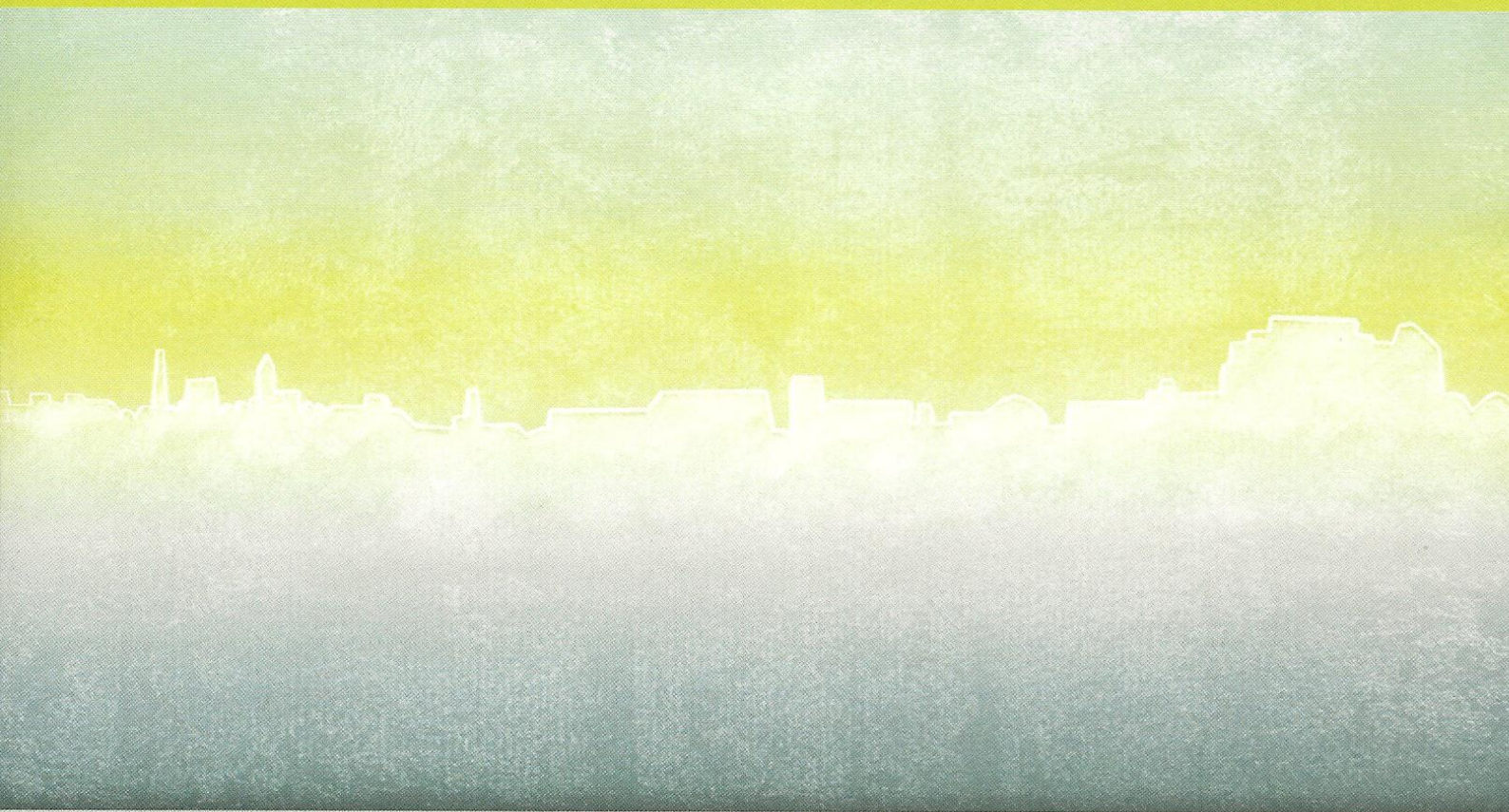


Kirkwells

The Planning People



NPPF Part 3: Planning for prosperity

Introduction

1. To streamline national planning policy the Government has launched for consultation a draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
2. Here, in the third in our series on the NPPF we look at what the draft NPPF has to say on *Planning for Prosperity*.
3. The Government wants to secure sustainable economic growth, and, in particular, restructure the country's economy. To help achieve this economic growth, the Government's objectives are to:
 - plan proactively to meet the development needs of business;
 - promote the vitality and viability of town centres, and meet the needs of consumers for high quality and accessible retail services; and
 - promote thriving, inclusive, and locally distinctive rural economies.

Supporting Economic Development

4. Investment in business should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of policy expectations. Planning policies should also seek to address potential barriers to investment, e.g. poor environments, or lack of housing.
5. In drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should ensure that they:
 - set out a clear economic vision and strategy for their area which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth;
 - set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment;
 - support existing business sectors, and plan for new or emerging sectors;
 - plan for clusters or networks of knowledge driven, creative, or high technology industries;
 - identify priority areas for economic regeneration, infrastructure provision and environmental enhancement.
 - planning policies should avoid long term protection of employment land or floorspace.

Promote the vitality and viability of town centres

6. Planning policies should promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies to manage the growth of centres over the plan period.
7. Local planning authorities should:
 - recognise town centres as the heart of their communities, and promote their vitality and viability;
 - define a network and hierarchy of centres;
 - define the extent of the town centre and prime shopping area;
 - encourage residential development on appropriate sites;
 - allocate a range of sites to meet the needs of retail, leisure, commercial, community and residential uses; and
 - allocate edge of centre sites, where suitable town centre sites are not available, and set policies for meeting identified requirements in other locations.
8. Where there is not an up to date Local Plan local planning authorities should use a sequential approach to out of town retail and leisure proposals.
9. Where out of centre retail and leisure development over 2,500 sq m. (or a locally set threshold) is not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan an impact assessment will be required.

Support the rural economy

10. To maintain a prosperous rural economy planning strategies should support the sustainable growth of rural business; promote development and diversification of agricultural businesses; and support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside.

Transport

11. The objectives of transport policy are to:
 - facilitate economic growth by taking a positive approach to planning for development; and
 - support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion, and promote accessibility.

12. Local authorities should work with their neighbours and transport providers to develop strategies for the provision of viable infrastructure necessary to promote economic growth.
13. All developments that generate significant amounts of movements, as determined by local criteria, should be supported by Transport Statement, or Transport Assessment.
14. Developments that generate significant movement should be located where the need to travel can be minimised, and the use of sustainable modes of transport can be maximised. However, in for example rural areas, this needs to take account of other policies in the NPPF.
15. Local criteria should identify which types of development should be required to prepare a Travel Plan.
16. Balances and mixes of uses, particularly for large scale residential developments, should be the aim of planning policies.

Communications Infrastructure

17. To promote economic growth the planning system should facilitate the growth of new and existing telecommunications infrastructure.
18. In supporting the expansion of telecommunications local planning authorities should keep the number of masts and sites for such installations to a minimum. Unless a new site has been justified existing masts, buildings and structures should be used.
19. Bans of telecommunications in certain areas should not be imposed, nor should Article 4 directions be used over wide areas, or for a wide range of telecommunications development.
20. Local planning authorities should not question if a service to be provided is needed, nor seek to prevent competition between operators.

Minerals

21. The Planning system should secure an adequate and steady supply of indigenous minerals to support sustainable economic growth, and facilitate a sustainable use of energy minerals.
22. In securing an adequate supply of minerals local planning authorities should:

- liaise with neighbouring authorities to co-ordinate the planning of locally important minerals, or those more distant authorities where those authorities also host minerals of greater than local importance;
- not identify sites or extensions to existing sites for peat extraction;
- plan for a steady supply of land won aggregates;
- ensure adequate supply of industrial and energy minerals;
- allocate sufficient land to maintain landbanks of at least seven years for sand and gravel, and at least ten years for crushed rock, silica sand and brick clay.

23. In facilitating the sustainable use of energy minerals, local planning authorities should:

- if geologically feasible encourage underground gas and carbon storage;
- encourage capture of methane from coal mines in coalfield areas;
- provide for coal producers to extract, and if necessary, stockpile fireclay reserves;
- indicate any areas where coal extraction and disposal of colliery spoil may be acceptable.

24. For the extraction of coal there should be a presumption against development unless the proposal is environmentally acceptable, or can be made so by using conditions or planning obligations. Or, if not, the national, local, or community benefits outweigh the likely impacts of granting planning permission.

What Next?

25. 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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