

TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL
PLANNING POLICY & LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE
25 AUGUST 2026

Update to report A.1 - TENDRING DISTRICT LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: SUBMISSION VERSION

Background

Since publication of the Committee agenda, the Government has published a new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 17 August 2026. The Framework replaces the December 2024 version and introduces a structure separating plan-making policies from national decision-making policies. Officers have undertaken an initial review of the new document and set out below the key implications for the emerging Local Plan. The introduction of National Decision-Making Policies is one of the most significant changes in the new Framework and has potential implications for the weight given to some development plan policies when determining planning applications.

Transitional Arrangements

Annex A of the new NPPF confirms that plans already being prepared under the previous plan-making system should continue to be prepared in accordance with the December 2024 version of the Framework, subject to the relevant transitional provisions. The Tendring Local Plan Review will therefore continue under the existing arrangements and the publication of the new NPPF does not affect the recommendations contained within this report. However, the new NPPF is now a material consideration in the determination of planning applications with immediate effect.

BNG

The new NPPF includes specific provisions relating to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). Policy N2(3) indicates that where a Local Plan seeks to secure BNG above the statutory minimum requirement, weight in decision making should generally only be given to site-specific policies requiring a higher level of BNG.

The effect of this policy is that greater weight is likely to be given to locally justified BNG requirements attached to specific development allocations or locations. By contrast, more general Local Plan policies seeking to apply higher BNG requirements across an entire district may carry less weight.

The Submission Version Local Plan includes policies relating to biodiversity enhancement and Biodiversity Net Gain. Officers are currently reviewing the implications of Policy N2(3) and the extent to which it may affect the application and weight afforded to relevant policies within the emerging Local Plan.

Energy and Carbon Policies

The Submission Version Local Plan contains local policies relating to operational energy, embodied carbon and renewable energy (Policies PPL10a, PPL10b and PPL10c). Whilst the Local Plan Review will continue to be considered against the national policy framework under which it has been prepared, the new NPPF includes national policies relating to climate change, clean energy and water resources.

Officers consider that the overall direction of the Council's policies remains broadly aligned with national objectives. However, the emerging energy and carbon policies are likely to attract particular scrutiny through the examination process and in the determination of future planning applications as the implications of the revised national policy framework are considered.

Strategic Planning and Spatial Development Strategies

The new NPPF includes a policy framework for Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs), reflecting the Government's wider reforms to strategic planning and the emerging devolution agenda.

Whilst the Tendring Local Plan continues to progress under existing arrangements, the increasing emphasis on strategic planning reinforces the importance of having an up-to-date Local Plan in place ahead of the preparation of future strategic planning arrangements for Greater Essex. The emerging Local Plan will therefore provide an important framework for future strategic planning decisions affecting Tendring and the wider area.

Railway Stations and Sustainable Growth

The new NPPF includes support for directing development towards well-connected railway stations and sustainable transport hubs. Officers have reviewed the position in Tendring and note that Manningtree is the only station within Tendring potentially affected by these provisions.

However, Officers do not currently consider that this policy is likely to have significant implications for the Local Plan's strategy or future growth around Manningtree because of existing constraints, including flood risk, the Dedham Vale National Landscape, environmental sensitivities and infrastructure limitations.

Overall Implications for the Local Plan

Officers do not consider that the publication of the new NPPF gives rise to any issue requiring amendment to the Submission Version Local Plan or the recommendations before Committee. The detailed implications of the new Framework will continue to be reviewed through the Regulation 19 consultation process and subsequent examination.