



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

National Planning Policy Framework

Plan-making and national decision-making policies

December 2025

housing requirement has significantly increased following the adoption of a spatial development strategy.

4. The Secretary of State has powers to intervene in plans, including when a local planning authority fails to make adequate progress with plan-making.
5. Joint local plans prepared by two or more local planning authorities should be considered where this would enable local planning matters to be dealt with most effectively.

PM3: Minerals and waste plans

1. Minerals and waste plans should set out specific proposals to facilitate a sufficient supply of minerals to meet society's needs and enable the delivery of sustainable waste management and a circular economy. Their preparation should accord with policy PM2, other than in relation to identifying contributions to affordable housing.
2. Minerals and waste matters can be dealt with in separate plans or combined with local plans where an authority is responsible for all these matters. Minerals and waste planning authorities should consider the most appropriate form for their minerals and waste plan to take.
3. Joint minerals and waste plans prepared by two or more minerals and waste planning authorities should be considered where this would enable matters related to minerals and waste planning to be dealt with most effectively.

PM4: Supplementary plans

1. Supplementary plans may be used by relevant plan-making authorities¹⁰ to address specific issues, where these are not already covered in other parts of the development plan for the area or the policies in this Framework. They should be limited to:
 - a. Setting out locally-specific design standards to provide clear design expectations that support the delivery of development; or
 - b. Situations where a supplementary plan would allow the authority to respond positively and quickly to unanticipated changes in their area, between plan-making cycles, where it is important to put in place policies to shape and direct development for a site or group of sites which the authority considers to be nearby to each other.
2. Supplementary plans should not be used to subvert the role of local plans and minerals and waste plans, including the vision or spatial strategy set out within them. Their preparation should not be used to delay the implementation of sites allocated for development in those plans.
3. Where supplementary plans allocate sites for development, these allocations should be included in the next local plan (or minerals and waste plan) for the area, unless changes in circumstances mean that it is no longer relevant to do so¹¹.

¹⁰ Local planning authorities, Minerals and Waste Planning Authorities and the Mayor of London.

¹¹ To ensure the process of including relevant policies from supplementary plans to the next local plan is effective, local authorities should, when preparing supplementary plans, have regard to the requirements and expectations set out for the local plans and minerals and waste plans preparation process.

- c. Land that is protected or proposed to be enhanced for specific purposes (such as habitat improvement) and which places limits on whether development proposals may be acceptable or where specific policies apply; and
 - d. Sites allocated for development to meet the identified need for housing and other uses in the area and for local and strategic infrastructure (including any proposals to enable the development of land around stations).
2. The spatial strategy should be illustrated on a key diagram forming part of a spatial development strategy and/or local plan, with the boundaries of specific policy areas, land-use designations and allocations identified on a policies map.

National decision-making policies

S3: Presumption in favour of sustainable development

- 1. Decisions on development proposals should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:
 - a. Policy S4 in this Framework should be applied when considering development proposals within settlements;
 - b. Outside settlements, policy S5 should be applied; and
 - c. In all locations, development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan and also the decision-making policies in this Framework should be approved without delay.

S4: Principle of development within settlements

- 1. Development proposals within settlements should be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.
- 2. In applying policy S4, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include (but are not restricted to) situations where the development proposal would:
 - a. Have an unacceptable impact in relation to:
 - i. the allocation or safeguarding of land for particular uses in the development plan, unless there is no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the allocated use, or there is evidence that the safeguarding is no longer appropriate; or
 - ii. the application of the policies in this Framework for safeguarding existing open space, sport and recreation facilities (HC7), Local Green Space (HC8), designated wildlife habitats (N6) and for managing development within residential curtilages (L2); or
 - b. Involve the whole or partial loss of undeveloped land which is used for a cemetery or burial ground; or for water storage and/or flood risk management (unless suitable

compensatory provision is made which does not increase the risk of flooding either on or off-site); or

- c. Fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.

S5: Principle of development outside settlements

1. Only certain forms of development should be approved outside settlements, as set out in the following list. These should be approved, unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework:
 - a. Development proposals which are for: agriculture, horticulture and forestry; outdoor sport and recreation; allotments; cemeteries and burial grounds; mineral extraction; engineering operations and infrastructure (including for transport, energy and water); roadside facilities in accordance with policy TR5; and national defence and security;
 - b. Development for rural businesses and services, including tourism, where a location outside settlements is shown to be necessary;
 - c. The re-use, extension, alteration or replacement of an existing building, so long as the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction, and any extension or alteration will not result in a disproportionate increase in size compared to the existing building²⁴;
 - d. The redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed-use including residential);
 - e. Limited infilling within groups of houses;
 - f. An exception site as provided for in policy HO10, or development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order or Neighbourhood Development Order;
 - g. Development which would address an evidenced unmet need for gypsy, traveller or travelling showpeople accommodation²⁵, provided it meets the criteria in policy HO12;
 - h. Development for housing and mixed-use development which would be: within reasonable walking distance of a railway station which provides a high level of connectivity to jobs and services²⁶; physically well-related to a railway station or a settlement within which the station is located; is of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; and where the development would not prejudice any proposals for long-

²⁴ The existing building is to be assessed as the property as existing on the date of the publication of this Framework.

²⁵ Including (but not limited to) where the relevant local planning authority lacks a five year supply of deliverable sites as set out in policy HO3(1)(c).

²⁶ Well-connected rail stations and underground, tram and light rail stops are those in a top 60 Travel to Work Area located partially or fully within England by Gross Value Added (GVA) and which, in the normal weekday timetable, are served (or have a reasonable prospect of being served due to planned upgrades or through agreement with the rail operator) throughout the daytime by four trains or trams per hour overall, or two trains or trams per hour in any one direction.

term comprehensive development in the same location;

- i. The development of land allocated for that purpose in the development plan (where this lies outside settlements); and
 - j. Development which would address an evidenced unmet need (including, but not limited to, development proposals involving the provision of housing where the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites²⁷ or scores below 75% in the most recent Housing Delivery Test²⁸), and where the development would:
 - i. be well related to an existing settlement²⁹ (unless the nature of the development would make this inappropriate) and be of a scale which can be accommodated taking into account the existing or proposed availability of infrastructure; or
 - ii. comprise major development for storage and distribution purposes which accords with policy E3.
2. In applying this policy, the circumstances in which the benefits of approving development proposals are likely to be substantially outweighed by adverse effects include, but are not restricted to, situations where the development proposal would fail to comply with one of the national decision-making policies which state that development proposals should be refused in specific circumstances.
 3. Development proposals comprising isolated homes, which are those lying outside settlements or groups of houses, should not be approved other than in accordance with policy HO11.
 4. Any other development proposals which do not fall within one of the categories set out above should only be approved in exceptional circumstances, where the benefits of the proposal would substantially outweigh the adverse effects, including to the character of the countryside and in relation to promoting sustainable patterns of movement.
 5. The preceding parts of this policy do not apply to development proposals in the Green Belt or on land designated as Local Green Space, which should instead be determined in accordance with policies HC8, GB6, GB7 and GB8. However, where development is not inappropriate in the Green Belt (as set out in policy GB7), proposals should also be approved unless the benefits of doing so would be substantially outweighed by any adverse effects, when assessed against the national decision-making policies in this Framework.

S6: Neighbourhood plans and the presumption

1. For development proposals involving the provision of housing, the benefits of approving development are likely to be substantially outweighed by the adverse effects where a proposal would conflict with a neighbourhood plan, provided the following apply:

²⁷ See Annex D: Housing calculations and supply.

²⁸ See Annex D: Housing calculations and supply.

²⁹ Where a development proposal is located outside a settlement, and separated from the existing built-up area by virtue of being beyond the outside edge of an allocated site that has yet to be fully developed, consideration should be given to whether the proposal is in a suitable location should the allocated development not proceed.

11. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

The objective of the policies in this chapter is to ensure there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, green energy and goods that the country needs, while at the same time restricting specific types of minerals development that could harm environmental objectives. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation.

Plan-making policies

M1: Planning for a sufficient supply of minerals

1. The development plan should provide for a sufficient supply of minerals of national and local importance.
2. This means that in relation to aggregate minerals, the development plan should:
 - a. Use the Local Aggregate Assessment, the advice of the Aggregate Working Parties and the National Aggregate Co-ordinating Group as appropriate, and any published National and Sub National Guidelines on future supply, to identify the provision needed in the plan area⁴⁰. The Local Aggregate Assessment should be prepared annually, either individually or jointly, to forecast future demand, based on a rolling average of 10 years' sales data and other relevant local information and an assessment of all supply options (including marine dredged, secondary and recycled sources);
 - b. Allocate sites and/or identify preferred areas to maintain this provision, including landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock (longer periods may be appropriate to take account of the need to supply a range of types of aggregates, locations of permitted reserves relative to markets, and the productive capacity of permitted sites);
 - c. Calculate and maintain separate landbanks for any aggregate materials of a specific type or quality which have a distinct and separate market; and
 - d. Ensure that large landbanks bound up in very few sites do not stifle competition.
3. In relation to industrial minerals, the development plan should:
 - a. Use evidence of existing site capacities and demand to identify the level of provision needed to maintain a continuing level of supply for their use in industrial and manufacturing processes; and through cooperation with neighbouring and more distant authorities, identify how these requirements can be met through the allocation of sites and/or identification of preferred areas, taking into account the distribution of industrial minerals deposits;
 - b. Maintain reserves of:

⁴⁰ The assessment of the provision needed for aggregate and industrial minerals may, where appropriate, be undertaken and set out through the preparation of spatial development strategies.

- i. at least 10 years for individual silica sand sites;
 - ii. at least 15 years for silica sand sites where significant new capital is required, and for cement primary (chalk and limestone) and secondary (clay and shale) materials to maintain an existing plant; and
 - iii. at least 25 years for brick clay, and for cement primary and secondary materials where this is needed to support a new kiln.
- c. Take account of the need for the provision of brick clay from a number of different sources to enable appropriate blends to be made.
4. In relation to oil and gas, the development plan should distinguish between, and plan for, the three phases of development (exploration, appraisal and production) within licenced areas. The development plan should not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites outside licenced areas.
5. The development plan should not identify new sites or extensions to existing sites for peat or coal extraction.
6. Relevant development plan policies should take account of the contribution that substitute or secondary and recycled materials and minerals waste can make to supply, in preference to the extraction of primary materials, whilst aiming to source minerals supplies indigenously. Where further extraction is necessary, landbanks of non-energy minerals should so far as practical be maintained through sites which lie outside National Parks, the Broads, National Landscapes and designated heritage assets, although the identification of sites or preferred areas in development plans should also reflect that minerals can only be worked where they are found.

M2: Safeguarding mineral resources and infrastructure through plan-making

1. The development plan should:
- a. Define Mineral Safeguarding Areas and (in two tier areas) Mineral Consultation Areas to support the safeguarding of mineral resources;
 - b. Where necessary to prevent the sterilisation of mineral resources, require the prior extraction of minerals on sites allocated for non-mineral development, where practical and environmentally feasible; and
 - c. Identify existing, planned and potential sites which need to be safeguarded for: the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material.

National decision-making policies

M3: Assessing the benefits of mineral development

1. In assessing proposals for minerals development⁴¹, substantial weight should be given to the benefits of mineral extraction, including to the economy. In this context, particular importance should be given to:
 - a. Maintaining minimum reserves of aggregates and industrial minerals, as specified in policy M1(2)(b) and M1(3)(b);
 - b. Ensuring that the capacity of operations to supply a wide range of materials is maintained (with reserves which are sufficient to support the level of actual and proposed investment required for new or existing plant, and the maintenance and improvement of existing plant and equipment);
 - c. Processing secondary aggregates, where this can help to reduce the need for new extraction;
 - d. Facilitating the exploration and extraction or processing of critical and growth minerals, the use of which supports any or all of the following:
 - i. the green energy transition;
 - ii. the delivery of net zero;
 - iii. national security; and
 - iv. the growth of key sectors set out in the Industrial Strategy⁴².
 - e. Maintaining a supply of building and roofing stone for the repair or extension of historic buildings and structures, or where the use of traditional materials is important to conserve or enhance the character of an area. The duration of planning permission should, where appropriate, give the flexibility needed to cater for the intermittent or low rate of working at many sites.

M4: Considering the impacts of mineral development

1. Proposals for mineral development should:
 - a. Not have unacceptable adverse impact on the natural and historic environment, human health or aviation safety, including as a result of any cumulative effect of multiple impacts from individual sites and/or from a number of sites in a locality;
 - b. Ensure any unavoidable noise, dust and particle emissions and any vibrations from

⁴¹ Other than for development involving peat, coal or onshore oil and gas extraction, to which this policy does not apply.

⁴² Invest 2035: The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (UK Government, June 2025) identifies priority sectors for growth and support as: advanced manufacturing; clean energy industries; creative industries; defence industries; digital and technology businesses; financial services; life sciences; and professional and business services.

blasting will be controlled, mitigated or removed at source, and that appropriate noise limits are established for extraction in proximity to noise sensitive properties (recognising that some noisy short-term activities, which may otherwise be regarded as unacceptable, are unavoidable to facilitate minerals extraction); and

- c. Provide for restoration and aftercare at the earliest opportunity, to be carried out to high environmental standards, through the application of appropriate conditions. Bonds or other financial guarantees to underpin planning conditions should only be sought in exceptional circumstances.

M5: Development involving peat, coal or onshore oil and gas

1. Proposals for the extraction of peat at new or extended sites should be refused.
2. Development involving surface or underground coal workings, or for onshore oil and gas extraction, should not be approved unless it is necessary:
 - a. To facilitate the exploration, appraisal or production of oil and gas within licensed areas; or
 - b. For public safety; or
 - c. To facilitate the capture and use of methane from coal mines in active and abandoned coalfield areas.
3. If proposals for surface or underground coal extraction come forward under the criteria listed above, minerals planning authorities should provide for coal producers to extract separately, and if necessary stockpile, fireclay so that it remains available for use.
4. Minerals planning authorities should support proposals for underground gas and carbon storage and associated infrastructure if local geological circumstances indicate its feasibility. It should also be ensured that the integrity and safety of underground storage facilities are appropriate, taking into account the maintenance of gas pressure, prevention of leakage of gas and the avoidance of pollution.

M6: Safeguarding mineral resources and infrastructure through decision-making

1. Proposals for non-mineral development should not:
 - a. Constrain likely or foreseeable future use for mineral working in a Mineral Safeguarding Area; or
 - b. Prevent the use of existing, planned and potential sites for:
 - i. the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals;
 - ii. the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; or
 - iii. the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material.
2. Where proposals for non-mineral development are located within a Minerals Consultation

Area, the decision-making authority should consult the mineral planning authority and take account of the local minerals plan before determining the planning application.

3. The prior extraction of minerals, where practical and environmentally feasible, should be approved where it would prevent the sterilisation of minerals deposits as a consequence of other forms of development proposals or allocations.