

ELMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

5th February 2024

Mr John Slater
Letter sent by e-mail

Dear John,

The Parish Council (PC) thanks the examiner for an opportunity to address the publication of the 2023 version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is also mindful of the publication of the government's response to the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy consultation which provides the background and reasoning for the changes made to the NPPF ([link](#)).

The PC has revisited the basic conditions statements for both the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and (NDO) in respect of the basic condition 'having regard to national policy'. The basic conditions statement on page 32 of the NDO document and pages 7-11 of the Basic Conditions Statement published alongside the NP sets out how, in the PC's opinion, the NDO and NP provisions meets the basic condition 'having regard to national policy'. Amendments made to the NPPF in this regard are limited to paragraph numbering and its provisions remain largely unchanged. The PC therefore considers that the provisions of the NP and the NDO continue to have regard to national policy.

The PC notes that there is also a clear continuation and future commitment of government support for the development of small sites and community-led development and an encouragement to local authorities to seek and support opportunities as clarified in its response to the consultation, relevant extracts copied below:

"We have carefully weighed up the responses and recognise the importance of small sites in delivering housing diversification, including affordable housing. We have therefore amended the Framework to say that local authorities should seek opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led housing and self-build and custom build housing. Our policy changes also encourage 'permission in principle' alongside other routes to permission (such as local development orders), to remove barriers for smaller and medium-sized builders in the planning system.

...

We received a wide range of comments from across the sector. This included suggestions for planning policy changes to support community-led housing, as well as wider comments around how viability could be boosted to help community groups bring forward more small sites, and proposals for financial support. Having considered the responses received, the government has concluded that the

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ELMSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

proposed amendments to paragraph 78 (new paragraph 82) of the National Planning Policy Framework to emphasise the importance of community-led housing development should be brought forward as proposed, as this will send a clear signal that the government is serious about community-led development.

As set out in the government's response to questions 24 and 25, in recognition of the importance that small sites play in delivering housing diversification, including affordable housing, the government has amended paragraph 70 of the Framework to specifically reference that local authorities should seek out opportunities, through policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led housing and self-build and custom-build housing. Our policy changes also encourage 'permission in principle' and other routes to permission (such as local development orders)."

Yours sincerely

Angela Baxter
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