

NPPF Myth-buster – Published by DCLG

What the NPPF actually says...

Accusation: The NPPF will lead to concreting over the Green Belt

137 “Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances”

142 “Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.”

143 “When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt.”

Accusation: The NPPF does not protect the countryside or the environment

24 “Crucially, Local Plans should...identify land which is genuinely important to protect from development, for instance because of its environmental or historic value...”

164 “...the planning system should aim to conserve and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting valued landscapes...minimising impacts on biodiversity”

165 “In preparing plans to meet development requirements, the aim should be to minimise adverse effects on the local and natural environments.”

167 “Local planning authorities should

...set out a strategic approach in their Local Plans, planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of networks of biodiversity and green infrastructure...

...maintain character of the undeveloped coast, protecting and enhancing its distinctive landscapes...

...give great weight to protecting landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage are important considerations in all these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks and the Broads. Planning permission should be refused for major developments in designated areas except in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated they are in the public interest.”

Accusation: The NPPF removes the priority for development on Brownfield land

165 “Plans should allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value where practical...”

19 "...planning policies and decisions should make effective use of land...planning policies and decisions should enable the reuse of existing resources, such as through the conversion of existing buildings..."

109 "...local planning authorities should...identify and bring back into residential use empty housing and buildings in line with local housing and empty homes strategies..."

113 "...local planning authorities should avoid isolated homes in the countryside unless...the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings..."

Accusation: The NPPF tears up the plan led system and gives all the power to developers on appeal

19 "planning should be genuinely plan-led, with succinct Local Plans setting out a positive long-term vision for an area. These plans should be kept up to date and should provide a practical framework within which decisions on planning applications can be made with a high degree of certainty and efficiency"

25 "Local Plans are the key to delivering development that reflects the vision and aspiration of local communities. To do this, early and meaningful engagement and collaboration with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. A wide section of the community should be proactively engaged, so that Local Plans, as far as possible, reflect a collective vision and a set of agreed priorities for the development of the area, including adopted neighbourhood plans."

Accusation: The NPPF will lead to more out of town development

76 "Local planning authorities should recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support the viability and vitality of town centres".

77. "Local planning authorities should apply a sequential approach to planning applications for retail and leisure uses that are not in an existing centres and are not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan."

78. "Local planning authorities should prefer applications for retail and leisure uses to be located in town centres where practical, then in edge of centre location and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered."

80. "Planning polices and decisions should assess the impact of retail and leisure proposals, including:

- 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
- the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to ten years from the time the application is made."

Accusation: The NPPF will allow development that has a significant adverse effect on the delivery of sustainable transport

84 "...the objectives of transport policy are...to support reductions in greenhouse gas emission and congestion, and promote accessibility through the planning for the location and mix of development."

86 "Planning policies and decisions should consider whether: the opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site..."

88 "Planning policies and decisions should ensure developments that generate significant movement are located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised."

89 "Planning strategies should protect and exploit opportunities for the use of sustainable transport modes for the movement of goods or people. Therefore, developments should be located and designed where practical to:

- accommodate the efficient delivery of goods and supplies
- give priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, and have access to high quality public transport facilities
- create safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians
- incorporate facilities for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles; and
- consider the needs of disabled people by all modes of transport."

91 "Planning policies should aim for a balance of land uses within their area so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for employment, shopping, leisure, education and other activities."

92 "Where practical, particularly within large-scale developments, key facilities such as primary schools and local shops should be located within walking distance of most properties."

Accusation: The NPPF does not take account of the need to plan for climate change

148 "...the planning system should aim to: secure, consistent with the Government's published objectives, radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions...minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to impacts arising from climate change...avoid inappropriate development at risk of flooding...reduce the risk from coastal change..."

149 "...local planning authorities should adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change."

150 "...local planning authorities should...plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions..."

154 “New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to 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”