

# Agenda Item IMD11

## INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER DECISION

REFERENCE IMD: IMD 2021/11

<b>TITLE</b>	National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code: Consultation Proposals
<b>DECISION TO BE MADE BY</b>	Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement - Wayne Smith
<b>DATE, MEETING ROOM and TIME</b>	23 March 2021 Virtually at 4pm
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific;
<b>DIRECTOR / KEY OFFICER</b>	Director, Place and Growth - Chris Trill

### **PURPOSE OF REPORT (Inc Strategic Outcomes)**

To consider the councils response to the government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code: consultation proposals' (MHCLG, January 2021).

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Executive Member for Planning and Enforcement agrees that Wokingham Borough Council submit the comments contained in Enclosure 1 as this Council's response to the government consultation 'National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code: consultation proposals' (MHCLG, January 2021).

### **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Government has published proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and published a National Model Design Code. The consultation runs to 27 March 2021 and the documents available to download here.

The proposed revisions to the NPPF mostly relate to policy on the quality of design of new development and form the intended response to the recommendations of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission. There are however a number of additional revisions that respond to legal cases, with the revisions intended to provide clarity. Some time expired text is also proposed to be deleted.

The National Model Design Code provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It is intended to be used as a toolkit to guide local planning authorities on the design parameters and issues that need to be considered and tailored to their own context.

The recommended response to the questions set out in the consultation document is provided in Enclosure 1 to this report. In summary, it is recommended that we welcome and support the consultation proposals. It is recommended however that concerns are raised as to how the government's expansion of permitted development rights pulls in a different direction to providing clarity about design expectations and quality.

Some areas of clarification and amendment are also requested.

## Background

The government has published proposed revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and published a National Model Design Code.

The consultation runs to 27 March 2021. The consultation documents are available to download [here](#).

## Business Case (including Analysis of Issues)

The proposed revisions to the NPPF mostly relate to policy on the quality of design of new development and form the intended response to the recommendations of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission. There are however a number of additional revisions that respond to legal cases, with the revisions intended to provide clarity. Some time expired text is also proposed to be deleted.

A design code is a set of illustrated design requirements that provide specific, detailed parameters for the physical development of a site or area. Their purpose is to provide clarity about design expectations at an early stage in the development process.

The purpose of the National Model Design Code is to provide detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies to promote successful design. It is intended to be used as a toolkit to guide local planning authorities on the design parameters and issues that need to be considered and tailored to their own context when producing design codes and guides, as well as methods to capture and reflect the views of the local community from the outset, and at each stage in the process.

The process of preparing a design code follows a three stage or seven step process of:

- Analysis
  - Scoping
  - Baseline
- Vision
  - Design vision
  - Coding plan
  - Masterplanning
- Code
  - Area type guidance
  - Design code wide guidance

The recommended response to the questions sets out in the consultation document is provided in Enclosure 1 to this report.

In summary, it is recommended that the proposed changes to NPPF and the National Model Design Code are welcomed and supported. The proposed revisions to the NPPF provide useful clarity whereas the National Model Design Code is a useful resource to assist local authorities.

It is recommended however that concerns are raised as to how the government's expansion of permitted development rights pulls in a different direction to providing clarity about design expectations and quality. It is also recommended that mechanisms such as the five year housing land supply should be reviewed to ensure the laudable aim of improving design quality is not undermined. The recommended response is to

strongly urge the government to abandon the expansion of the permitted development regime as unnecessary and to advocate any regime that remained to link to local design codes.

Some areas of clarification and amendment are also highlighted within the recommended response.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION**

***The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.***

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	Nil.	Not relevant.	Not relevant.
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	Nil.	Not relevant.	Not relevant.
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	Nil.	Not relevant.	Not relevant.

**Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision**

No financial implications arise directly as a result of this consultation exercise.

**Cross-Council Implications**

Whilst national planning policy and guidance strongly influence the council’s statutory planning function and other services which involve changes to the use of land or buildings, the focus of these specific proposals have limited impact on the principal use of land or buildings.

**Public Sector Equality Duty**

This report relates to proposed changes to the planning system promoted and consulted on by government, and does not directly relate to actions of the council. As such an equality assessment has not been undertaken.

An equality assessment will be undertaken by government and views have been specifically invited as part of the consultation process on potential impacts of the proposals in this regard.

**SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES**

<b>Director – Resources and Assets</b>	None received.
<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	None received.
<b>Leader of the Council</b>	None received.

**List of Background Papers**

1. National Planning Policy Framework and National Model Design Code; consultation proposals (MHCLG, January 2021).
2. Draft National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG, January 2021)
3. Draft National Model Design Code (MHCLG, January 2021)
4. Guidance note for design codes (MHCLG, January 2021).
5. National Design Guide (MHCLG, January 2021).

<b>Contact</b> Ian Bellinger	<b>Service</b> Place Commissioning
	<b>Email</b> <a href="mailto:ian.bellinger@wokingham.gov.uk">ian.bellinger@wokingham.gov.uk</a>