

Rural Economy Making the Connections

...But what are the Key Issues?

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Many polarised debates –

The future vs the past?

Economic growth or the environment?

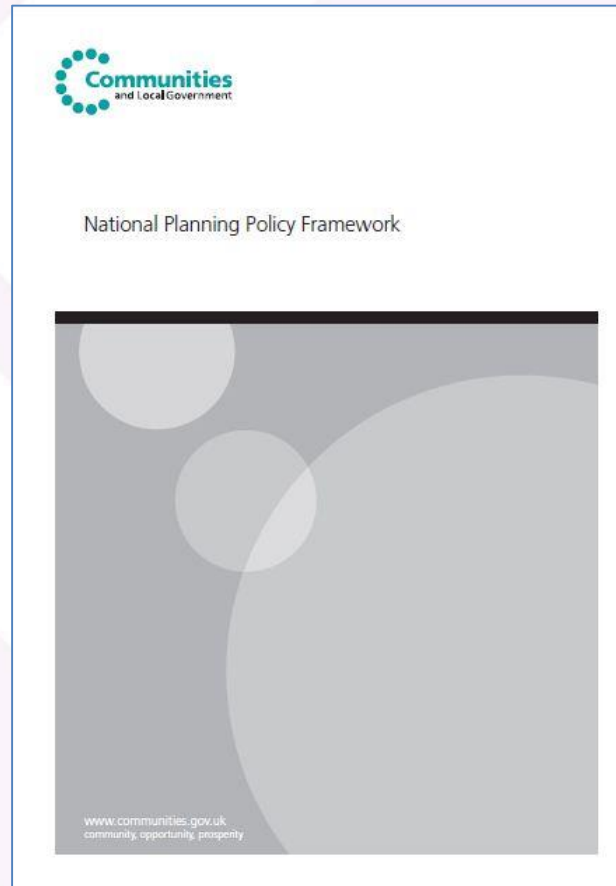
A million new homes or zero need?

Fracking – lifeline or threat?

Always controversial issues...but

- Local choice and democracy
- Environment, impacts and communities
- Economy, jobs and tackling inequality
- Homes
- Infrastructure

Key Gov Documents/Views



NPPF – March 2012

- “1,000 pages of jargon” to “50 clear guidance”
- Permission granted unless “*adverse impacts would significantly outweigh the benefits*”
- Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- Supporting a prosperous rural economy

- Support expansion of all types of rural business through conversion of existing and well designed new buildings
- Promote diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses and rural tourism ... which respect character of the countryside
- promote retention and development of local services and community facilities

DEFRA 10 Point Rural Plan



Department
for Environment
Food & Rural Affairs

www.gov.uk/defra

**Towards a one nation economy: A 10-point
plan for boosting productivity in rural areas**

August 2015

- Extensive, fast broadband
- High quality mobile comms
- Modern transport connections
- High quality education and training
- Expanded apprenticeships
- Enterprise Zones in rural areas
- Better regulation and improved planning
- More housing
- Increased affordable childcare
- Devolution of power

Conservative 2015 Manifesto planning commitments, including

“Let local people have more say on
planning”

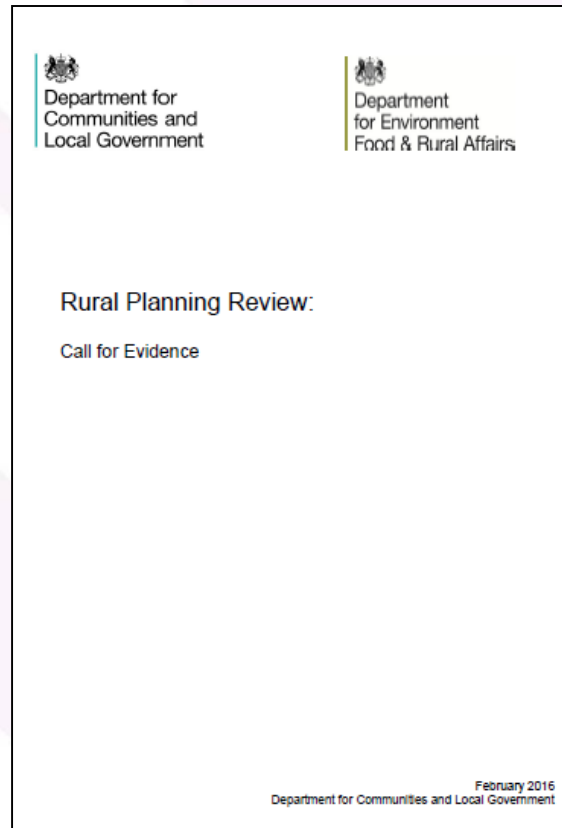
Housing and Planning Bill 2015-16

“a national crusade to get
1 million homes built by 2020”
and transform “generation rent
into generation buy.”

Where is the Rural Difference?

11/02/16 Rural Planning Review :

“look to reduce regulatory burdens in support of new homes, jobs and innovation.”



- ..housebuilders to provide ideas on how to make it simpler to build much needed new homes.”
- “...review rules for converting agricultural buildings to residential, building on success of the 2014 changes which have seen more than 2,000 agricultural buildings being allowed to be converted to much-needed homes.”

- “we are seeing net internal migration from urban to rural, including highly skilled people attracted by excellent quality of life on offer.”
- “A Government review looking at a more streamlined planning system in rural areas has been welcomed by the NFU.”
- “Planning system has often delayed farmers’ and growers’ ability to move homes on farms.”

Some issues to think about today

- Complex devolution picture forming. Range of powers covering to 10 point plan.
- Can rural voice engage if no convergence on stakeholder participation?
- Ensure CPRE core concerns for planning, countryside and SD are properly reflected, especially given overarching **urban economic** focus

- Change in philosophy of regeneration - areas of greatest economic need to greatest economic potential. 'Don't spread the jam too thinly'
- Selective use of available city evidence, ignores evidence on market towns
- Planning intended to address inequality and deliver SD. Re-emergence of "either-or" view of economic growth set against sustainability

- Housing supply has planning in panic mode, inherently unstrategic and unsustainable
- SD* agenda lost its way? Should centre on tackling inequalities and promoting wellbeing, health and civic engagement, alongside economic growth. ** SD = sustainable development*
- SD agenda, 2030/2050 carbon commitments, climate change response and ecosystem services, are not 'nice to do' list, but pre-requisites for a healthy and just society.

Finally...

- Economic growth **is** a delivery mechanism for this, if harnessed properly.
- All these changes seem to be heading towards an as yet really unstated goal
- Fundamental tensions with localism?
- Non polycentric commuter belt?
- Comparative rural advantage =
“stunning view from office window” ?

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