

# National CPRE Briefing – National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

For use by the CPRE Network in meetings with Parliamentarians and local authorities

The National Planning Policy Framework consultation is now closed, and we are awaiting the new version in December following the consideration of the responses. National CPRE, in partnership with the CPRE network, submitted a detailed response to the consultation. This document summarises that response into our key asks.

## Summary

CPRE supports the government's continuing commitment to a plan-led system, the recognition of the importance of strategic planning, and the need to resource planning teams more in the future. CPRE are pleased that the government announced more planning officers for local authorities but believe that even more can be done.

CPRE strongly supports the increased focus on brownfield first and support the promotion of density in urban areas. We are also pleased to see the proposed threshold increase that would see larger schemes agreed by local planning authorities rather than through the nationally significant infrastructure project (NSIP) regime, providing that this would occur alongside strategic spatial energy planning.

Below we set more detailed changes we would like to see to deliver better outcomes and the government's targets of growth, ending the housing crisis and delivering more renewable energy.

## Housing targets and affordability

- Social and affordable targets – The NPPF has set out an aspiration to build more social housing, but without the targets that are needed to underpin it. CPRE believe ambitious targets are needed for the number of affordable homes and social rented housing the government intend to deliver. Alongside this, the 10% target for affordable homes on new development should be expanded to deliver a mix of tenures.
- Definition of affordable – Affordable housing at 80% of market rent is often not genuinely affordable. CPRE would like to see a change in the definition of 'affordable' housing to explicitly link to average local incomes to ensure housing is affordable.
- Calculating local housing need – CPRE recognises the need for the current "standard method" to calculate housing need, we believe it should use the latest population data, with an assessment of how best to reduce "housing need" in local authority areas.

## Brownfield, 'grey belt' and the Green Belt

- Increase construction on brownfield land – CPRE believes local authorities should have new targets for completed homes on brownfield land. The government should work closely with local authorities to

keep Brownfield Registers up to date. There should also be an increase in density of new developments to ensure land delivers more social and environmental benefits per hectare.

- Green Belt protection and release – CPRE believes that Green Belt reviews and boundary changes should remain strictly exceptional, and there should be no widening of ‘very special circumstances.’ Any release of Green Belt needs to be strategic, transparent, and in locations well served by public transport.
- Grey belt – CPRE supports the continued building on brownfield in the Green Belt, but do not support the creation of an additional category of land (grey belt) beyond this. We believe the definition is too subjective and could lead to degradation of land in pursuit of permission.

### Green energy and land use

- Rooftop solar – CPRE supports a new requirement for local authorities to assess how much rooftop solar could be installed in their areas. Alongside this, we support a new requirement for local authorities to take a rooftop solar-first approach in their energy strategies. Solar should be mandatory on all suitable new buildings.
- Land use framework – CPRE believes that alongside the new NPPF there must be a new strategic land use framework (LUF), which supports managing water and flood risk, protection of agricultural land, and integration of land use and transport.

### Further considerations for reform

CPRE looks forward to the publication of a wider housing strategy to identify the actions needed to deliver the government’s social homes targets. CPRE believes that the government should use this strategy to implement the recommendations of Sir Oliver Letwin’s Independent Review of Build Out from 2018, particularly:

- Setting a baseline expectation for delivery of a range of housing types and tenures including social housing in all large development schemes.
- Rebalancing of power away from large builders and towards local authorities and small and medium sized enterprises in master planning new developments.

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### About us

CPRE is the countryside charity that campaigns to promote, enhance and protect the countryside for everyone’s benefit, wherever they live. With a local CPRE in every county, we work with communities, businesses and government, nationally and locally, to find positive and lasting ways to help the countryside thrive – today and for generations to come.

If you would like to find out more about CPRE’s parliamentary work, or arrange a meeting, please contact our Public Affairs team: [externalaffairs@cpre.org.uk](mailto:externalaffairs@cpre.org.uk)