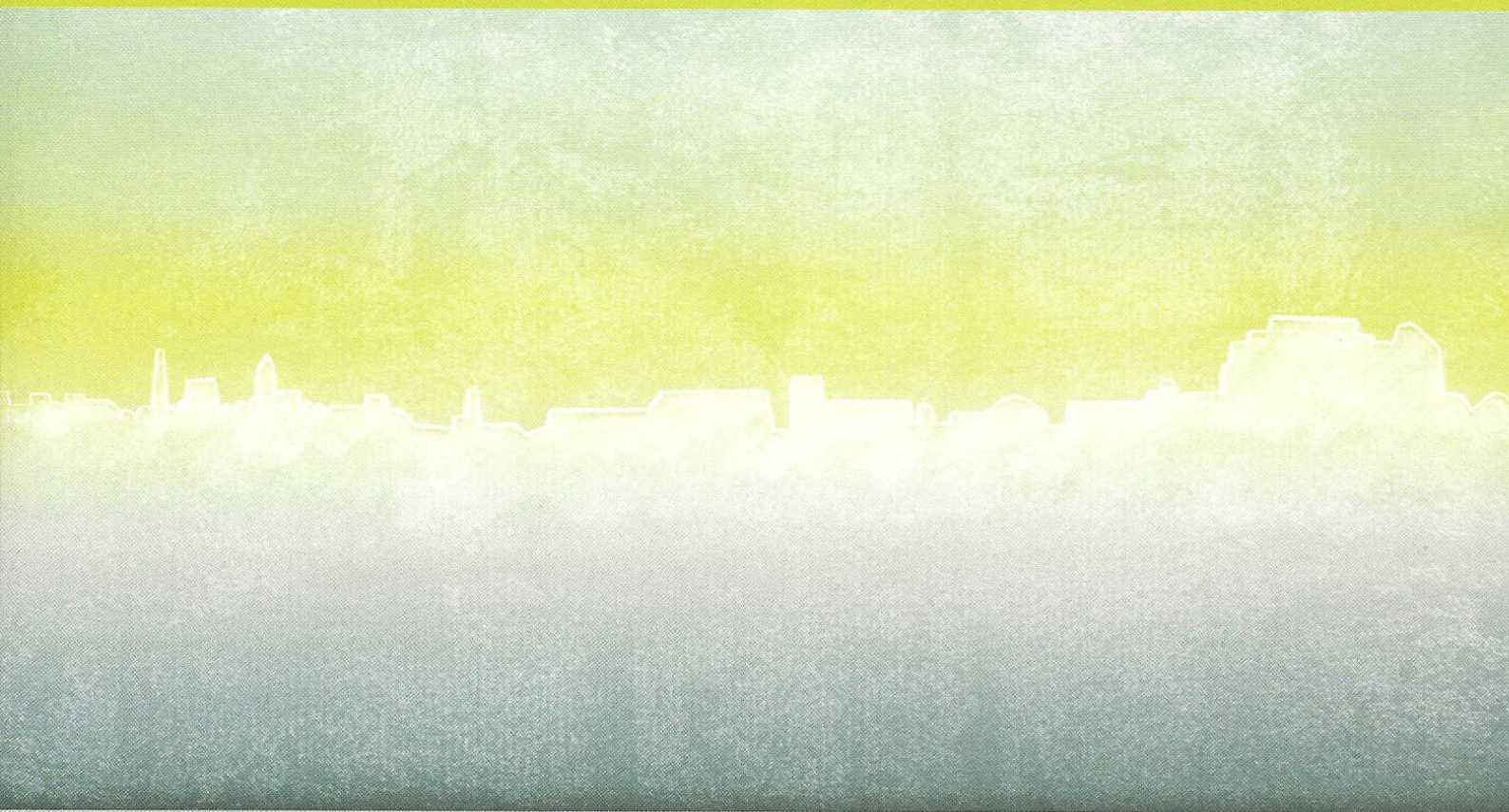


Kirkwells

The Planning People



**NPPF Part 1: Sustainable development
and plan-making**

Introduction

1. To streamline national planning policy the Government has launched for consultation a draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
2. This is the first in Kirkwells' mini-guides to the main points in the draft Framework. In part 1, we look at the new definition of sustainable development and plan making.

Out with the old in with the new

3. The NPPF when finalised will replace many pages of existing national guidance. Guidance contained in things such as Planning Policy Statements. Government wants to do this because, in its view there is too much national guidance and this has become “unwieldy and complex”. The new system should be simpler and more coherent.
4. The NPPF will set out the Government's national economic, environmental and social planning policies. The Government's requirements for the planning system, and how they should be addressed.
5. The policies in the NPPF will apply to the preparation of local plans, neighbourhood plans and development management decisions.

Delivering Sustainable Development

6. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to sustainable development.
7. The Government intends to introduce a presumption in favour of sustainable development.
8. For the planning system delivering sustainable development means:
 - Planning for prosperity (an economic role)
 - Planning for people (a social role)
 - Planning for places (an environmental role)

These three components should be pursued in an integrated way.

9. However, a number of commentators have picked up on the statement in the NPPF that the planning system should do everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Allied to the presumption in favour of sustainable development this has alarmed many that it will

lead to a loss of environmental assets. Government have already sought to counter these claims.

Plan-making

10. Local development plans should aim to achieve the objective of sustainable development. They should be consistent with the objectives, principles, and policies set out NPPF. Objectively assessed development needs should be met, unless the adverse impacts of doing so would significantly outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the NPPF as a whole.

Local Plans

11. Each local planning authority should produce a plan for its area, and only produce additional plan documents where clearly justified.
12. Local plans should set strategic priorities on issues such as housing and economic development. They should be aspirational but realistic.
13. Plans will have to be updated to take account of the NPPF. In the absence of an up to date and consistent local plan, planning applications will be determined in accord with the NPPF. The onus will be on local planning authorities to seek a certificate of conformity with the NPPF.
14. To plan strategically across boundaries public bodies will have a duty to co-operate across administrative boundaries.
15. Local Plans will still be subject to independent examination by an inspector.

Neighbourhood Plans

16. Neighbourhood Plans will give communities direct power to plan their area. In particular, they will set planning policies for the use of land, and give planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. Neighbourhood Plans must be in “general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.” But neighbourhoods will have the power to promote more development than is set out in the Local Plan. Where there is a conflict the neighbourhood plan will take precedence.
17. Neighbourhood plans will have to be assessed by an independent examination, and will then go to a local referendum.

What Next?

18. Does this affect you? Need to know more? Call Mick or Gareth on 01282 872570 they will be happy to provide free, initial, independent advice. Or email Mick (michaelwellock@kirkwells.co.uk), or Gareth (garethfort@kirkwells.co.uk) your questions, and we will get back to you to discuss your needs.

Further information

You can find out more about Kirkwells, including staff profiles, and details of all our services at www.kirkwells.co.uk

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