

SABRE Guidance Note 02: Setting and satisfying planning requirements using SABRE

Aug 2018

Introduction

This Guidance Note helps planners and planning applicants deliver development that is compliant with the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), released by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in July 2018.

What's New for Security in the NPPF 2018?

The NPPF 2012 made several references to crime prevention, but did not go on to detail the decision-making approach expected to deliver a development with such attributes. Furthermore, the NPPF 2012 required local authorities to consider 'high profile sites' (without defining this term) and consult with security agencies in the development of local plans only. This apparent separation of crime and terrorism, and the latter's role in plan-making only, did not reflect that security planning must be holistic, and a fundamental part of both plan making and decision making in relation to development proposals.

The NPPF 2018 has improved matters significantly. It now contains a section dedicated to 'promoting healthy and safe communities', which instructs local authorities to consider the 'wider security and defence requirements' both when developing plans and making decisions. It stresses the importance of 'appropriate and proportionate' security and for the first time defines locations which require special consideration¹. This suggests a shift towards a risk based approach to security, as has long been the case for other dynamic planning issues, such as flooding.

What do these changes mean?

Because the NPPF is a material consideration, its effect is immediate and is not dependent on a local authority updating its local plans. It is therefore important that local authorities understand what to ask of planning applicants to ensure that the requirements of the NPPF 2018 are addressed in development proposals. This may impact the data they collect in application forms, validation requirements and planning conditions, which to date, for many local authorities have solely focused on crime prevention.

The NPPF now reflects the unfortunate reality that premises may be subjected to a wide range of 'malicious threats' and that those locations that attract high densities of users may be targeted by terrorists. As we have seen in recent incidents across the United Kingdom and internationally, terrorists use a wide variety of attack methodologies to achieve their objectives. Although security measures incorporated to mitigate attacks involving vehicles will typically have the most visual impact on development proposals, security will impact a range of decisions made during the planning and design process, including boundary treatments, access and circulation, landscaping, parking and material selection.

For this reason, applicants must be able to evidence that they have fully considered these risks when developing their layout and design proposals and this will often necessitate the involvement of security specialists within design teams. Security specialists can be expected to consult with the local police and other agencies to obtain the most up to date information in relation to potential threats and use it to assess the implications on development proposals. They will have to do this as early as possible to ensure security enhances proposals, rather than negatively impacting other planning objectives.

How can SABRE help?

SABRE is a security risk management standard for buildings, infrastructure and managed space. It does not attempt to prescribe a set of security measures that should be incorporated in different types of development, as there is clearly no one-size fits all solution that delivers the NPPF requirement of appropriate and proportionate security. What is appropriate for one development may be, given other material considerations, completely inappropriate for another.

Instead, to help planners and applicants, SABRE provides a robust auditable process for delivering integrated security during the design and construction process. An independent assessor will record the activities evidenced by the applicant and subject to meeting the standard, 3rd party certification will be awarded by BRE Global at design stage (interim certification) and at practical completion. Certification evidences a risk based approach has been adopted, records the stakeholder engagement that has occurred, highlights the threats taken into account and provides assurance that design proposals are implemented fully.

For further information relating to SABRE in the planning process, refer to 'How SABRE Works for You' and the RIBA Process Chart, downloadable [here](#).

¹ Refer to NPPF 2018 footnote 41 for a full list of location types requiring special consideration.