives in
England

30 July 2024

Playing your part in building the homes we need

Earlier today, I set out to the House of Commons the Government's plan to build the homes this country so desperately needs. Our plan is ambitious, it is radical, and I know it will not be without controversy – but as the Prime Minister said on the steps of Downing Street, our work is urgent, and in few areas is that urgency starker than in housing.

As the Leaders and Chief Executives of England's local authorities, you know how dire the situation has become and the depth of the housing crisis in which we find ourselves as a nation. You see it as you place record numbers of homeless children in temporary accommodation; as you grapple with waiting lists for social housing getting longer and longer; and as your younger residents are priced out of home ownership.

It is because of this I know that, like every member of the Government, you will feel not just a professional responsibility but a moral obligation to see more homes built. To take the tough choices necessary to fix the foundations of our housing system. And we will only succeed in this shared mission if we work together – because it falls to you and your authorities not only to plan for the houses we need, but also to deliver the affordable and social housing that can provide working families with a route to a secure home.

To that end, and in a spirit of collaboration and of shared endeavour, I wanted to set out the principal elements of our plan – including what you can expect of the Government, and what we are asking of you.

Universal coverage of local plans

I believe strongly in the plan making system. It is the right way to plan for growth and environmental enhancement, ensuring local leaders and their communities come together to agree the future of their areas. Once in place, and kept up to date, local plans provide the stability and certainty that local people and developers want to see our planning system deliver. In the absence of a plan, development will come forward on a piecemeal basis, with much less public engagement and fewer guarantees that it is the best outcome for your communities.

That is why **our goal has to be for universal coverage of ambitious local plans as quickly as possible**. I would therefore like to draw your attention to the proposed timelines for plan-making set out in Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation. My objective is to drive all plans to adoption as fast as possible, with the goal of achieving universal plan coverage in this Parliament, while making sure that these plans are sufficiently ambitious.

This will of course mean different things for different authorities.

- For **plans at examination** this means allowing them to continue, although where there is a significant gap between the plan and the new local housing need figure, we will expect authorities to begin a plan immediately in the new system.
- For **plans at an advanced stage of preparation** (Regulation 19), it means allowing them to continue to examination unless there is a significant gap between the plan and the new local housing need figure, in which case we propose to ask authorities to rework their plans to take account of the higher figure.
- **Areas at an earlier stage of plan development**, should prepare plans against the revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework and progress as quickly as possible.

I understand that will delay the adoption of some plans, but I want to balance keeping plans flowing to adoption with making sure they plan for sufficient housing. I also know that going back and increasing housing numbers will create additional work, which is why we will provide financial support to those authorities asked to do this. The Government is committed to taking action to ensure authorities have up-to-date local plans in place, supporting local democratic engagement with how, not if, necessary development should happen. On that basis, and while I hope the need will not arise, I will not hesitate to use my powers of intervention should it be necessary to drive progress – including taking over an authority's plan making directly. The consultation we have published today sets out corresponding proposals to amend the local plan intervention criteria.

We will also empower Inspectors to be able to take the tough decisions they need to at examination, by being clear that they should not be devoting significant time and energy during an examination to 'fix' a deficient plan – in turn allowing Inspectors to focus on those plans that are capable of being found sound and can be adopted quickly.

Strategic planning

We know however that whilst planning at the local authority level is critical, it's not enough to deliver the growth we want to see. That is why the Government was clear in the Manifesto that housing need in England cannot be met without planning for growth on a larger than local scale, and that it will be necessary to introduce effective new mechanisms for cross-boundary strategic planning.

This will play a vital role in delivering sustainable growth and addressing key spatial issues – including meeting housing needs, delivering strategic infrastructure, building the economy, and

improving climate resilience. Strategic planning will also be important in planning for local growth and Local Nature Recovery Strategies.

We will therefore take the steps necessary to enable universal coverage of strategic planning within this Parliament, which we will formalise in legislation. This model will support elected Mayors in overseeing the development and agreement of Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs) for their areas. The Government will also explore the most effective arrangements for developing SDSs outside of mayoral areas, in order that we can achieve universal coverage in England, recognising that we will need to consider both the appropriate geographies to use to cover functional economic areas, and the right democratic mechanisms for securing agreement.

Across all areas, these arrangements will encourage partnership working but we are determined to ensure that, whatever the circumstances, SDSs can be concluded and adopted. The Government will work with local leaders and the wider sector to consult on, develop and test these arrangements in the months ahead before legislation is introduced, including consideration of the capacity and capabilities needed such as geospatial data and digital tools.

While this is the right approach in the medium-term, we do not want to wait where there are opportunities to make progress now. We are therefore also taking three immediate steps.

- First, in addition to the continued operation of the duty to cooperate in the current system, we are strengthening the position in the NPPF on cooperation between authorities, in order to ensure that the right engagement is occurring on the sharing of unmet housing need and other strategic issues where plans are being progressed in the short-term.
- Second, we will work in concert with Mayoral Combined Authorities to explore extending existing powers to develop an SDS.
- Third, we intend to identify priority groupings of other authorities where strategic planning – and in particular the sharing of housing need – would provide particular benefits, and engage directly with the authorities concerned to structure and support this cooperation, using powers of intervention as and where necessary.

Housing targets

Underpinning plan making – at the strategic and local level – must be suitably ambitious housing targets. That is why we have confirmed today that we intend to **restore the standard method as the required approach for assessing housing needs and planning for homes**, and reverse the wider changes made to the NPPF in December 2023 that were detrimental to housing supply.

But simply going back to the previous position is not enough, because it failed to deliver enough homes. So, we are also consulting on **a new standard method** to ensure local plans are ambitious enough to support the Government's commitment to build 1.5 million new homes over the next five years. The new method sees a distribution that will drive growth in every corner of the country. This includes a stretching yet credible target for London, with what was previously unmet need in the capital effectively reallocated to see homes built in areas where they will be delivered. The new

method increases targets across all other regions relative to the existing one, and significantly boosts expectations across our city regions – with targets in Mayoral Combined Authority areas on average growing by more than 30%.

I want to be clear that local authorities will be **expected to make every effort to allocate land in line with their housing need as per the standard method**, noting it is possible to justify a lower housing requirement than the figure the method sets on the basis of local constraints on land and delivery, such as flood risk. Any such justification will need to be evidenced and explained through consultation and examination, and local authorities that cannot meet their development needs will have to demonstrate how they have worked with other nearby authorities to share that unmet need.

And we are also committed to making sure that **the right kind of homes are delivered through our planning system as quickly as possible**. That is why we are proposing to remove the prescriptive approach to affordable home ownership products, which can squeeze out Social and Affordable rent homes despite acute need. This will free authorities to secure more Social Rent homes, ensuring you get the homes you need in your local areas. We also want to promote the delivery of mixed use sites which can include a variety of ownership and rental tenures, including rented affordable housing and build to rent, and which provide a range of benefits – including creating diverse communities and supporting timely build out rates.

Green Belt and Grey Belt

If targets tell us what needs to be built, the next step is to make sure we are building in the right places. The first port of call is rightly brownfield land, and we have proposed some changes today to support such development.

But brownfield land can only be part of the answer, which is why we are consulting on changes that would see councils **required to review boundaries and release Green Belt land where necessary to meet unmet housing or commercial need**.

I want to be clear that this Government is committed to protecting nature. That is why land safeguarded for environmental reasons will maintain its existing protections. But we know that large parts of the Green Belt have little ecological value and are inaccessible to the public, and that the development that happens under the existing framework can be haphazard – too often lacking the affordable homes and wider infrastructure that communities need. Meanwhile, low quality parts of the Green Belt, which we have termed ‘grey belt’ and which make little contribution to Green Belt purposes, like disused car parks and industrial estates, remain undeveloped.

We will therefore ask authorities to prioritise sustainable development on previously developed land and other low quality ‘grey belt’ sites, before looking to other sustainable locations for meeting this need. We want decisions on where to release land to remain locally led, as we believe that local authorities are in the best position to judge what land within current Green Belt boundaries will be most suitable for development. But we also want to ensure enough land is identified in the planning system to meet housing and commercial need, and so we have proposed a clear route to bringing forward schemes on ‘grey belt’ land outside the plan process where delivery falls short of need.

To make sure development on the Green Belt truly benefits your communities, we are also **establishing firm golden rules**, with a target of at least 50% of the homes onsite being affordable, and a requirement that all developments are supported by the infrastructure needed – including GP surgeries, schools and transport links - as well as greater provision of accessible green space.

Growth supporting infrastructure

Building more homes is fundamental to unlocking economic growth, but we need to do so much more. That is why we are also proposing changes to make it **easier to build growth-supporting infrastructure** such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, electricity grid connections and the networks that support freight and logistics – and seeking views on whether we should include some of these types of projects in the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime.

Having ended the ban on onshore wind on our fourth day in office, we are also proposing to: boost the weight that planning policy gives to the benefits associated with **renewables**; bring larger scale onshore wind projects back into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime; and change the threshold for solar development to reflect developments in solar technology. In addition, we are testing whether to bring a broader definition of water infrastructure into the scope of the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime.

And recognising the role that planning plays in the **broader needs of communities**, we are proposing a number of changes to: support new, expanded or upgraded public service infrastructure; take a vision-led approach to transport planning, challenging the now outdated default assumption of automatic traffic growth; promote healthy communities, in particular tackling the scourge of childhood obesity; and boost the provision of much needed facilities for early-years childcare and post-16 education.

Capacity and fees

I recognise that delivering on the above ambition will demand much from you and your teams, and your capacity is strained. We want to **see planning services put on a more sustainable footing**, which is why we are consulting on whether to use the Planning and Infrastructure Bill to allow local authorities to set their own fees, better reflecting local costs and reducing financial pressures on local authority budgets.

While legislative change is important, we also do not want to wait to get extra resource into planning departments – which is why I am consulting on increasing planning fees for householder applications and other applications, that for too long have been well below cost recovery. We know that we are asking a lot more of local authorities, and we are clear that this will only be possible if we find a way to give more resource.

It is also important that you are supported in the critical role you play when the infrastructure needed to kickstart economic growth and make Britain a clean energy superpower is being consented under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime. I am therefore consulting on whether to

make provision to allow host upper and lower tier (or unitary) authorities to recover costs for relevant services provided in relation to applications, and proposed applications, for development consent.

Social and affordable housing

Overhauling our planning system is key to delivering the 1.5 million homes we have committed to build over the next five years – but it is not enough. We need to diversify supply, and I want to make sure that you have the tools and support needed to deliver quality affordable and social housing, reversing the continued decline in stock. This is vital to help you manage local pressures, including tackling and preventing homelessness.

Within the current Affordable Homes Programme (AHP), we know that particularly outside London, almost all of the funding for the 2021-2026 AHP is contractually committed. That is why I have confirmed that we will **press Homes England and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to maximise the number of Social Rent homes in allocating the remaining funding.**

The Government will also bring forward details of future Government investment in social and affordable housing at the Spending Review, so that social housing providers can plan for the future and help deliver **the biggest increase in affordable housebuilding in a generation.** We will work with Mayors and local areas to consider how funding can be used in their areas and support devolution and local growth.

In addition, I have confirmed that the Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) 3 will be going ahead, with £450 million provided to councils to acquire and create homes for families at risk of homelessness. This will create over 2,000 affordable homes for some of the most vulnerable families in society.

I recognise that councils and housing associations need support to build their capacity if they are to make a greater contribution to affordable housing supply. We will set out plans at the next fiscal event to **give councils and housing associations the rent stability they need** to be able to borrow and invest in both new and existing homes, while also ensuring that there are appropriate protections for both existing and future social housing tenants.

As we work to build more affordable homes, we also need to do better at maintaining our existing stock – which is why I have announced three updates on the Right to Buy scheme:

- First, we have started to review the increased Right to Buy discounts introduced in 2012, and we will bring forward secondary legislation to implement changes in the autumn;
- Second, we will review Right to Buy more widely, including looking at eligibility criteria and protections for new homes, bringing forward a consultation also in the autumn; and
- Third, we are increasing the flexibilities that apply to how councils can use their Right to Buy receipts.

With respect to the third point, from today we are removing the caps on the percentage of replacements delivered as acquisitions (which was previously 50%) and the percentage cost of a replacement home that can be funded using Right to Buy receipts (which was also previously 50%).

Councils will also now be able to combine Right to Buy receipts with section 106 contributions. These flexibilities will be in place for an initial 24 months, subject to review. My department will be writing to stock-holding local authorities with more details on the changes, and I would encourage you to make the best use of these flexibilities to maximise Right to Buy replacements and to achieve the right balance between acquisitions and new builds.

Finally, I would like to emphasise the importance of homes being decent, safe and warm. That is why this Government will introduce Awaab's Law into the social rented sector. We will set out more detail and bring forward the secondary legislation to implement this in due course. We also intend to bring forward more detail in the autumn on our plans to raise standards and strengthen residents' voices.

Next phase of reform

The action we have announced today will get us building, but as I said to the House of Commons it represents only a downpayment on our ambitions.

As announced in the King's Speech, we will introduce a Planning and Infrastructure Bill later in the first session, which will: modernise planning committees by introducing a national scheme of delegation that focuses their efforts on the applications that really matter, and places more trust in skilled professional planners to do the rest; enable local authorities to put their planning departments on a sustainable footing; further reform compulsory purchase compensation rules to ensure that what is paid to landowners is fair but not excessive; streamline the delivery process for critical infrastructure; and provide any necessary legal underpinning to ensure we can use development to fund nature recovery where currently both are stalled.

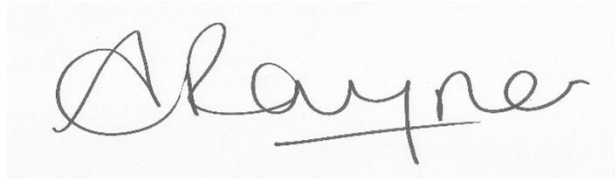
We will consult on the right approach to strategic planning, in particular how we structure arrangements outside of Mayoral Combined Authorities, considering both the right geographies and democratic mechanisms.

We will say more imminently about how we intend to deliver on our commitment to build a new generation of new towns. This will include large-scale new communities built on greenfield land and separated from other nearby settlements, but also a larger number of urban extensions and urban regeneration schemes that will work with the grain of development in any given area.

And because we know that the housing crisis cannot be fixed overnight, the Government will publish a long-term housing strategy, alongside the Spending Review, which the Chancellor announced yesterday.

We have a long way to go, but I hope today proves to be a major first step for all of us as we seek to put the housing crisis behind us. I look forward to working with you all, and am confident that together, we can achieve significant improvements that will benefit our citizens.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light grey background. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "A Rayner". The first letter 'A' is large and loops around the start of the name. The 'R' is also large and loops around the 'a'. The 'y' has a long tail that loops under the 'n'. The 'e' is written with a simple, rounded stroke.

RT HON ANGELA RAYNER MP

Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Housing, Communities & Local Government

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