

Priston Village Design Statement 2: Planning & Policy Background

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. Below are extracts relevant to planning in Priston.

Achieving Sustainable Development

11. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Core Planning Principles

17. Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings.

Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, Protecting the Green Belts around them, recognizing the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it.

6. Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes

53. Local planning authorities should consider the case for setting out policies to resist inappropriate development of residential gardens, for example where development would cause harm to the local area.

55. Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:
where the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to an enhancement to the immediate setting.

7. Requiring Good Design

58. Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality development that will be expected for the area....Planning policies and decisions should aim to ensure that developments:

Respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation.

Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping.

60. Planning policies and decisions should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiativeIt is, however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

61. Planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

63. In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which help raise the standard of design more generally in the area.

64. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

66. Applicants will be expected to work closely with those directly affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community.

9. Protecting the Green Belt

79. The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

89. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions are:

buildings for agriculture

limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites... which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it.

11. Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

109. The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils.

120. To prevent unacceptable risks from pollution and land instability, planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location.

125. By encouraging good design, planning policies and decisions should limit the impact of light pollution from artificial light on local amenity, intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation.

12. Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

135. The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application.

Bath and North East Somerset Local Plan

1. Core Strategy

The Core Strategy makes up Part 1 of the Local Plan. It sets out the Strategic Policy Framework for the district and it contains a long-term spatial concept and strategic objectives, core planning policies and a monitoring and implementation framework.

2. Placemaking Plan

The Placemaking Plan is the second part of the Local Plan. It outlines detailed design principles and applies specific planning policies, to enhance the quality and diversity of localities within B&NES, which will be used in determining planning applications.

Core Strategy

Extracts relevant to planning in Priston

Strategic Objectives

2: Maintaining an outstanding built and natural environment by ensuring that new development responds to the locally distinctive context and meets high standards of design. (p.17).

Rural Areas

5.02. Large parts of the rural areas are designated as Green Belt.

The distinctiveness of different parts of the rural areas and the villages within them fall within broad character areas identified in Rural Landscapes of Bath & North East Somerset that reflect underlying geology and rural form (p.120).

Vision for the Rural Areas

The District's rich and diverse countryside will be maintained. Locally identified needs will be met whilst maintaining the individual character of villages (p.121).

5.13. In line with a national policy of restraint there will only be limited development in rural areas (p.122).

Rural Affordable Housing

5.29. [Outside the RA1 villages] local need for affordable housing across rural areas will primarily be met through the rural exceptions policy. If there are rural buildings which are no longer required for local food production there may be opportunities to convert them to affordable housing under the Government's emerging proposals for the 'home on the farm' scheme (p.127).

Environmental Quality

6.33. B&NES' high quality environment is fundamental to its local distinctiveness.

6.34. High quality design is fundamental to the creation of high quality places by both enhancing appearance and functionality.

6.35. High quality design (including architecture, urban design and landscape architecture) has a significant impact on the quality of life.

6.36. High quality design is crucial if settlements throughout the District are to maintain and enhance their valued local distinctiveness and emerge as more sustainable and higher quality environments that thrive economically, socially and culturally.

The Council will support contemporary and innovative responses to local distinctiveness (p.148).

Historic Environment

6.39. B&NES' outstanding historic built, cultural, landscape and archaeological heritage assets and their settings are well documented and will continue to be preserved or enhanced (p.148).

6.40. Our heritage assets are central to local distinctiveness, and sense of place... [they] should be used as an integral part of regeneration wherever possible, and used to expect the highest standards of new design and architecture (p.149).

6.41. Proposals for the use of redundant and underused historic buildings and areas will be encouraged where the proposed use does not compromise or threaten the historic asset (p.149).

6.43. The Council will keep under review conservation areas in the District and where appropriate, designate new areas. Appraisals of conservation areas will define the boundaries and analyse the special architectural and historic interest of the area. In highlighting the key features that both contribute to or detract from the character of the conservation area, they provide a framework for considering development proposals (p.149).

Landscape

6.47. Policy seeks to conserve or enhance landscape character including opportunities to reinforce local distinctiveness (p.149).

Nature Conservation

6.50. There is a need to create a coherent network of more robust and resilient natural habitats, including bigger protected sites and both a greater extent and greater connectivity of natural habitats (p.150).

6.52. The Council also recognizes the importance of maintaining, restoring and recreating priority habitats within Strategic Nature Areas ... (p.150).

Green Belt

6.61. Green Belts are designated primarily in order to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. As such they help to shape patterns of urban development, protect the countryside and provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation. Within B&NES the Green Belt also plays a vital role in maintaining and setting of the World Heritage Site of Bath and the surrounding villages. It is also important in preventing the coalescence of these villages with the city (p.154).

Placemaking plan

Volume 1: District Wide Strategy and Policies **Extracts relevant to planning in Priston**

High Quality Design

180. Urban design is the process of shaping the physical setting for life in cities, towns and villages and involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscape.

Policy D2: Local Character Distinctiveness

Development proposals will be supported where they contribute positively and do not harm local character and distinctiveness...they will be assessed against the following criteria:

i. The development has positively responded to the site context, in particular the local character, including uses, layout, streets and spaces, siting, spacing, building lines, roofscapes, materials, building forms and features;

ii. The design responds appropriately to urban geomorphology, including consideration of historic grain –: routes, block and plot patterns; ... building heights, massing and scale and local vernacular;

- iii. The design enhances and responds to natural features including landscape, green infrastructure, skylines, topography and landform and views;*
- v. The development should, where appropriate, respect locally characteristic architectural styles, patterns, rhythms and themes which reflect local proportions;*
- vi. The development reflects materials, colours, textures, landscape and boundary treatments that are appropriate to the area.*

Policy D4: Streets and Spaces

c. Car parking and highways design should not dominate the design of the development or the public realm.

Policy D5: Building Design

Development proposals must be well detailed, in particular:

- i. Building facades, reveals and entrances must be well designed, all elevations must be well articulated and appropriate building line and/or boundary treatment should be maintained.*
- ii. Building frontages should face and relate to the public realm, and should define the street.*
- iii. Extensions must complement and enhance the host building.*
- iii. Good modern, innovative design is supported.*

Lighting

203. Within the open countryside external lighting is generally not acceptable. Lighting can be extremely prominent and in many cases visible over a large area and can often introduce an urban appearance to the countryside which for the most part is not lit at night.

Policy D8: Lighting

1) Proposals for artificial lighting will only be permitted when:

- a) they would not give rise to an unacceptable level of illumination into the sky, open countryside, urban areas or villages;*
- b) it can be demonstrated that additional lighting on site will have no detrimental effect on visual and residential amenity or local ecology.*

2) Development will be expected to reduce or at best maintain existing light levels to protect or improve the darkness of rivers, watercourses or other ecological corridors, in particular to protect or provide a functional dark route for European protected species.

Historic Environment

Policy HE1: Historic Environment Safeguarding Heritage Assets

3) Applications affecting the significance of any heritage asset and its setting will be required to provide sufficient information to demonstrate how the proposals would contribute to the asset's conservation.

8) In addition, the following will apply to specific asset types as listed below:

b) Listed buildings.

The significance of listed buildings is required to be sustained and enhanced. Appropriate repair and reuse of listed buildings will be encouraged.

g) Non-designated heritage assets.

Proposals affecting non-designated heritage assets, including unscheduled archaeology, unlisted buildings and local parks and gardens, should ensure they are conserved having regard to their significance.

Landscape

Policy NE2: Conserving and Enhancing the Landscape

1 Development will be permitted where it:

a) conserves or enhances local landscape character, landscape features and local distinctiveness;

d) conserves or enhances important views, particularly those to significant landmarks and features and takes opportunities to create new local views and vistas.

2 Development should seek to avoid or adequately mitigate any adverse impact on landscape.

3 Proposals with potential to impact on the landscape/townscape character or on views should be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment undertaken by a qualified practitioner to inform the design and location of any new development.

Policy NE2A: Landscape Setting of Settlements

Any development should seek to conserve and enhance the landscape setting of settlements and their landscape character, views and features. Development that would result in adverse impact to the landscape setting of settlements that cannot be adequately mitigated will not be permitted.

Policy NE2B: Extension of Residential Gardens in the Countryside

Proposals to extend residential garden land will be permitted provided it can be demonstrated that there are no adverse impacts on the setting of the site or property, residential amenity, local rural landscape character, key habitat features and/or ecological functions and that the proposed boundary treatment is sympathetic to the location and that there is no conflict with Green Belt policy.

Green Belt

299b. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) asks local planning authorities to retain and enhance visual amenity. On the basis that there is little guidance in national policy on safeguarding visual amenity of the Green Belt it is important that the current level of policy protection is maintained through Policy GB1.

Policy GB1: Visual Amenities of the Green Belt

Development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt should not prejudice but seek to enhance the visual amenities of the Green Belt by reason of its siting, design or materials used for its construction.

Development in villages within the Green Belt

300. There are a number of settlements in the District that are washed over by the Green Belt [including Priston].

301. The NPPF confirms that although the construction of new buildings is regarded as inappropriate development in the Green Belt, limited infilling in villages is considered an exception to this policy.

302. The Core Strategy defines “infilling” in relation to housing as the filling in of small gaps within existing development... the plot generally being surrounded on at least three sides by developed sites or roads.

303. There is no longer any specific reference to the need to define “infill boundaries” or distinction made between residential and other development in this context. Nevertheless, Housing Development Boundaries continue to be defined for those washed over by the Green Belt villages in which infilling for housing development would be acceptable and help avoid disputes over which particular sites are covered by infill policies and provide certainty as to where residential development would be acceptable in Green Belt settlements.

Policy GB2: Development in Green Belt Villages

Development in villages in the Green Belt will not be permitted unless it is limited to infilling and in the case of residential development the proposal is within the defined Housing Development Boundary.

307. The NPPF also takes a more flexible approach than previous local plans in considering proposals for the replacement or rebuilding existing dwellings in the Green Belt and will allow the replacement building (not just a dwelling), provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces.

Policy GB3: Extensions and Alterations to Buildings in the Green Belt

Proposals to extend a building in the Green Belt will only be permitted provided they would not:

i) Represent a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original building.

Unstable Land

329. Policy PCS6 seeks to ensure that sites are suitable for the new use taking account of ground conditions and land stability and the need for remediation as appropriate.

Policy PCS6: Unstable Land

Where there is a risk that the land may be unstable, development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that:

1) The site is capable of being developed without adversely affecting the stability of the development or that of neighbouring land; and

2) Any remedial and/or precautionary measures proposed as a result of the development do not adversely affect local amenities and/or environmental interests.

The onus will be with the developer and/or landowner for securing a safe development and for submitting the necessary Risk Assessment(s) to support the proposal.

Foul Sewage Infrastructure

337. Policy PCS7A seeks to ensure development is only permitted where there is adequate foul sewage provision...

Policy PCS7A: Foul Sewage Infrastructure

1. Development will only be permitted where adequate sewage treatment facilities are available or where suitable arrangements are made for their provision.

2. Developments which may result in increased nutrient load to sensitive watercourses should incorporate adequate mitigation measures in compliance with the EU Water Framework and Habitat Directives.

3. New developments will be expected to connect to the public sewer system and new sewers and associated infrastructure will be constructed to a standard adoptable by Wessex Water.

Policy SU1: Sustainable Drainage Policy

Sustainable urban Drainage Systems (SuDs) are to be employed for the management of runoff from both major development...and for minor development in an area at risk of flooding...

Please check the Placemaking Plan on the B&NES website for further planning policies which might have relevance for any planning application.

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