

Annex 1

Response to the Package of Materials that were published on 17 August 2026 (Excluding the NPPF) for Applications A and B.

Policy Paper: Creating a clear, rules-based planning system

Due to the broad nature of the Policy Paper, this response of the Council is considered applicable to both Application A and Application B.

It is noted that the paper provides a commentary and rationale of changes that have been and will be enacted. Having full regard to the aspirational tone of the Policy Paper, there is much that is outside the scope of the applications to which this response relates.

A theme taken from the paper is that there is a clear aspiration to ‘boost housing supply and unlock economic growth in the years ahead.’ As a broad approach, this is supported by the Council and was reflected in the Council’s closing statement to the Inquiry, where it was stated that “We want to build. But we want to build well.”

Where the Policy Paper sets out 10 changes that were brought about from the December 2025 iteration of the Draft NPPF, these will be addressed within the response to the August 2026 version of the NPPF that will be provided elsewhere.

This is also true for the commentary around the publication of the Housing Delivery Tests which will be addressed elsewhere.

The commentary provided in respect of statutory consultation is considered to be moot in respect of these applications.

The Government Response to the National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system consultation

Due to the broad nature of the Government Response, this reply of the Council is considered applicable to both Application A and Application B.

The commentary that the Government Response provides is noted and the commentary and rationale for changes that is included within it will be addressed within the response to the August 2026 NPPF where applicable.

The Government response to the Reforms to the statutory consultee system consultation

Due to the broad nature of the Government Response, this reply of the Council is considered applicable to both Application A and Application B.

The consultations required or deemed to be necessary have been undertaken. The Government Response to the consultation is therefore considered to be moot in respect of the applications.

Housing Delivery Test (HDT) results for 2024 and 2025 and an updated HDT Rule Book

The outcome of the HDT and its implications are applicable to both applications and this response of the Council is therefore applicable to both applications.

In summary, whilst a HDT result of 91% was achieved in 2023-24, the 2024-25 HDT result of 70% means that the Presumption is the identified consequence.

As detailed at 4c) of the HDT Rule Book, as delivery has fallen below 75% of the requirement over the previous three years, an evidenced unmet need for housing is deemed to exist for the purpose of applying policy S5(1)(j) of the NPPF. An action plan will need to be prepared and a 20% buffer will be applicable.