

Cambridge City Council

Record of Executive Decision

Response to Government Consultation: Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system

Decision of: Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure

Reference: 24/URGENCY/S&R/13

Date of decision: 11/09/24

Date Published on website: 26/09/24

Decision Type: Non-Key

Matter for Decision:

- a. To agree to submit the response to the open consultation on Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system as set out in Appendix 1.
[Appendix 1 Response to NPPF Consultation](#)
- b. To agree delegated authority is given to the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development to agree any minor amendments to the response in order to finalise the joint response.

Why the Decision had to be made (and any alternative options):

Background:

The purpose of this decision is to agree a response to the Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system consultation.

Consultation closes on 24 September 2024 and further information can be viewed on the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government website for the consultation: [Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The consultation seeks views on changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and wider changes to the planning system, with a focus on enabling the delivery of 1.5m homes over the next 5 years. It proposed changes to the standard method of calculating housing requirements, changes to green belt policy including introducing the term 'grey belt' and 'golden rules' that would apply to green belt development, changes to the approach to affordable housing, and renewable energy. It also proposes changes to the

planning application process, seeking views on what should be covered by Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects, and how planning fees should be set.

Feedback is requested via submission of written responses to the answered questions included within the document. The Councils' response is set out in Appendix 1. Note that the response is proposed to be joint by Cambridge City Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council, but it will be subject to each council's individual decision sign of process.

Response to the Consultation:

The draft response is supportive of a number of the changes proposed in the draft NPPF, although there are a number of cases where the proposed response is supportive of the general principle but concerned about omitted details or unintended consequences. The response has raised concerns about amendments to the presumption of sustainable development not doing enough to secure high quality development, the lack of transitional arrangement associated with changes to the standard method for assessing housing needs and, and the proposed definition of Grey Belt Land and expansion of the PDL definition. In response to wide changes to the planning system, the proposed response supports proposals to increase planning fees to enable cost recovery.

Alternative Options:

An alternative option would be to not respond to the consultation. However, if no response is made by Cambridge City and South Cambridgeshire District Councils, MHCLG would not be made aware of the Councils' views on the proposed changes to national planning policy.

The Executive Councillor's decision: That the Executive Councillor for Planning, Building Control and Infrastructure agrees:

- a. to submit the response to the open consultation on Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system as set out in Appendix 1.
[Appendix 1 Response to NPPF Consultation](#)
- b. that delegated authority is given to the Joint Director for Planning and Economic Development to agree any minor amendments to the response in order to finalise the joint response.

Reason for the decision: To provide feedback on the consultation reflecting issues relevant to Greater Cambridge.

Scrutiny Consideration: The Chair and Spokesperson of Planning and Transport Scrutiny Committee were consulted prior to the action being authorised.

Conflict of interest: None.

Comments: Councillor Porrer (Liberal Democrat Opposition Spokes) made comments which were addressed by the Planning Policy Manager and the draft response reviewed and updated.