

## CONSULTATION – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE, WHITE PAPER

---

13 August 2020

### OVERVIEW

---

MHCLG has issued a White Paper, Planning for the Future, making very radical proposals for the current planning system

<http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

The government believes the planning system is inefficient, opaque and provides poor outcomes. However, successive governments have tinkered and chipped away at the original concepts behind the planning system. The result is a complex, increasingly permissive system tilted in favour of development where profit is the motive. The planning system doesn't build houses, developers do. The LGA believe there are permissions for one million homes which have not been taken up, <https://www.local.gov.uk/housing-backlog-more-million-homes-planning-permission-not-yet-built>. The planning system is there to ensure development takes place in the right locations and to be open, democratic and transparent.

### IMPORTANT DATES

---

Response dates

- 15<sup>th</sup> October – to send response to NALC to co-ordinate its sector-wide response<sup>i</sup> OR
- 29<sup>th</sup> October – directly to MHCLG<sup>ii</sup>

### PROPOSALS

---

The government is proposing a system based on three categories:

- Growth
- Renewal
- Protection

This system is supported by three conceptual pillars:

- Planning for development
- Planning of beautiful and sustainable places
- Planning for infrastructure and connected places

The proposals include:

- Simplifying the role of Local Plans so they identify land under the three categories
  - Growth – areas suitable for substantial development, where outline approval for development would be automatically secured
  - Renewal – areas suitable for some development, such as “gentle densification”
  - Protected – areas where development is restricted
- Development management policies will be set nationally and Local Plans will have a core set of standards and requirement for development

- Streamline consultation at the planning application stage
- Local Plans be subject to a single statutory “sustainable development” test doing away with soundness, environmental and viability test and duty to co-operate
- Standard digital map based template for Local Plans
- Statutory timescales for LPA’s and Planning Inspectorate of 30 months for Local Plans, sanctions for failure
- Firm deadlines for decision making
- Digital first approach to encourage engagement by all, greater use of standard data sets
- Focus on design and sustainability through NPPF to combat climate change
- Ask for beauty with greater focus on “place making”
- Local design guidance and codes, each LPA to have a Chief Officer for design and place making
- CIL To be reformed as a nationally set value-based flat rate charge – the Infrastructure Levy (IL)
- Greater powers to LPA’s to determine how IL is used
- A nationally determined binding housing requirement that LPA’s have to deliver through their Local Plans
- Consult on options for improving data on contractual arrangements used to control land to promote competition among developers and helps SME’s (see 3 below)

## CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

---

There are 25 questions in the consultation.

1. What three words do you associate most with the planning system in England?
2. Do you get involved with planning decisions in your local area? If no, why not?
3. Our proposals will make it much easier to access plans and contribute your views to planning decisions. How would you like to find out about plans and planning proposals in the future?
4. What are your top three priorities for planning in your local area?
5. Do you agree that Local Plans should be simplified in line with our proposals?
6. Do you agree with our proposals for streamlining the development management content of Local Plans, and setting out general development management policies nationally?
7. Do you agree with our proposals to replace existing legal and policy tests for Local Plans with a consolidated test of “suitable development”, which would include consideration of environmental impact? How could strategic, cross-boundary issues be best planned for in the absence of a formal Duty to Cooperate?
8.
  - a. Do you agree that a standard method for establishing housing requirements (that takes into account constraints) should be introduced?
  - b. Do you agree that affordability and the extent of existing urban areas are appropriate indicators of the quantity of development to be accommodated?
9.
  - a. Do you agree that there should be automatic outline permission for areas for substantial development (Growth areas) with faster routes for detailed consent?
  - b. Do you agree with our proposals above for the consent arrangements for Renewal and Protected areas?
  - c. Do you think there is a case for allowing new settlements to be brought forward under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime?
10. Do you agree with our proposals to make decision making faster and more certain?
11. Do you agree with our proposals for accessible, web-based Local Plans?

12. Do you agree with our proposals for a 30 month statutory timescale for the production of Local Plans?
13. a. Do you agree that Neighbourhood Plans should be retained in the reformed planning system?  
b. How can the neighbourhood planning process be developed to meet our objectives, such as in the use of digital tools and reflecting community preferences about design?
14. Do you agree that there should be a stronger emphasis on the build out of developments? And if so, what further measures would you support?
15. What do you think about the design of new development that has happened recently in your area?
16. Sustainability is at the heart of our proposals. What is your priority for sustainability in your area?
17. Do you agree with our proposals for improving the production and use of design guides and codes?
18. Do you agree that we should establish a new body to support design coding and building better places, and that each authority should have a Chief Officer for design and place-making?
19. Do you agree with our proposal to consider how design might be given greater emphasis in the strategic objectives for Homes England?
20. Do you agree with our proposals for implementing a fast track for beauty?
21. When new development happens in your area, what is your priority for what comes with it?
22. a. Should the Government replace the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 planning obligations with a new consolidated Infrastructure Levy, which is charged as a fixed proportion of development value above a set threshold?  
b. Should the Infrastructure Levy rates be set nationally at a single rate, set nationally at an area specific rate, or set locally?  
c. Should the Infrastructure Levy aim to capture the same amount of value overall, or more value, to support greater investment in infrastructure, affordable housing and local communities?  
d. Should we allow local authorities to borrow against the Infrastructure Levy, to support infrastructure delivery in their area?
23. Do you agree that the scope of the reformed Infrastructure Levy should capture changes of use through permitted development rights?
24. a. Do you agree that we should aim to secure at least the same amount of affordable housing under the Infrastructure Levy, and as much on-site affordable provision, as at present?  
b. Should affordable housing be secured as in-kind payment towards the Infrastructure Levy, or as a “right to purchase” at discounted rates for local authorities?  
c. If an in-kind delivery approach is taken, should we mitigate against local authority overpayment risk?  
d. If an in-kind delivery approach is taken, are there additional steps that would need to be taken to support affordable housing quality?
25. Should local authorities have fewer restrictions over how they spend the Infrastructure Levy?  
a. If yes, should an affordable housing “ring-fence” be developed?

---

<sup>i</sup> [policycomms@nalc.gov.uk](mailto:policycomms@nalc.gov.uk)

<sup>ii</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future](http://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future) or [planningforthefuture@communities.gov.uk](mailto:planningforthefuture@communities.gov.uk)