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# Sustainable Development

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Lake District  
National Park

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Sustainable Development is ***“development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*** Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly



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## National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)



Paragraph 10 of the NPPF Sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Paragraph 8 explains that sustainable development has an social, economic and environmental dimension

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## National Planning Policy Framework

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

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## National Planning Policy Framework

It assumes that all development can achieve all three objectives -  
What it doesn't do very well is explain what happens when there is a clash between the different objectives.

Importantly paragraph 9 of the NPPF states

*These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.*

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## National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph 11 sets out what achieving sustainable development looks like. For **decision-taking** this means:

approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
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## So what does that mean for individual applications

If there are no policies in a development plan which specifically prohibit a development then planning permission should be granted unless an asset or area of particular importance (as identified in the NPPF) is harmed e.g. SSSI or landscape of the National Park or character of Conservation Area.

We cannot realistically judge individual applications against the broad criteria of sustainable development. In fact if we did so we would be acting directly against the stated policy set out in the NPPF and would be at risk of costs at appeal.

We are guided by the requirement to take decisions in accord with development plan policies and the NPPF, unless material considerations dictate otherwise.

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