

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Consultation on the Draft National Planning Policy Framework

19 September 2024

Report of Chief Officer – Planning and Climate Change

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To allow the Committee to consider the draft response to the Government's draft National Planning Policy Framework consultation.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the consultation response to the draft National Planning Policy Framework be agreed and formally submitted.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) have published a draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) for consultation. The proposals represent the biggest change to the national planning system since the original NPPF was introduced in 2012.
- 1.2 The consultation was published on 30 July 2024, and since then Officers have been compiling responses to the 106 questions. As part of this process, the views of Elected Members have been considered (see paragraphs 3.1 to 3.4 of this committee report).
- 1.3 The deadline for the submission of comments to the MHCLG is 24 September 2024.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 Officers have produced an explanatory note which is appended to this report. This sets out the key issues arising from the consultation, and how the proposals will likely affect the Lancaster District. The Note includes a link to the draft NPPF (Paragraph 1.4). This document is **Annex 1**.
- 2.2 **Annex 2** comprises all 106 consultation questions, repeated in full, with the draft answers provided by Officers following the consultation with Members. It is this document that is proposed to be submitted to MHCLG as Lancaster City Council's formal observations.

3.0 Details of Consultation

- 3.1 Members of the Planning Regulatory Committee were presented with an explanatory report and the draft responses to the consultation questions on 2 September 2024.
- 3.2 Members of the Local Plan Review Group received a similar report and the draft responses to the consultation questions on 10 September 2024.
- 3.3 Members of both of these groups are well-versed in terms of planning considerations and the plan-making system. Their observations have formed a valuable part of the consultation response drafting process.
- 3.4 Separately, Cabinet Members have also had an opportunity to input into the draft response.
- 3.5 As a matter of courtesy, the local planning authority also wrote to inform all Parish and Town Councils of the consultation opportunity (sent by email, 2 August 2024). This letter included details of where individual Parish and Town Councils could make representations (i.e. directly to the MHCLG).

4.0 Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

- 4.1 The options that are available are:

	Option 1: To respond to the consultation	Option 2: To respond to the consultation with other comments	Option 3: To not submit a response to this consultation
Advantages	<p>The views of the Council will be considered by Government when deciding whether to implement these proposed reforms to the NPPF.</p> <p>The draft response has been informed by the views of experienced Elected Members who operate regularly in the planning and plan-making arena.</p>	<p>The views of the Council will be considered by Government when deciding whether to implement these proposed reforms to the NPPF.</p>	None
Disadvantages	None.	Dependent upon the extent of any additional considerations, there is limited time to submit the consultation response.	The formal opinion of Lancaster City Council would not be provided, and an opportunity to contribute to the consultation proposals would be lost.
Risks	None.	None.	None.

5.0 Officer Preferred Option (and comments)

5.1 The preferred option is Option 1, to respond to the consultation as drafted following consultation with both the Planning Regulatory Committee and Local Plan Review Group.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The Council's approach to compiling the draft NPPF consultation response has involved Officers and Members, and I would like to take the opportunity to thank everyone for their valued input. The attached document represents a comprehensive and considered response and it is therefore recommended that it is formally submitted to MHCLG.

6.2 The MHCLG has indicated that it will publish a response to the consultation and a revised NPPF *"in the autumn, so that policy changes can take effect as soon as possible"*. At that point, Elected Members will receive further briefings from Officers.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Health & Safety, Equality & Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing):

The impacts of the proposed changes to the NPPF are set out in the accompanying papers to this report. Whilst the national planning system will change as a consequence of the reforms, if taken forward, it is considered that the proposals will be assessed by Government and that all duties of consideration regarding any impacts will be appropriately considered by the decision-maker.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications to completing and submitting the consultation response.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications at this stage.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS, such as Human Resources, Information Services, Property, Open Spaces

None.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- (i) Explanatory Note – Key Issues
Draft NPPF Consultation

- (ii) Draft Response to Consultation by
Lancaster City Council

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