

Land known as Bull Field Redetermination - Addendum Report

Appendix R - Extracts from the Draft National Planning Policy Framework for Consultation

**Weston
Homes**

A large, stylized graphic in the bottom right corner of the page, consisting of four bright blue, rounded, petal-like shapes arranged in a cross pattern, resembling a flower or a four-pointed star.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

National Planning Policy Framework

11. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

For **plan-making** this means that:

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change (including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;
- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas⁶, unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area⁷; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.

For **decision-taking** this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies for the supply of land⁸ which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date⁹, granting permission unless:
 - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed⁷; or
 - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, in particular those

⁶ As established through statements of common ground (see paragraph 287).

⁷ The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites (and those sites listed in paragraph 187) and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest; land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; irreplaceable habitats; designated heritage assets (and other heritage assets of archaeological interest referred to in footnote 742); and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

⁸ Policies for the supply of land are those which set an overall requirement and/or make allocations and allowances for windfall sites for the area and type of development concerned.

⁹ This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where: ~~(a) the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply (or a four year supply, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 226) of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate a buffer, if applicable, as set out in paragraph 7677) and does not benefit from the provisions of paragraph 76;~~ or ~~(b) where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years.~~

for the location and design of development (as set out in chapters 9 and 12) and for securing affordable homes.

12. The presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date development plan (including any neighbourhood plans that form part of the development plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local planning authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date development plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
13. The application of the presumption has implications for the way communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.
14. In situations where the presumption (at paragraph 11d) applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the neighbourhood plan is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided the following apply:
 - a) the neighbourhood plan became part of the development plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and
 - b) the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement (see paragraphs 67-68);

4. Decision-making

~~38~~39. Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. They should use the full range of planning tools available, including brownfield registers and permission in principle, and work proactively with applicants to secure developments that will improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area. Decision-makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development where possible.

Pre-application engagement and front-loading

~~39~~40. Early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties. Good quality pre-application discussion enables better coordination between public and private resources and improved outcomes for the community.

~~40~~41. Local planning authorities have a key role to play in encouraging other parties to take maximum advantage of the pre-application stage. They cannot require that a developer engages with them before submitting a planning application, but they should encourage take-up of any pre-application services they offer. They should also, where they think this would be beneficial, encourage any applicants who are not already required to do so by law to engage with the local community and, where relevant, with statutory and non-statutory consultees, before submitting their applications.

~~41~~42. The more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, including the need to deliver improvements in infrastructure and affordable housing, the greater the benefits. For their role in the planning system to be effective and positive, statutory planning consultees will need to take the same early, pro-active approach, and provide advice in a timely manner throughout the development process. This assists local planning authorities in issuing timely decisions, helping to ensure that applicants do not experience unnecessary delays and costs.

~~42~~43. The participation of other consenting bodies in pre-application discussions should enable early consideration of all the fundamental issues relating to whether a particular development will be acceptable in principle, even where other consents relating to how a development is built or operated are needed at a later stage. Wherever possible, parallel processing of other consents should be encouraged to help speed up the process and resolve any issues as early as possible.

~~43~~44. The right information is crucial to good decision-making, particularly where formal assessments are required (such as Environmental Impact Assessment, Habitats Regulations assessment and flood risk assessment). To avoid delay, applicants should discuss what information is needed with the local planning authority and expert bodies as early as possible.

~~44~~45. Local planning authorities should publish a list of their information requirements for applications for planning permission. These requirements should be kept to the minimum needed to make decisions, and should be reviewed at least every

two years. Local planning authorities should only request supporting information that is relevant, necessary and material to the application in question.

45.46. Local planning authorities should consult the appropriate bodies when considering applications for the siting of, or changes to, major hazard sites, installations or pipelines, or for development around them.

46.47. Applicants and local planning authorities should consider the potential for voluntary planning performance agreements, where this might achieve a faster and more effective application process. Planning performance agreements are likely to be needed for applications that are particularly large or complex to determine.

Determining applications

47.48. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.

48.49. Local planning authorities may give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- a) the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- b) the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
- c) the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)²³.

49.50. However, in the context of the Framework – and in particular the presumption in favour of sustainable development – arguments that an application is premature are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission other than in the limited circumstances where both:

- a) the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and
- b) the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.

50.51. Refusal of planning permission on grounds of prematurity will seldom be justified

²³ During the transitional period for emerging plans, consistency should be tested against the version of the Framework as applicable, as set out in Annex 1.

5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

~~60-61.~~ To support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. The overall aim should be to meet ~~as much of~~ an area's identified housing need ~~as possible~~, including with an appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.

~~61-62.~~ To determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. ~~The outcome of the standard method is an advisory starting point for establishing a housing requirement for the area (see paragraph 67 below). There may be exceptional circumstances, including relating to the particular demographic characteristics of an area²⁶ which justify an alternative approach which to assessing housing need; in which case the alternative approach should also reflect current and future demographic trends and market signals.~~ In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for²⁷.

~~62.~~ ~~The standard method incorporates an uplift which applies to certain cities and urban centres, as set out in national planning guidance. This uplift should be accommodated within those cities and urban centres themselves except where there are voluntary cross boundary redistribution agreements in place, or where it would conflict with the policies in this Framework²⁸.~~

63. Within this context of establishing need, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should include (but are not limited to) those who require affordable housing (including Social Rent); families with children; looked after children²⁹; older people (including those who require retirement housing, housing-with-care and care homes); students; people with disabilities; service families; travellers³⁰; people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes³¹.

~~²⁶ Such particular demographic characteristics could, for example, include areas that are islands with no land bridge that have a significant proportion of elderly residents.~~

²⁷ Transitional arrangements are set out in Annex 1

~~²⁸ In doing so, strategic policies should promote an effective use of land and optimise site densities in accordance with chapter 11. This is to ensure that homes are built in the right places, to prioritise brownfield and other under-utilised urban sites, to utilise existing infrastructure, and to allow people to live near the services they rely on, making travel patterns more sustainable.~~

²⁹ Evidence of need for looked after children can be found in the relevant Local Authority's Children's Social Care Sufficiency Strategy.

³⁰ Planning Policy for Traveller Sites sets out how travellers' housing needs should be assessed for those covered by the definition in Annex 1 of that document.

³¹ Under section 1 of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015, local authorities are required to keep a register of those seeking to acquire serviced plots in the area for their own self-build and custom house building. They are also subject to duties under sections 2 and 2A of the Act to have regard to this and to give enough

64. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required (including the minimum proportion of Social Rent homes required)³², and expect it to be met on-site unless:
- off-site provision or an appropriate financial contribution in lieu can be robustly justified; and
 - the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.
65. Provision of affordable housing should not be sought for residential developments that are not major developments, other than in designated rural areas (where policies may set out a lower threshold of 5 units or fewer). To support the re-use of brownfield land, where vacant buildings are being reused or redeveloped, any affordable housing contribution due should be reduced by a proportionate amount³³.
66. Where major development involving the provision of housing is proposed, planning policies and decisions should expect that the mix of affordable housing required meets identified local needs, across both affordable housing for rent and affordable home ownership tenures. at least 10% of the total number of homes to be available for affordable home ownership³⁴; ~~unless this would exceed the level of affordable housing required in the area, or significantly prejudice the ability to meet the identified affordable housing needs of specific groups. Exemptions to this 10% requirement should also be made where the site or proposed development:~~
- ~~provides solely for Build to Rent homes;~~
 - ~~provides specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs (such as purpose built accommodation for the elderly or students);~~
 - ~~is proposed to be developed by people who wish to build or commission their own homes; or~~
 - ~~a) is exclusively for affordable housing, an entry level a community led development exception site or a rural exception site.~~
67. Strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement figure for their whole area, which shows the extent to which their identified housing need (and any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas) can be met over the plan period. The requirement may be higher than the identified housing need if, for example, it includes provision for neighbouring areas, or reflects growth ambitions linked to economic development or infrastructure investment. Within this overall requirement, strategic policies should also set out a housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas which reflects the overall strategy for the pattern

suitable development permissions to meet the identified demand. Self and custom-build properties could provide market or affordable housing.

³² Applying the definition in Annex 2 to this Framework.

³³ Equivalent to the existing gross floorspace of the existing buildings. This does not apply to vacant buildings which have been abandoned.

³⁴ ~~As part of the overall affordable housing contribution from the site.~~

and scale of development and any relevant allocations³⁵. Once the strategic policies have been adopted, these figures should not need re-testing at the neighbourhood plan examination, unless there has been a significant change in circumstances that affects the requirement.

68. Where it is not possible to provide a requirement figure for a neighbourhood area³⁶, the local planning authority should provide an indicative figure, if requested to do so by the neighbourhood planning body. This figure should take into account factors such as the latest evidence of local housing need, the population of the neighbourhood area and the most recently available planning strategy of the local planning authority.

69. Mixed tenure sites can provide a range of benefits including creating diverse communities and supporting timely build out rates and local planning authorities should support their development through their policies and decisions. Mixed tenure sites can include a mixture of ownership and rental tenures, including rented affordable housing and build to rent, as well as housing designed for specific groups such as older people's housing and student accommodation, and plots sold for custom or self-build.

Identifying land for homes

69.70. Strategic policy-making authorities should have a clear understanding of the land available in their area through the preparation of a strategic housing land availability assessment. From this, planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. Planning policies should identify a supply of:

- a) specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption³⁷; and
- b) specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period.

70.71. Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, and are often built-out relatively quickly. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:

- a) identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;

³⁵ Except where a Mayoral, combined authority or high-level joint plan is being prepared as a framework for strategic policies at the individual local authority level; in which case it may be most appropriate for the local authority plans to provide the requirement figure.

³⁶ Because a neighbourhood area is designated at a late stage in the strategic policy-making process, or after strategic policies have been adopted; or in instances where strategic policies for housing are out of date.

³⁷ With an appropriate buffer, as set out in paragraph 767. See Glossary for definitions of deliverable and developable.

- b) seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom-build housing;
- c) use tools such as area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;
- d) support the development of windfall sites through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and
- e) work with developers to encourage the sub-division of large sites where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.

71.72. Neighbourhood planning groups should also give particular consideration to the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites (of a size consistent with paragraph 710a) suitable for housing in their area.

72.73. Where an allowance is to be made for windfall sites as part of anticipated supply, there should be compelling evidence that they will provide a reliable source of supply. Any allowance should be realistic having regard to the strategic housing land availability assessment, historic windfall delivery rates and expected future trends. Plans should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

73.74. Local planning authorities should support the development of exception sites, or community-led development³⁸ (as defined in Annex 2) on sites that would not otherwise be suitable as rural exception sites. These sites should be on land which is not already allocated for housing and should:

- a) comprise community-led development that includes one or more types of affordable housing as defined in Annex 2 of this Framework. A proportion of market homes may be allowed on the site at the local planning authority's discretion, for example where essential to enable the delivery of affordable units without grant funding; and
- b) be adjacent to existing settlements, existing settlements, proportionate in size to them³⁹, not compromise the protection given to areas or assets of particular importance in this Framework⁴⁰, and comply with any local design policies and standards.

74.75. The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and

³⁸-This exception site policy does not replace the First Homes exception policy set out in the Affordable Homes Update Written Ministerial Statement, dated 24 May 2021, which remains extant policy.

³⁹ Community-led development exception sites should not be larger than one hectare in size or exceed 5% of the size of the existing settlement, unless specific provision to exceed these limits is made in the development plan.

⁴⁰ i.e. the areas referred to in footnote 7.

designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes). Working with the support of their communities, and with other authorities if appropriate, strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way. In doing so, they should:

- a) consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;
- b) ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or in larger towns to which there is good access;
- c) set clear expectations for the quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained (such as by following Garden City principles); and ensure that appropriate tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes are used to secure a variety of well-designed and beautiful homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community;
- d) make a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery, given the lead-in times for large scale sites, and identify opportunities for supporting rapid implementation (such as through joint ventures or locally-led development corporations)⁴¹; and
- e) consider whether it is appropriate to establish Green Belt around or adjoining new developments of significant size.

Maintaining supply and delivery

~~75-76.~~ Strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of housing delivery over the plan period, and all plans should consider whether it is appropriate to set out the anticipated rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should ~~monitor their deliverable land supply against their housing requirement, as set out in adopted strategic policies~~ identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing⁴² against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old⁴³. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

⁴¹ The delivery of large scale developments may need to extend beyond an individual plan period, and the associated infrastructure requirements may not be capable of being identified fully at the outset. Anticipated rates of delivery and infrastructure requirements should, therefore, be kept under review and reflected as policies are updated.

⁴² For the avoidance of doubt, a five year supply of deliverable sites for travellers – as defined in Annex 1 to Planning Policy for Traveller Sites – should be assessed separately, in line with the policy in that document.

⁴³ Unless these strategic policies have been reviewed and found not to require updating. Where local housing need is used as the basis for assessing whether a five year supply of specific deliverable sites exists, it should be calculated using the standard method set out in national planning guidance.

a) 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or

~~b) 10% where the local planning authority wishes to demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable sites through an annual position statement or recently adopted plan, to account for any fluctuations in the market during that year; or~~
b) 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of achieving the planned supply⁴⁴.

~~76. Local planning authorities are not required to identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing for decision making purposes if the following criteria are met:~~

~~a. their adopted plan is less than five years old; and~~

~~b. that adopted plan identified at least a five year supply of specific, deliverable sites at the time that its examination concluded.~~

~~77. In all other circumstances, local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide either a minimum of five years' worth of housing or a minimum of four years' worth of housing if the provisions in paragraph 226 apply. The supply should be demonstrated against either the housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against the local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. Where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years the supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of 20% (moved forward from later in the plan period). National planning guidance provides further information on calculating the housing land supply, including the circumstances in which past shortfalls or over supply can be addressed.~~

~~78. Where the criteria in paragraph 76 are not met, a local planning authority may confirm the existence of a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with a 20% buffer, if applicable through an annual position statement which:~~

~~a) has been produced through engagement with developers and others who have an impact on delivery, and been considered by the Secretary of State; and~~

~~b) incorporates the recommendation of the Secretary of State, where the position on specific sites could not be agreed during the engagement process.~~

⁴⁴ This will be measured against the Housing Delivery Test, where this indicates that delivery was below 85% of the housing requirement.

~~79.~~77. To maintain the supply of housing, local planning authorities should monitor progress in building out sites which have permission. Where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that delivery has fallen below the local planning authority's housing requirement over the previous three years, the following policy consequences should apply:

- a) where delivery falls below 95% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should prepare an action plan to assess the causes of under-delivery and identify actions to increase delivery in future years;
- b) where delivery falls below 85% of the requirement over the previous three years, the authority should include a buffer of 20% to their identified supply of specific deliverable sites as set out in paragraph ~~76.~~77 of this framework, in addition to the requirement for an action plan.
- c) where delivery falls below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies, as set out in footnote ~~98~~98 of this Framework, in addition to the requirements for an action plan and 20% buffer.

~~80.~~78. The Housing Delivery Test consequences set out above will apply the day following the annual publication of the Housing Delivery Test results, at which point they supersede previously published results. Until new Housing Delivery Test results are published, the previously published result should be used.

~~81.~~79. To help ensure that proposals for housing development are implemented in a timely manner, local planning authorities should consider imposing a planning condition providing that development must begin within a timescale shorter than the relevant default period, where this would expedite the development without threatening its deliverability or viability. For major development involving the provision of housing, local planning authorities should also assess why any earlier grant of planning permission for a similar development on the same site did not start.

Rural housing

~~82.~~80. In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs, including proposals for community-led development for housing. Local planning authorities should support opportunities to bring forward rural exception sites that will provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs, and consider whether allowing some market housing on these sites would help to facilitate this.

~~83.~~81. To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

~~84.~~82. Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;
- b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

180. Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:
- h) protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);
 - i) recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland;
 - j) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;
 - k) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures;
 - l) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and
 - m) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
181. Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework⁶³; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.
182. Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight in National Parks

⁶³ Where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, areas of poorer quality land should be preferred to those of a higher quality. ~~The availability of agricultural land used for food production should be considered, alongside the other policies in this Framework, when deciding what sites are most appropriate for development.~~

and the Broads⁶⁴. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.

183. When considering applications for development within National Parks, the Broads and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, permission should be refused for major development⁶⁵ other than in exceptional circumstances, and where it can be demonstrated that the development is in the public interest. Consideration of such applications should include an assessment of:
- a) the need for the development, including in terms of any national considerations, and the impact of permitting it, or refusing it, upon the local economy;
 - b) the cost of, and scope for, developing outside the designated area, or meeting the need for it in some other way; and
 - c) any detrimental effect on the environment, the landscape and recreational opportunities, and the extent to which that could be moderated.
184. Within areas defined as Heritage Coast (and that do not already fall within one of the designated areas mentioned in paragraph 182), planning policies and decisions should be consistent with the special character of the area and the importance of its conservation. Major development within a Heritage Coast is unlikely to be appropriate, unless it is compatible with its special character.

Habitats and biodiversity

185. To protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity, plans should:
- a) Identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity⁶⁶; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation⁶⁷; and
 - b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

⁶⁴ *English National Parks and the Broads: UK Government Vision and Circular 2010* provides further guidance and information about their statutory purposes, management and other matters.

⁶⁵ For the purposes of paragraphs 182 and 183, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes for which the area has been designated or defined.

⁶⁶ Circular 06/2005 provides further guidance in respect of statutory obligations for biodiversity and geological conservation and their impact within the planning system.

⁶⁷ Where areas that are part of the Nature Recovery Network are identified in plans, it may be appropriate to specify the types of development that may be suitable within them.

Considering potential impacts

205. When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
206. Any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset (from its alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting), should require clear and convincing justification. Substantial harm to or loss of:
- a) grade II listed buildings, or grade II registered parks or gardens, should be exceptional;
 - b) assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, registered battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional⁷³.
207. Where a proposed development will lead to substantial harm to (or total loss of significance of) a designated heritage asset, local planning authorities should refuse consent, unless it can be demonstrated that the substantial harm or total loss is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that outweigh that harm or loss, or all of the following apply:
- a) the nature of the heritage asset prevents all reasonable uses of the site; and
 - b) no viable use of the heritage asset itself can be found in the medium term through appropriate marketing that will enable its conservation; and
 - c) conservation by grant-funding or some form of not for profit, charitable or public ownership is demonstrably not possible; and
 - d) the harm or loss is outweighed by the benefit of bringing the site back into use.
208. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.
209. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

⁷³ Non-designated heritage assets of archaeological interest, which are demonstrably of equivalent significance to scheduled monuments, should be considered subject to the policies for designated heritage assets.

210. Local planning authorities should not permit the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset without taking all reasonable steps to ensure the new development will proceed after the loss has occurred.
211. Local planning authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner proportionate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (and any archive generated) publicly accessible⁷⁴. However, the ability to record evidence of our past should not be a factor in deciding whether such loss should be permitted.
212. Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.
213. Not all elements of a Conservation Area or World Heritage Site will necessarily contribute to its significance. Loss of a building (or other element) which makes a positive contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site should be treated either as substantial harm under paragraph x or less than substantial harm under paragraph x, as appropriate, taking into account the relative significance of the element affected and its contribution to the significance of the Conservation Area or World Heritage Site as a whole.
214. Local planning authorities should assess whether the benefits of a proposal for enabling development, which would otherwise conflict with planning policies but which would secure the future conservation of a heritage asset, outweigh the disbenefits of departing from those policies.

⁷⁴ Copies of evidence should be deposited with the relevant historic environment record, and any archives with a local museum or other public depository.