



# Drighlington Parish Council

The Community Hub  
1, Moorside Approach  
Drighlington BD11 1JF

Tel: 07984733352

Email: [clerk@drighlingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@drighlingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Website: [www.drighlingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.drighlingtonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

---

## 11.h Summary Comparison Document NPPF 2025

### Preamble:

The December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] and the December 2025 Full Draft NPPF, supported by the Government's Consultation Document [2025], propose significant refinements that directly impact Parish Councils both as consultees and as contributors to local plan-making and the consideration of applications.

The 2025 draft and consultation push for a more rules-based, streamlined system, greater focus on sustainable locations [including brownfield and transport-linked sites], clearer support for rural and community facilities, and stronger direction in plan-making and development management. Parish Councils will see their roles clarified, but also face stricter national parameters and reduced scope for some local variations.

This report has been prepared from the documents referred to above. The document adopts a generic approach in both its terminology and intent.

### Details:

#### 1. Overarching Structural and Policy Changes:

- **Permanent Presumption in Favour of Suitably Located Development:**  
The 2025 proposals replace the "tilted balance" in favour of sustainable development with clear, rules-driven principles: automatic support for development on suitable urban and brownfield sites, but more restrictions for land outside settlements.
- **Distinct Policies for Inside/Outside Settlements:**
  - *Within settlements:* Development [including on brownfield and some curated non-brownfield sites] is presumed acceptable unless adverse effects outweigh benefits. Certain land [e.g. allocated for specific non-development uses or valuable previously undeveloped land] is protected.

- *Outside settlements*: Only specified forms of development are considered appropriate, with a firmer restriction on unsustainable growth in the countryside.
- **Denser and Higher Urban Development:**  
Clear support for densification [including infill, upward extensions, and redevelopment in curtilages], especially near train stations and in accessible locations. National minimum densities are to be set for sites around stations.
- **Reorganisation and Integration:**  
The NPPF structure now clearly separates plan-making policies from national decision-making policies and absorbs guidance [e.g., for traveller sites] into a unified document, reducing repetition and clarifying reference points for Parish Councils.

## **2. Policies Directly Affecting Parish Councils:**

### **A. Plan-making and the Parish Council's Statutory Role:**

- Parish Councils remain key consultees for Neighbourhood Plans and development allocations but will be operating within a more prescriptive national framework.
- Parish Plans must, if not yet submitted, conform to the new NPPF as soon as it is published [subject to transitional arrangements].
- National rules [rather than local standards or duplicated plan policies] will increasingly dictate matters like design, density, and development principles.

### **B. Consultation on Applications:**

- Presumption in favour of urban and brownfield development will shift the burden when responding to applications, particularly for infill and higher-density proposals within settlements.
- Stronger protection and clearer replacement standards for loss of community facilities, recreation grounds, open spaces, and allotments. For example, any replacement now needs only to be equivalent or better in quantity and/or" quality, not both, offering more flexibility but possible risks in net provision.

### **C. Rural and Housing Considerations:**

- More substantial support for rural social/affordable housing—smaller settlements and low-density parishes can be subject to affordable housing levies on minor developments.
- A minimum of 40% of homes to meet accessibility [M4[2] standards, particularly relevant for older or disabled residents in rural areas.
- Policies require authorities [and by extension, influencing neighbourhood plans and consent responses] to foster a broader mix of housing tenures and site sizes.

#### **D. Green Belt and Local Green Space:**

- Green Belt policies now allow for exceptions where new housing or mixed-use schemes are near “well-connected” stations and can meet minimum density standards, but these sites must deliver “Golden Rules” benefits such as social housing and infrastructure. Parish Councils should be aware of possible new development pressures on the Green Belt and stronger tests for approval or alteration.

#### **E. Community and Health:**

- Enhanced weight given to retaining or improving community facilities [e.g., shops, halls, health infrastructure] and defending against their final loss, which will strengthen Parish Councils' arguments in objections or neighbourhood plans for vital rural services.

#### **F. Enforcement:**

- The 2025 NPPF draft clarifies that substantial weight will be given to intentional unauthorised development, potentially assisting Parish Councils in lobbying for enforcement where local breaches are a concern.

### **3. Changes Affecting Parish Council Considerations on Applications:**

#### **Key shifts for consideration of planning proposals:**

- Parish Councils will need to adjust to development, “in principle” being supported in most in-settlement areas [especially brownfield], requiring stronger evidence to support objections if adverse effects are material.
- For rural or fringe applications, the test is now clearly “rules-based,” making exceptions harder unless national policies allow.
- Denser development, permitted in more situations—especially adjacent to transport nodes—will require careful local scrutiny and early engagement to address design, infrastructure, and amenity issues.
- Additional flexibility in replacing lost community/recreational facilities may need closer parish scrutiny to ensure community “quality” claims are genuine.
- Loss of the “Planning Policy for Traveller Sites” as a separate document brings all such considerations into the NPPF, reaffirming the need for parity and integration of traveller site issues in all local and neighbourhood plan policies.

## Summary:

Here's a balanced overview of the main advantages and disadvantages for Parish Councils resulting from the proposed changes in the NPPF [Full Draft December 2025 and consultation] compared to the current [December 2024] position.

## Pros and Cons for Parish Councils:

Pros	Cons
<b>Greater Clarity and Consistency:</b>	<b>Reduced Local Flexibility:</b>
Clear national rules simplify understanding for Parish Councils and communities.	National prescriptions can override local distinctiveness in policies/design.
<b>Support for Key Community Facilities:</b>	<b>Presumption in Favour of In-Settlement Development:</b>
Stronger protection/clearer replacement regime for loss of valued local assets.	Parish objections to densification/infill may be harder to justify.
<b>Emphasis on Accessible, High-Quality Housing:</b>	<b>Rural Restriction Tightening:</b>
Mandated minimum accessibility/housing mix targets better serve ageing rural needs.	Less flexibility for rural 'exception' housing or schemes outside settlements.
<b>Enhanced Role for Neighbourhood Plans in Implementation:</b>	<b>Density and Height Mandates Near Transport:</b>
Maintains Neighbourhood Plan status, supports ongoing community involvement.	Risk of inappropriate scale/forms in "well-connected" areas, especially villages.
<b>Improved Enforcement Guidance:</b>	<b>Faster Transition Period:</b>
Stronger support for addressing unauthorised development.	Existing/prepared Neighbourhood Plans may need a rapid update to remain compliant.
<b>Clearer Process for Replacing Community Facilities:</b>	<b>Replacement Flexibility Could Reduce Provision:</b>
Only one (not both) of quality/quantity must improve in loss/replacement situations.	Risk that replacements focus on "quality" at the expense of overall provision.
<b>Streamlined Plan-Making and Decision Document:</b>	<b>Complexity of Transitional Arrangements:</b>
Easier reference for Parish Councils' policies in one clear place.	May need interpretation/support during the early implementation phase.

Kind regards

*Jill Davis*

Jill Davis

Proper Officer to Drighlington Parish Council

**Citations:**

- NPPF Consultation Document 2025 [summary of national rule-based approach and enforcement, community facilities, housing accessibility, and plan-making reforms]
- Full Draft NPPF December 2025 [Sections DM7–DM10, HC1–HC8, relevant tables and “implementation”/transitional details]
- NPPF December 2024 [for baseline policy comparison]