

PLANNING COMMITTEE

25th April 2012

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK – CHANGES TO PLANNING POLICY

Relevant Portfolio Holder(s)	Councillor Jinny Pearce, Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development & Transport.
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning & Regeneration Services
Wards Affected	All wards
Ward Councillors Consulted	No
Not a Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF INFORMATION

- 1.1 On 27th March 2012 the Government revoked the existing suite of policy documents and published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in its place.
- 1.2 Officers drew Members' attention to the new document, as a matter of urgency, at the last Planning Committee meeting on 28th March 2012. However, in view of timescales, there was insufficient time to provide much advice. The following report therefore provides further information on the policy document content, and the procedures surrounding its use and how they differ from the system as it was.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked

to RESOLVE that

- 1) **the National Planning Policy Framework be taken into account, in place of the documents it has superseded, as a material consideration when determining all future planning applications; and**

to RECOMMEND that

- 2) **the Council's constitutional Policy Framework be updated accordingly.**

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3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 No financial implications have been identified.
- 3.2 The financial services manager has been consulted on this matter.

Legal Implications

- 3.3 The legal implications are as detailed throughout this report.
- 3.4 The relevant legislation is:
 - Town & Country Planning Act 1990
 - Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
 - Planning Act 2008
 - Localism Act 2011
- 3.5 The Legal Services Manager has been consulted and has raised no objection to any aspect of this report and associated course of action.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.6 Member training on Planning and previous decisions on planning applications have taken into account a suite of national planning policy documents and guidance, largely in the form of PPGs (Planning Policy Guidance notes) and PPSs (Planning Policy Statements) which have been referred to as appropriate in Officer reports in the agenda papers.
- 3.7 On 27th March 2012 the Government revoked the existing suite of policy documents and published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in its place.
- 3.8 Officers drew Members' attention to the new document at the last meeting of the Planning Committee on 28th March 2012, in advance of determining the items on the agenda. However, given the timescales, there was insufficient time to provide much advice.
- 3.9 The following report therefore provides further information on the policy document content, and the procedures surrounding its use and how they differ from the system as it was.
- 3.10 The NPPF is available on the Communities and Local Government website. If a hard copy is required, please contact the report author, who will arrange for one to be left for you in your Party Group Room. It is a brief overview document giving strategic direction for the

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planning system as a whole. This means that future local plan documents will need to reflect its direction and objectives.

- 3.11 Decisions on planning applications and related matters should still be made in accordance with the Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Redditch Council remains the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 and the Worcestershire County Structure Plan. It is noted that the Structure Plan is likely to be revoked as part of recent legislative changes, but it remains in place for the moment.
- 3.12 The Local Plan is currently under review and as such the emerging Core Strategy document can also be afforded some weight when determining planning applications. However, caution should be exercised in this case as it has yet to go through the rigorous examination in public process and have an Inspector comment on its content and suitability / soundness, prior to full Council approval and adoption. Further, the emerging Core Strategy will need to be reviewed to ensure that it is in compliance with the newly published NPPF.
- 3.13 The NPPF is a material consideration of significant weight when determining planning applications. However, it does not form part of the Development Plan. It should be afforded similar weight to that previously given to the Planning Policy Guidance notes and Planning Policy Statements that preceded it.
- 3.14 Future policy developments will be advised through the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP) to whose meetings all Members are invited and those with planning interests are positively encouraged to attend. Any policy developments that directly affect the decision making of this Committee will also be reported within relevant reports.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.15 No such implications have been identified.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risks of determining applications for development not in accordance with planning policy remain as before, however providing the relevant material considerations have been taken into account and this can be clearly demonstrated, then any significant risks are minimised.

5. APPENDICES

None.

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6. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NPPF (which can be found at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/planningandbuilding/planningsystem/planningpolicy/planningpolicyframework/>)

The legislation noted in section three

7. **KEY**

NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework

PPG – Planning Policy Guidance (notes)

PPS – Planning Policy Statement.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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