

APPENDIX A19.1: National Planning Policy

SPP1: The Planning System

SPP1 outlines the purpose of the planning system and sets out the main tasks for development planning and development control. It identifies the primary objectives of the planning system as to set the land use framework for promoting sustainable economic development, to encourage and support regeneration, and to maintain and enhance the quality of the natural heritage and built environment (Paragraph 4).

In relation to sustainable development, Paragraph 8 states that “planning decisions should favour the most sustainable option, promoting development that safeguards and enhances the long term needs of the economy, society and the environment. When conflicts between objectives inevitably arise, decisions should be taken in line with local priorities and needs as identified in the Local Plan”.

SPP 2: Economic Development

SPP2 focuses on four key areas where planning can contribute to economic development; provision of development opportunities; securing development in sustainable locations, safeguarding and enhancing the environment, and promoting effective communication between councils and businesses (Paragraph 11).

Paragraph 12 recognises that good access by public transport and other infrastructure provision is required to support the development of strategic business locations. Furthermore, Paragraph 32 highlights the integration between transport and economic development and states that an efficient transport infrastructure is essential to a successful economy.

The importance of high environmental quality in the context of attracting business development is acknowledged (Paragraph 47) and Paragraph 57 states that in making provision for economic development planning authorities should seek to minimise adverse effects on the natural and built heritage.

NPPG 5: Archaeology and Planning

NPPG5 sets out the policy on how archaeological remains and discoveries should be handled under the development planning and control systems, including the weight to be given to them in planning decisions (Paragraph 1).

Paragraph 4 recognises that archaeological remains are finite and states that the primary planning objectives are “that they should be preserved wherever feasible and that, where this proves not to be possible, procedures should be in place to ensure proper recording before destruction”.

SPP 7: Planning and Flooding

Paragraph 1 states that the central purpose of SPP7 is to prevent further development which would have a significant probability of being affected by flooding or which would increase the probability of flooding elsewhere.

Paragraph 17 states that built development should not take place on functional flood plains but that there may be exceptions for infrastructure if a specific location is essential for operational reasons or it is incapable of being located elsewhere.

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Paragraph 21 confirms that drainage methods and capacity can be material planning considerations and that any such measures proposed as part of a planning application should have a neutral or beneficial effect on flooding both on and off the site.

NPPG 11: Planning and Open Space

NPPG11 states that the Government's objective through the planning system is to seek to protect and enhance the land and water resources required for the nation's sport and physical recreation (Paragraph 28).

In this regard, Paragraphs 46 and 47 outline the importance of playing fields and sports pitches to sporting, recreational and amenity needs and introduces a presumption against the redevelopment of such pitches, whether in public or private ownership unless certain criteria can be met. Furthermore, Paragraph 22 emphasises that Councils have a duty to assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment any public right of way.

NPPG 14: Natural Heritage

NPPG14 states that a key role of the planning system is "to ensure that society's land requirements in terms of housing, economic activity, transport infrastructure and recreation are met in ways which do not erode environmental capital"(Paragraph 9).

The main national and international statutory designations are summarised in Paragraphs 23–45 and include Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Paragraphs 46–49 also state that our natural heritage is not confined to the various designated areas and includes features such as areas of woodland, rivers and burns, lochs, ponds and wetlands, traditional field boundaries, grasslands and peatlands. There is a requirement on planning authorities to seek to safeguard and enhance these areas.

Paragraphs 60–62 set out the range of regional and local designations, including Areas of Great Landscape Value, Local Nature Reserves and locally important wildlife sites.

SPP15: Rural Development

Paragraph 8 of SPP15 states that the Scottish executive's overarching aim is to "have a prosperous rural economy, with a stable or increasing population that is more balanced in terms of age structure and where rural communities have reasonable good access to good quality services".

With particular regard to environmental quality, Paragraph 26 recognises that the natural and cultural heritage is a valuable national asset and that the protection and enhancement of these assets, including the need to further the interests of biodiversity, are important considerations.

SPP17: Planning for Transport

SPP17 states that the Scottish Executive's overall transport vision is "of a Scotland where the economy can flourish and communities can function without significant environmental and social problems arising from car dependency, traffic congestion and pollution" (Paragraph 5).

In terms of major transport projects, Paragraph 15 recognises that maintaining and improving transport infrastructure has an important role to play in growing Scotland's economy and that congestion has a major impact on the economy and environment.

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Paragraph 22 states that there is general presumption against new motorway or trunk road junctions but that the Scottish Executive will consider the case for such junctions where nationally significant economic growth or regeneration benefits can be demonstrated.

In relation to rural access, Paragraph 13 recognises that local authorities have a duty to assert, protect, keep open and free from obstruction, any route, waterway or other means where access can be reasonably exercised.

NPPG 18: Planning and the Historic Environment

Paragraph 1 of NPPG18 clarifies that the historic environment comprises the tangible built heritage - historic buildings and townscapes, parks and gardens, designed landscapes, ancient monuments, archaeological sites and landscapes and includes the wider setting of these features. It also includes the wider setting of these features and areas as well as places important for their historic associations. In this regard, Paragraph 9 states that *"maintaining and enhancing the quality of the historic environment and preserving the country's heritage are important functions of the planning system"*.

Paragraph 25 states that the Government's aim is to promote sustainable development by applying the legislative framework to protect, maintain, conserve and promote the continued use of historic property and environments whilst promoting economic, social and physical change that respects the character of the historic environment.

SPP 21: Green Belts

SPP21 states that the key objectives of green belt policy are to direct planned growth to the most appropriate locations and support regeneration; to protect and enhance the character, landscape setting and identity of towns and cities; and, the protect and give access to open space within and around towns and cities, as part of the wider structure of green space (Paragraph 6).

Paragraph 22 states that development plans will define the uses that are appropriate in green belts which may include agricultural uses, woodland and forestry, horticulture and recreational uses. Paragraph 26 recognises that where a proposed use would not normally be consistent with green belt designation, *"exceptionally it may still be considered appropriate, either as a national priority or to meet an established need, and only if no other suitable site is available"*.