

SUMMARY OF CHANGES TO THE NPPF 2021

Paragraph 7

The addition of the following text to paragraph 7:

“At a similarly high level, members of the United Nations – including the United Kingdom – have agreed to pursue the Global Goals for Sustainable Development in the period to 2030. These address social progress, economic well-being and environmental protection.”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>7 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. 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.</p>	<p>7.The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. 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.</p>

Paragraph 8c

Amendments to paragraph 8c from *“to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment”* to *“to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment”* and from *“helping to improve biodiversity”* to *“improving biodiversity”*.

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>8c 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.</p>	<p>8c an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.</p>

Paragraph 11a

Changes to wording of paragraph 11a from *“plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change”* to *“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”*.

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
11a 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;	11a plans should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change;

Paragraph 53

Paragraph 53 now includes more detail and has changed from *“The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations where this 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). Similarly, planning conditions should not be used to restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so”*

To:

“The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should:

- 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)*

- *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)*
- *in all cases, be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible.” With the addition of paragraph 54 in this section of the 2021 version: “Similarly, planning conditions should not be used to restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so.”*

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>53 The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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) • 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) • in all cases, be based on robust evidence, and apply to the smallest geographical area possible. <p>54. Similarly, planning conditions should not be used to restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so.</p>	<p>53 The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should be limited to situations where this 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). Similarly, planning conditions should not be used to restrict national permitted development rights unless there is clear justification to do so.</p>

Paragraph 72/73

Paragraph 72 of the 2019 version has changed to paragraph 73 in the 2021 version and now includes “...and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes)”.

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>73 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 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:</p>	<p>72 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 designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities. 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:</p>

Paragraph 104d/106d

Paragraph 104d (now 106d in the 2021 version) has changed from “provide for high quality walking and cycling networks and..” to “provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with..”

Paragraph 108/110

The following paragraph has been added to 110 as point d (previously paragraph 108) “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 Code 46; and..”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>110 d (new) the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance, including the</p>	

National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code 46; and	
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Paragraph 125/127

Paragraph 127, previously 125, now includes *“neighbourhood planning groups”* rather than *“neighbourhood plans”* and has the addition of *“both through their own plans and by engaging in the production of design policy, guidance and codes by local planning authorities and developers.”*

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>127 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.</p>	<p>125 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 plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and explaining how this should be reflected in development.</p>

Paragraph 126 / 128

The wording of paragraph 126 in the 2019 version has changed from:

“To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.”

To:

“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.”

And is now paragraph 128 in the 2021 version.

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>128 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.</p>	<p>126 To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.</p>

Paragraph 129

There is a new paragraph 129 in the 2021 version:

“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.”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>129 (new) 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.</p>	

Paragraph 131

Another new paragraph 131 is found in the 2021 version:

“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-lined⁵⁰, 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.”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
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<p>131 (new) 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-lined⁵⁰, 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.</p>	
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Paragraph 129/133

Paragraph 129 has more detail in the 2021 version and is now number 133. The wording has changed from:

“In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.”

To:

“In assessing applications, local 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. Unless, in specific cases, there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate. Birkbeck D and Kruczkowski S et al (2020) Building for a Healthy Life planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
133 Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for	129 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. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for a Healthy Life⁵¹. 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 49 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. ⁵⁰ Unless, in specific cases, there are clear, justifiable and compelling reasons why this would be inappropriate. ⁵¹ Birkbeck D and Kruczkowski S et al (2020) Building for a Healthy Life ⁴⁰ planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.

assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life⁴⁷. 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 authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.

Paragraphs 130 & 131

Paragraphs 130 and 131 from the 2019 version have been removed in the new version.

Paragraph 134

In the 2021 version paragraph 134 is a new addition:

“Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect 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. 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.”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>134 new Development that is not well designed should be refused, especially where it fails to reflect local design policies and government guidance on design⁵², 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.</p>	<p>130 removed - Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions, taking into account any local design standards or style guides in plans or supplementary planning documents. Conversely, where the design of a development accords with clear expectations in plan policies, design should not be used by the decision-maker as a valid reason to object to development. 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).</p>

Paragraph 135

Another new addition to the 2021 version is paragraph 135:

“Local planning authorities should 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).”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>135. new Local planning authorities should 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</p>	<p>131 removed. In determining applications, great weight should be given to 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</p>

changes to approved details such as the materials used).	with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.
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Paragraph 172/176 (also 172a, b and c)

Paragraph 172 has changed from:

“The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission should be refused for major development⁵⁵ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest.”

To:

“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.”

As paragraph 176 in the newer version. Also points 172a, b and c of the 2019 version are now restructured as part of paragraph 177 in the 2021 version which reads:

“When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁰ 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)..”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
176 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 ⁵⁸ 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. ⁵¹ and the Broads ⁵⁹ . The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development	172 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 ⁵³ 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. ⁵⁰ and the Broads ⁵⁴ . The scale and extent of development within these designated areas should be limited. Planning permission

<p>within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.</p> <p>177. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁰ 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.</p>	<p>should be refused for major development⁵⁵ 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.</p>
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Paragraph 175d/180d

The wording of paragraph 175d which is now 180d in the 2021 version has changed from “while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.” to “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.”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>180 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.</p>	<p>175d) development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to incorporate biodiversity improvements in and around developments should be encouraged, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity.</p>

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Paragraph 198

Paragraph 198 of the 2021 version is a new addition: “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.”

NPPF 2021 version	NPPF 2019 version
<p>198 new. 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.</p>	