

NPPF CONSULTATIONS.

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The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has launched several NPPF consultations.

The consultations involve changes to the National Planning Policy Framework, including all developments meeting local standards of beauty, design and quality.

Read about the changes by visiting: www.gov.uk

The government has also provided draft text in a tracked change version of the existing NPPF.

'The text seeks to implement policy changes in response to the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission Report "Living with Beauty" via changes to the NPPF.'

It involves the uptake of the National Model Design Code which will provide detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies.

In terms of the amendments to the NPPF, the key areas of focus are achieving beautiful design (referring to National Design Guide and National Model Design Code), changes relating to flooding and the natural environment, historic environment (statues in particular) and minerals. Interestingly, 'beautiful' has been slotted into paragraph 8 of the objectives of the planning system. In addition, further advice on the use of Article 4 directions particularly of note, is advising that they should "in all cases, apply to the smallest

geographical area possible”.

Read and download the policy text: [Draft National Planning Policy Framework](#)

The National Model Design Code provides detailed guidance on the production of design codes, guides and policies, in order to promote successful design.

Read and download the document: [National Model Design Code](#)

A document has also been released to provide guidance on the contents of design codes, based on the National Design Guide (Read and download the guide: [National Design Guide](#)). It covers the key characteristics contained within the guide, such as; content, movement, nature, built form, identity, public space and use.

Planning Insight attended a session with MHCLG on the 4th of February 2021, which provided invaluable guidance on the intentions with the National Design Guide and the implementation.

'The overarching purpose of the Design Guide is to provide guidance to Local Authorities in developing their own sets in order to drive up design quality. This is very much in the context of the current planning system.'

Our experts agree that a focus on high quality design and providing a model code that ensures consistency from authority-to-authority, is certainly positive. A key issue however, as raised by many of the attendees, is how the production of such codes will be resourced. MHCLG is to carry out several pilots with Local Authorities, that should indicate the level of resources necessary. However, on a country-wide basis, with competing interests and at a base level of varying resources, slightly more than teething issues could present themselves.

Another issue that was discussed, was the extensive roll-out of permitted development rights, and how the code would relate to new rights. There was particular concern in relation to potential changes to Class E to residential that are on the horizon.

There is no doubt that the proposals are ambitious and the focus on creating better, and dare we say it, a 'more beautiful' built environment is admirable. We look forward to seeing how the proposed changes are implemented.