

Planning appeal against refusal of outline planning application for residential development of up to 34 dwellings and associated infrastructure (access only to be considered)

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

In response to the email received from Heather Langridge on 12 December 2024, the Local Planning Authority's comments in respect of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, December 2024) and its relevance to the above appeal, are set out below.

The Local Planning Authority (LPA) acknowledges that the revisions to the NPPF have been introduced in order to take forward the Government's aims of significantly increasing the supply of housing. However, the fundamental principles of the NPPF for achieving sustainable development have not changed, nor has there been any change to the emphasis on development plans as the starting point for decision making (paragraph 12).

It had already been accepted for the purposes of this appeal that paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF is engaged due to the Council's inability to demonstrate a five year supply of housing, and this remains the case. The five year supply requirement would continue to be based on the Local Plan target, as the Local Plan is less than 5 years old. Paragraph 11(d) in the revised NPPF applies the same requirement as the previous NPPF in terms of the need to weigh the benefits of a scheme against any adverse impacts. The revised wording of point ii) of this paragraph adds reference to some of the specific policies that need to be considered when applying the balancing exercise, which includes policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well designed places and providing affordable homes.

The LPA's case in relation to the adverse impacts of the development is set out in detail in the Statement of Case and was further discussed verbally at the appeal hearing held on 11 December 2024. The LPA remains of the view that the adverse impacts, particularly in respect of the conflict with Policies S5 and S6 of the Adopted Local Plan through the urbanising visual impacts and the undermining of the settlement gap, would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the Framework taken as a whole.