



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Government's Reforms of the Planning System

NCALC Briefing

05 June 2025



Housing

- Directing that strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment conducted using the government's standard method.
- Local planning authorities should “meet an area's identified housing need”. This is in comparison with the previous wording which instructed councils to “meet as much of an area's identified housing need as possible”.
- Government's manifesto commitment of 1.5 million new homes in this Parliament; places;
- Reverse other changes to the NPPF made in December 2023 which are considered detrimental to housing supply;

Housing Need

Housing Need and Supply

- Regulation 18 Plan (April 2024):
Total need 2023-41: 40,100
Total supply: circa 41,300
Surplus: circa 1,200
- Next plan:
Total need 2024-43: 49,900
Total supply: circa 40,100
Residual need: circa 9,800

Source	Position with base date at 1st April 23	Position with base date at 1st April 2024 with: (a) increased LHN requirement (b) 5% buffer	Position with base date at 1st April 2024 with: (a) increased LHN requirement (b) 5% buffer (c) 2 years added to plan period
Requirement	39,100 (2023-41)	42,551 (2024-2041)	47,557 (2024-43)
Contingency / 5% buffer	1,000	2,128	2,378
Total	40,100	44,679	49,935
Existing Provision	36,400	33,600	34,600
Housing allocations in emerging Local Plan at Northampton	3,500	3,500	4,100
Regeneration Allocations in emerging local plan at Northampton and Daventry	1,400	1,400	1,400
Total Provision	41,300	38,500	40,100
Surplus	1,200		
Deficit		6,179	9,835

Housing Land Supply and Housing Delivery Test (HDT):

Likely that we will move to a single HLA calculation from 1st April 2025
(approx 5.4 year supply based on 1/4/24 data)

Passed the HDT in December 2024 (117%). Will get more challenging when LHN figures increase.

Planning Update

- In an update to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, the NPPF says that for decision-taking, schemes should be granted permission unless policies in the framework provide a “strong” reason for refusal. The previous version stated that such policies should provide a “clear” reason for refusal.
- The new version of the presumption also adds explicit reference to the need to consider key policies. These are listed as those for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes.

Planning Update

- Support economic growth in key sectors, aligned with the Government's industrial strategy and future local growth plans, including laboratories, gigafactories, datacentres, digital economies and freight and logistics – given their importance to our economic future;
- The framework, at paragraph 87, says storage and distribution operations should be provided for “that allow for the efficient and reliable handling of goods, especially where this is needed to support the supply chain, transport innovation and decarbonisation”.

Recent Activity:

- Report on Reg 18 consultation – 20th November PPC
 - Workshops with members
 - Evidence base updates/ revisions
 - Reviewing policies in light of NPPF changes/new evidence/responses to consultation
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- Revised Local Development Scheme – agreed at PPC 26th February 2025
 - Further Regulation 18 consultation – October 2025
 - Submission October 2026
 - Examination Spring 2027
 - Adoption November 2027

5 — Neighbourhood Planning and other updates

- **Neighbourhood Plan Housing need.**

The team are working to understand the implications of the new NPPF housing numbers for neighbourhood plans and as yet are unable to provide specific need figures for Plans in preparation. Please bear with us.

- **Community Governance Review**

Changes to Parish boundaries may have consequences for Neighbourhood Plans. Please contact us if you are affected.

- **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)**

Consultation Summer 2025.

- **Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document**

Consultation Autumn 2025.

Questions

