

Holme Valley Parish Council

To all Members of the Planning Committee

You are hereby summoned to attend a virtual meeting of the **Planning Committee** to be held on **MONDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2020** by **ZOOM** at **6.30 PM** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87993217117>

Please note that timings on the agenda are given for guidance of the Chairman and Committee only and should not be taken as the time at which discussion of a particular item will commence.

- AGENDA - (A)

Welcome

Open Session at Planning

6.30 pm

At the commencement of the meeting, there will be an open session lasting up to 15 minutes, for members of the public to address Members of the Committee in connection with planning applications to be considered at the meeting. This session allows both applicants and objectors to address Members. Any other information relating to items on the agenda will be considered as part of the agenda item. Issues/concerns/information not related to any item on the agenda will be considered at a later date or referred to the appropriate body.

2021 39 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 amended by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 on 6 August 2014 6.45 pm

As Local (Parish and Town) Council meetings can now be recorded, the Chairman to check if any members of the public wish to record the meeting, to ensure reasonable facilities can be provided. The meeting is already being recorded by the Officer in audio and video formats.

2021 40 To accept apologies for absence 6.46 pm

2021 41 To receive Members' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda 6.47 pm

2021 42 To receive Officers' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda 6.48 pm

2021 43 To consider written requests for new DPI dispensations 6.49 pm

2021 44 To consider whether items on the agenda should be discussed in private session 6.50 pm

- Any recording to be halted during such items and members of the public be moved to the Zoom "Waiting Room"

2021 45 To confirm the Minutes of the Previous Meeting 6.51 pm

- Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 3 August 2020, numbered 2021 25 – 2021 38 inclusive (B)

2021 46 Completed Kirklees Planning Applications List 6.52 pm

- To note List 2021/05 updated with the views of the Committee (C)

Holme Valley Parish Council

- 2021 47 New Planning Applications – Kirklees Council 6.53 pm**
- To consider new or amended applications received by Kirklees Council from 28 July 2020 to 01 September 2020 inclusive – List 2021/06 enclosed **(D)**
- 2021 48 Kirklees Council – Planning Officers’ Decisions 7.26 pm**
- To note list of Decision Notices issued by Kirklees Council for the period 28 July 2020 to 01 September 2020 inclusive **(E)**
- 2021 49 Neighbourhood Planning 7.28 pm**
- To receive any report of recent Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings and events and developments of the Plan – Chairman of Steering Group to report if required
- 2021 50 Peak District National Park Authority 7.30 pm**
NB: there were no new or amended applications received by the Peak District National Park Authority from 28 July 2020 to 01 September 2020
- To note, Decision Notices issued by the Peak District National Park Authority from 28 July 2020 inclusive to 01 September 2020 **(F)**
- To note the response by Holme Valley Parish Council to the consultation request by email regarding Peak District National Park Authority Residential Annexes Supplementary Planning Document **(G)**
- To note, the publication of the Peak District National Park Annual monitoring Report **(H)**
- 2021 51 Issue with shop frontage 7.40 pm**
- To note the Deputy Clerk’s letter on behalf of the Parish Council to Kirklees Planning regarding the shop frontage of new businesses within the Holmfirth Conservation Area **(I)**
- 2021 52 Application to divert a footpath Wolfstones 7.42 pm**
- To consider the application by a resident to divert footpath 60 **(Ji-vii)**
- 2021 53 Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint 7.50 pm**
- To note, the Re-issue of the Notice of the Adoption of the Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint **(K)**
- 2021 54 Planning for the Future – Changes to Planning Consultation 7.52 pm**
- To consider a response from the Parish Council to the government’s proposals **(Li - iii)**

Holme Valley Parish Council

2021 55 Mac's Bikes

7.57 pm

- [Mac's Bikes](#) was set up by a Holme Valley resident in memory of her son. Mac's Bikes wants to supply free bikes and bike racks. They have 10 free wheel-in bike racks that they would like to place around Holmfirth and would like suggestions of suitable sites.

Rich McGill

Rich McGill
Deputy Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer

Holme Valley Parish Council
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DECISIONS OF KIRKLEES COUNCIL PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE (HUDDERSFIELD AREA) ARE DISPLAYED IN THE OFFICE

Holme Valley Parish Council

MINUTES OF THE VIRTUAL PLANNING STANDING COMMITTEE HELD VIA THE ZOOM PLATFORM ON MONDAY 3 AUGUST 2020

Those present:

Chairman: Cllr J Roberts

Councillors: Cllrs K Bellamy, M Blacka, P Colling, RP Dixon, B Feeney

Officer: Mr R McGill (Deputy Clerk)

Welcome

Cllr Roberts welcomed Members to this virtual meeting of the Planning Standing Committee.

Open Session at Planning

No members of the public were present at the virtual Open Session.

2021 25 Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 amended by the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 on 6 August 2014

Council meetings can now be recorded.

RESOLVED: The Deputy Clerk was recording the meeting via the Zoom teleconferencing platform in audio and video formats.

2021 26 To accept apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs T Dixon, D Gould and R Hogley.

RESOLVED: The Committee approved the acceptance of the apologies.

No apology was received from Cllr B Lockley.

2021 27 To receive Members' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda

None were disclosed.

2021 28 To receive Officers' personal and disclosable pecuniary interests in items on the agenda

None were disclosed.

2021 29 To consider written requests for new DPI dispensations

No written requests for new DPI dispensations had been received.

2021 30 To consider whether items on the agenda should be discussed in private session

RESOLVED: Members decided that no items on the agenda should be discussed in private.

2021 31 To confirm the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 6 July 2020, numbered 2021 14 – 2021 24 inclusive were confirmed.

Holme Valley Parish Council

2021 32 Completed Planning Applications Lists

NOTED:

The Planning Committee noted List 2021/04 updated with the views of the Committee.

2021 33 New Planning Applications – Kirklees Council

Members considered any new or amended applications received from Kirklees Council from 30 June 2020 to 28 July 2020 inclusive – List 2021/05.

RESOLVED: That the Standing Committee's comments on the above applications be forwarded to Kirklees Council by the Deputy Clerk.

2021 34 Kirklees Council – Planning Officers' Decisions

NOTED: The Planning Standing Committee noted the List of Decision Notices issued by Kirklees Council covering 30 June 2020 to 28 July 2020 inclusive.

2021 35 Neighbourhood Planning

The Deputy Clerk shared a report from Cllr Hogley, - that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group had received confirmation from Kirklees Council and the Peak District National Park Authority that they are currently assessing our Submission Plan and we await their response about its progression to Regulation 16 consultation.

NOTED: The Planning Standard Committee noted Cllr Hogley's report.

2021 36 Peak District National Park Authority

Members considered any new or amended applications received from the Peak District National Park Authority from 30 June 2020 to 28 July 2020 inclusive – List 2021/02PD.

RESOLVED: That the Standing Committee's comments on the above applications be forwarded to the Peak District National Park Authority by the Deputy Clerk.

NOTED: The Committee noted the list of Decision Notices issued by the Peak District National Park Authority from 30 June 2020 to 28 July 2020 inclusive – List 2021/01PD.

Members considered the consultation request by email regarding Peak District National Park Authority Residential Annexes Supplementary Planning Document.

RESOLVED: The Deputy Clerk would pass on the Committee's comments to the Consultation.

2021 37 Notice of plans to extend existing woodland

The Committee considered a notice from a Holme Valley resident regarding his intention to extend existing woodland.

RESOLVED: That the Standing Committee fully supported the resident's plan to extend existing woodland.

RESOLVED: That the Deputy Clerk pass onto the applicant, the gratitude and support of the Planning Standing Committee for his actions.

Holme Valley Parish Council

2021 38 A resident's issue with shop frontage

The Committee considered a communication from a Holme Valley resident regarding the shop frontages of new businesses within the Holmfirth Conservation Area.

RESOLVED: That the Deputy Clerk draw up a letter to the Kirklees Conservation Area Officer regarding potential breaches to the Conservation.

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Chairman

Holme Valley Parish Council

Planning applications lodged with Kirklees from 30 06 2020 to 28 07 2020 - List 2021/05. The following applications will be considered by Holme Valley Parish Council ahead of the virtual Planning Committee meeting 03/08/2020. Where appropriate, recommendations will be made to Kirklees Planning Services regarding whether or not they should be approved, but the final decisions will be taken by Kirklees Planning Services.

Local residents can email deputyclerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk to submit their views on applications or, better still, attend the meeting in person. Contact the Deputy Clerk for an invite.

Full details regarding deadline dates for comments and how to submit a comment can be obtained from the Kirklees' website: www.kirklees.gov.uk/planning

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/01
Application No:	2020/62/91899/W
Location:	17, Netherlea Drive, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3EX
Ward/Councillors:	Netherthong – JD, JR
Proposed Development:	Erection of two storey side extension and single storey front and rear extensions
OS Map Ref:	SE 413986.6575409492.8966
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91899
HVPC Comment:	Support subject to materials being in keeping
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/02
Application No:	2020/62/91897/W
Location:	69, Town Gate, Hepworth, Holmfirth, HD9 1TE
Ward/Councillors:	Hepworth - TD
Proposed Development:	Demolition of existing extension and erection of two storey side extension, porch extension and replacement windows (within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 416387.7092406617.1704
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91897
HVPC Comment:	Support subject to Conservation Area Officer approval
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/03
Application No:	2020/62/91906/W
Location:	57, River Holme View, Brockholes, Holmfirth, HD9 7BP
Ward/Councillors:	Brockholes - MP
Proposed Development:	Erection of 2 storey rear extension with balcony
OS Map Ref:	SE 415228.2126410615.5178
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91906
HVPC Comment:	Support subject to no overlooking
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/04
Application No:	2020/62/91955/W
Location:	209, Huddersfield Road, Thongsbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 3TT
Ward/Councillors:	Netherthong – JD, JR
Proposed Development:	Erection of single storey rear and front extensions
OS Map Ref:	SE 414513.2111409363.7495
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91955
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/05
Application No:	2020/70/91815/W
Location:	32, Paris Road, Scholes, Holmfirth, HD9 1UA
Ward/Councillors:	Scholes – MB, RPD
Proposed Development:	Variation of condition 2. (plans and specifications) on previous permission no. 2015/91839 erection of one detached dwelling and demolition of existing detached dwelling and garage with associated works to vehicular access
OS Map Ref:	SE 415828.3645407592.5557
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91815
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/06
Application No:	2020/62/91978/W
Location:	22, Town Head, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6BW
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC, BL, SS
Proposed Development:	Part demolition of boundary wall to form new off road parking space (within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 413668.0724412075.7354
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91978
HVPC Comment:	Object due to inappropriate sight lines
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/07
Application No:	2020/62/92055/W
Location:	The Bowling Club, Bridge Lane, Holmfirth, HD9 7AN
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB, RH
Proposed Development:	Erection of single storey extension to pavilion building to form toilet block (modified Proposal)
OS Map Ref:	SE 414426.4237408714.3274
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92055
HVPC Comment:	Support subject to disabled access having a ramp
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/08
Application No:	2020/70/92043/W
Location:	The Co Operative Food, Market Street, Holmfirth, HD9 7AX
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB, RH
Proposed Development:	Variation of condition 2. (plans and specifications) and 3. (lighting scheme) on previous permission no. 2019/92541 for installation of and re-positioning of exiting ATM and external lighting (within a Conservation area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 414365408461
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92043
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/09
Application No:	2020/62/91914/W
Location:	Oldfield Road Farm, Oldfield Road, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6RL
Ward/Councillors:	Honley South - JS
Proposed Development:	Erection of agricultural building
OS Map Ref:	SE 413842410619
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91914
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/10
Application No:	2020/62/92044/W
Location:	1, White Wells, Dean Bridge Lane, Hepworth, Holmfirth, HD9 1TW
Ward/Councillors:	Scholes – MB, RPD
Proposed Development:	Partial demolition and rebuilding of agricultural building with erection of extension
OS Map Ref:	SE 415938.8202407199.7934
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92044
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/11
Application No:	2020/62/91896/W
Location:	Pentlands, New Mill Road, Holmfirth, HD9 7LN
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB, PD, DG
Proposed Development:	Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of 25 dwellings with associated access and external works
OS Map Ref:	SE 414805.7222409164.2706
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91896
HVPC Comment:	Object: the Council welcomed the mix of houses including affordable accommodation in the project, but were concerned regarding over-intensification of the site and the increase of vehicles onto the road
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/12
Application No:	2019/93550
Location:	Land east and west of, Netherton Moor Road, Netherton, Huddersfield, HD4 7JF
Ward/Councillors:	N/A outside of our locality
Proposed Development:	Erection of 250 dwellings
OS Map Ref:	SE 413163 412788
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2019/93550
HVPC Comment:	Reiteration of previous comments: the Committee has major concerns regarding the intensification of the site; safety concerns regarding safe, pedestrian walking routes especially schoolchildren walking to Honley schools; no footpaths or lighting to access roads; too few access roads will cause difficulties especially at school times; building so many houses in one go is concerning; impact on Honley Conservation Area (Magdale/White Gate), wildlife habitats, and narrow through-roads to Honley will be detrimental; concern regarding to sewage infrastructure ability to cope
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/13
Application No:	2020/48/92122/W
Location:	Land adjacent, Wooldale Co-operative Society, Springwood Road, Thongsbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 7SN
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB, PD, DG
Proposed Development:	Formation of 21 space car park and boundary fence
OS Map Ref:	SE 415256.2686409797.557
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92122
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/14
Application No:	2020/62/92161/W
Location:	2, Stoney Bank Lane, Thongsbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 7LW
Ward/Councillors:	Fulstone – DF, DH
Proposed Development:	Erection of first floor extension over existing garage
OS Map Ref:	SE 415649.2952409854.1465
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92161
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/15
Application No:	2020/62/92176/W
Location:	Jjm Motor Services Unit 2a, Riverside Works, Woodhead Road, Holmbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 2NQ
Ward/Councillors:	Upper Holme Valley – KB , TB
Proposed Development:	Change of existing use from garage to motor vehicle garage and mot centre
OS Map Ref:	SE 412016.9099406665.6868
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92176
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/16
Application No:	2020/62/92159/W
Location:	53, Town End Road, Wooldale, Holmfirth, HD9 1XT
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB, PD, DG
Proposed Development:	Erection of two storey and first floor side extension
OS Map Ref:	SE 415058.7558409133.6188
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92159
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/17
Application No:	2020/65/92182/W
Location:	Knowl Bridge Farm, Knoll Lane, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3UR
Ward/Councillors:	Netherthong – JD, JR
Proposed Development:	Listed Building Consent for erection of extension to rear porch and erection of internal stud wall
OS Map Ref:	SE 412691.8221409631.4247
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92182
HVPC Comment:	Defer to Listed Buildings Officer
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/18
Application No:	2020/62/92181/W
Location:	Knowl Bridge Farm, Knoll Lane, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3UR
Ward/Councillors:	Netherthong – JD, JR
Proposed Development:	Erection of extension to rear porch. (Listed Building)
OS Map Ref:	SE 412691.8221409631.4247
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92181
HVPC Comment:	Defer to Listed Buildings Officer
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/19
Application No:	2020/N /92207/W
Location:	20, Springwood Road, Thongsbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 7SJ
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB, PD, DG
Proposed Development:	Prior notification for demolition of dwelling
OS Map Ref:	SE 415429.7334409455.2859
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92207
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/20
Application No:	2020/62/92131/W
Location:	33, Upper Bank End Road, Holmfirth, HD9 1EP
Ward/Councillors:	Central Holmfirth – GB, RH
Proposed Development:	Alterations to detached garage to create dwelling forming annex accommodation associated with 33, Upper Bank End Road, Holmfirth, HD9 1EP and erection of front dormer and canopy to existing dwelling
OS Map Ref:	SE 414742.8042407568.0625
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92131
HVPC Comment:	Support subject to provision of adequate parking
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/21
Application No:	2020/62/92229/W
Location:	Brookside, 67, Hall Ing Lane, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6QW
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC, BL, SS
Proposed Development:	Raising of roof height and erection of extension to create first floor living accommodation
OS Map Ref:	SE 414892.901412311.5903
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92229
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/22
Application No:	2020/CL/92246/W
Location:	Wall Nook Farm, Wall Nook Lane, Cumberworth, Huddersfield, HD8 8YB
Ward/Councillors:	Fulstone – DF, DH
Proposed Development:	Certificate of Lawfulness for proposed demolition of front porch, erection of single and two storey rear extension and exterior alterations
OS Map Ref:	SE 418756.146408543.426
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92246
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/23
Application No:	2020/62/92245/W
Location:	19, Birch Park, Brockholes, Holmfirth, HD9 7BJ
Ward/Councillors:	Brockholes - MP
Proposed Development:	Erection of single storey rear extension
OS Map Ref:	SE 415532.5223410923.6679
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92245
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/24
Application No:	2020/62/92192/W
Location:	North Royd, Bank End, Thurstonland Bank Road, Brockholes, Holmfirth, HD9 7BE
Ward/Councillors:	Brockholes - MP
Proposed Development:	Erection of single and two storey extensions, alterations to convert integral garage to extend living accommodation and erection of carport
OS Map Ref:	SE 415667.333410513.5131
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92192
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/25
Application No:	2020/70/92267/W
Location:	Land adjacent, 14, New Mill Road, Wooldale, Holmfirth, HD9 7LT
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB, PD, DG
Proposed Development:	Variation of condition 8 (appearance) on previous permission 2019/94101 reserved matters application pursuant to outline permission 2017/92936 for erection of one detached dwelling
OS Map Ref:	SE 414961.4201409308.1405
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92267
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/26
Application No:	2020/62/92071/W
Location:	New Biggin Farm, Cold Hill Lane, New Mill, Holmfirth, HD9 7DN
Ward/Councillors:	Brockholes - MP
Proposed Development:	Erection of first floor extension to side
OS Map Ref:	SE 416469.4172409797.9443
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92071
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/27
Application No:	2020/62/91998/W
Location:	6, 8, 10, Market Walk, Holmfirth, HD9 7DA
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB, RH
Proposed Development:	Demolition of chimney, installation of replacement shop fronts, formation of new openings, raised rear decking and exterior alterations (Within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 414232.9449408172.6501
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91998
HVPC Comment:	Support in principle but defer to Conservation Area Officer approval
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/28
Application No:	2020/62/92272/W
Location:	Thongsbridge Cricket Club, Miry Lane, Thongsbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 7RY
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB, PD, DG
Proposed Development:	Erection of extension to clubhouse to form outdoor bar/kitchen with canopy over
OS Map Ref:	SE 414933.4273409772.8776
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92272
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/05/29
Application No:	2020/65/92210/W
Location:	12-13, New Fold, Holmfirth, HD9 2DQ
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB, RH
Proposed Development:	Listed Building Consent for the replacement of windows (Within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 414084.3832408063.0008
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92210
HVPC Comment:	Support
Decision:	

Holme Valley Parish Council

Planning applications lodged with Kirklees from 28 07 2020 to 01 09 2020 - List 2021/06. The following applications will be considered by Holme Valley Parish Council ahead of the virtual Planning Committee meeting 07/09/2020. Where appropriate, recommendations will be made to Kirklees Planning Services regarding whether or not they should be approved, but the final decisions will be taken by Kirklees Planning Services.

Local residents can email deputyclerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk to submit their views on applications or, better still, attend the meeting in person. Contact the Deputy Clerk for an invite.

Full details regarding deadline dates for comments and how to submit a comment can be obtained from the Kirklees' website: www.kirklees.gov.uk/planning

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/01
Application No:	2020/62/92382/W
Location:	5, St Mary's Rise, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3XW
Ward/Councillors:	Netherthong – JD JR
Proposed Development:	Erection of first floor rear balcony
OS Map Ref:	SE 413576.0554409964.4279
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92382
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/02
Application No:	2020/62/92344/W
Location:	3, Broomy Lea Lane, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3EN
Ward/Councillors:	Netherthong – JD JR
Proposed Development:	Erection of single storey and first floor rear extensions and external alterations
OS Map Ref:	SE 413838.7955409371.9681
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92344
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/03
Application No:	2020/62/92230/W
Location:	Croft Bottom Farm, Fulstone Hall Lane, Fulstone, Holmfirth, HD9 7DL
Ward/Councillors:	Fulstone – DF DH
Proposed Development:	Demolition of piggery and erection of 4 detached dwellings (part within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 417437.9166409547.5596
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92230
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/04
Application No:	2020/62/92318/W
Location:	Land Adj, 1, Longlands Bank, Thongsbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 7HR
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB PD DG
Proposed Development:	Erection of detached dwelling with garage
OS Map Ref:	SE 415058.166409687.2776
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92318
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/05
Application No:	2020/62/92319/W
Location:	adj, 31, Wickleden Gate, Scholes, Holmfirth, HD9 1QT
Ward/Councillors:	Scholes – MB RPD
Proposed Development:	Erection of detached dwelling with integral garage
OS Map Ref:	SE 415845.1073407434.3528
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92319
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/06
Application No:	2020/62/92315/W
Location:	2, Denham Drive, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3HA
Ward/Councillors:	Netherthong – JD JR
Proposed Development:	Erection of extensions and alterations to create dwelling forming annex accommodation associated with 2, Denham Drive, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3HA
OS Map Ref:	SE 413718.4913409630.9527
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92315
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/07
Application No:	2020/62/92289/W
Location:	38, Southgate, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6NT
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC BL SS
Proposed Development:	Erection of raised decking, installation of Bi-Fold doors and alterations
OS Map Ref:	SE 414012.8475411819.6732
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92289
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/08
Application No:	2020/65/92290/W
Location:	The Barn, 1, Hall Ing Farm, Hall Ing Lane, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6QX
Ward/Councillors:	Brockholes - MP
Proposed Development:	Listed Building Consent for installation of multi fuel log burning stove and external flue
OS Map Ref:	SE 415217.123411854.9017
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92290
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/09
Application No:	2020/62/92322/W
Location:	Hogley Green Cottage, 27, Booth House Lane, Holmfirth, HD9 2QT
Ward/Councillors:	Upper Holme Valley – KB TB
Proposed Development:	Erection of single storey rear extension
OS Map Ref:	SE 412245.8351407897.8057
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92322
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/10
Application No:	2020/62/92111/W
Location:	Land off, Cartworth Road, Cartworth Moor, Holmfirth, HD9 2ST
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB RH
Proposed Development:	Erection of stable block and ancillary equestrian storage and formation of riding arena (Modified Proposal)
OS Map Ref:	SE 414174.8222407355.0564
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92111
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/11
Application No:	2020/62/92083/W
Location:	Land to east of, Cartworth Road, Holmfirth, HD9 2RG
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB RH
Proposed Development:	Erection of agricultural building
OS Map Ref:	SE 414323.5393407640.8352
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92083
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/12
Application No:	2020/70/92410/W
Location:	Windy Ridge Quarry, Cartworth Moor Road, Cartworth Moor, Holmfirth, HD9 2RL
Ward/Councillors:	Upper Holme Valley – KB TB
Proposed Development:	Variation conditions 7 and 8 on previous permission 2012/93305 to continue the extraction of sandstone and deepen the quarry to 323m AOD to restore the quarry to agricultural use by means of infill and to recycle construction, demolition and excavation waste
OS Map Ref:	SE 413111.8734406292.593
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92410
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/13
Application No:	2020/62/92477/W
Location:	69, Hall Ing Lane, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6QW
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC BL SS
Proposed Development:	Demolition of existing outbuilding and porch and erection of single storey side and two storey rear extensions and detached garage
OS Map Ref:	SE 414913.9628412290.5576
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92477
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/14
Application No:	2020/62/92428/W
Location:	Rockhouse, 8, Summervale, Holmfirth, HD9 7AG
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB RH
Proposed Development:	Erection of decking
OS Map Ref:	SE 414497.0778408633.1542
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92428
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/15
Application No:	2020/62/92317/W
Location:	53, Upper Bank End Road, Holmfirth, HD9 1EP
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB RH
Proposed Development:	Erection of detached garage
OS Map Ref:	SE 414718.1549407456.45
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92317
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/16
Application No:	2020/62/92512/W
Location:	adj, Field House, 2, Dearn Dike Lane, Upper Cumberworth, Huddersfield, HD8 8YA
Ward/Councillors:	Fulstone – DF DH
Proposed Development:	Change of use of land to extend domestic curtilage and erection of detached garage
OS Map Ref:	SE 419083.6532408364.5658
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92512
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/17
Application No:	2020/62/92457/W
Location:	29, Wildspur Mills, Sheffield Road, New Mill, Holmfirth, HD9 7BA
Ward/Councillors:	Scholes – MB RPD
Proposed Development:	Installation of bi-fold doors with external patio area and additional windows
OS Map Ref:	SE 416188.9177408187.5039
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92457
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/18
Application No:	2020/62/92495/W
Location:	Abinger Farm, Scholes Moor Road, Scholes, Holmfirth, HD9 1RU
Ward/Councillors:	Scholes – MB RPD
Proposed Development:	Conversion of agricultural buildings to form 5 No. new dwellings with associated works
OS Map Ref:	SE 415174.3911406334.9743
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92495
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/19
Application No:	2020/62/92514/W
Location:	3, Spring Gardens, Upperthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3RT
Ward/Councillors:	Upperthong – DC BF
Proposed Development:	Erection of single storey extension
OS Map Ref:	SE 413075.7517408339.5878
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92514
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/20
Application No:	2020/62/92633/W
Location:	Highwinds, 41, Oldfield Road, Honley, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6NL
Ward/Councillors:	Honley South - JS
Proposed Development:	Erection of first floor side extension
OS Map Ref:	SE 414362.5443410810.2553
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92633
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/21
Application No:	2020/62/92623/W
Location:	23, Greenfield Road, Holmfirth, HD9 2LA
Ward/Councillors:	Upperthong – DC BF
Proposed Development:	Erection of two storey side extension, formation of terrace above existing garage and exterior alterations
OS Map Ref:	SE 413498.467407901.5278
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92623
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/22
Application No:	2020/62/92575/W
Location:	37, Magdale, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6LX
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC BL SS
Proposed Development:	Replacement of roof over rear single story extension with lantern skylight (Within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 413896.5672412631.1874
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92575
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/23
Application No:	2020/65/92576/W
Location:	37, Magdale, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6LX
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC BL SS
Proposed Development:	Listed Building Consent for the replacement of roof over rear single story extension with lantern skylight (Within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 413896.5672412631.1874
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92576
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/24
Application No:	2020/62/92680/W
Location:	22 Damhouse, Cartworth Road, Holmfirth, HD9 2ST
Ward/Councillors:	Holmfirth Central – GB RH
Proposed Development:	Alterations to convert loft to living accommodation
OS Map Ref:	SE 414254.8519407341.9946
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92680
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/25
Application No:	2020/70/91997/W
Location:	Former Midlothian Garage, New Mill Road, Holmfirth, HD9 7LN
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB PD DG
Proposed Development:	Variation condition 1 (plans) on previous permission 2018/91579 for reserved matters application pursuant to outline application 2015/93824 for erection of 56 dwellings
OS Map Ref:	SE 414820.6326409293.8241
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/91997
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/26
Application No:	2020/62/92468/W
Location:	11, Leyfield Bank, Wooldale, Holmfirth, HD9 1XU
Ward/Councillors:	Wooldale – JB PD DG
Proposed Development:	Erection of extensions, demolition of existing garage and external alterations
OS Map Ref:	SE 415032.9655409303.4924
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92468
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/27
Application No:	2020/62/92689/W
Location:	Sundial House, 38, Thirstin Road, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6JG
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC BL SS
Proposed Development:	Erection of extensions and alterations to attached barn to extend living accommodation (Listed Building within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 413589.4194412011.1419
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92689
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

HVPC Reference:	2021/06/28
Application No:	2020/65/92690/W
Location:	Sundial House, 38, Thirstin Road, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6JG
Ward/Councillors:	Honley Central and East – PC BL SS
Proposed Development:	Listed Building Consent for erection of extensions and alterations to attached barn to extend living accommodation (within a Conservation Area)
OS Map Ref:	SE 413589.4194412011.1419
Link:	http://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-applications/search-for-planning-applications/detail.aspx?id=2020/92690
HVPC Comment:	
Decision:	

Kirklees Planning Decisions for the period 28/07/2020-01/09/2020

No.	Location	Development	HVPC Comment	Kirklees Decision
91128	25, Daleside Avenue, New Mill, Holmfirth, HD9 1LT	Demolition of existing single storey side extension and erection of single storey side extension	Support	Granted
91741	17, Broadfield Park, Holmbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 2JQ	Conversion of garage to form additional living space and exterior alterations	Support	Granted
91473	1, Grasscroft Road, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6HG	Erection of two storey side and single storey rear extensions	Support	Granted
91678	19, Broad Lane, Upperthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3JS	Certificate of Proposed Lawfulness for erection of single storey rear extension	Support	Granted
91187	Land at, Newgate Fold, Holmfirth, HD9 1AJ	Erection of 3 dwellings forming stepped terrace (modified proposal) (within a Conservation Area)	"Support subject to conservation area officer approval."	Granted
90961	Hey Croft, 3, Cliff Lane, Holmfirth, HD9 1XE	Alterations to integral garage to extend living accommodation (within a Conservation Area)	"support; plastic cladding was queried"	Granted
91421	7, Stable Court, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth, HD9 3AY	Change of use from Class D1 (dentist) to Class A4 (drinking establishment) (Within a Conservation Area)	"In support subject to appropriate hours or use and noise insulation for the above properties."	Granted
91145	Hassocks Cottage, 7A, Hassocks Lane, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6RF	Erection of single storey extension and decking and associated works	"support subject to there being no overlooking"	Granted
90308	T W Birks and Son Funeral Directors, Woodhead Road, Holmfirth, HD9 2PR	Advertisement Consent for erection of non illuminated signs	Support	Granted
90855	15, Crossley Mills, Honley, Holmfirth, HD9 6PL	Change of use of unit to D2 to house a functional dance school	Support	Granted
91333	29, Moss Edge View, Holmbridge, Holmfirth, HD9 2HY	Erection of three storey rear extension	Support	Granted
91770	9, New Fold, Holmfirth, HD9 2DQ	Change of use from residential cottage to business use as a remedial massage therapy clinic (Within a Conservation Area)	Support	Granted

91030	adj, 141a, Church Street, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3EA	Variation of conditions 2. (plans and specifications) 5 & 12. (access) on previous permission no. 2019/92069 for erection of attached dwelling (Listed Building within a Conservation Area)	“Insufficient information regarding vehicle manoeuvring within and from the site, so defer to Kirklees Planning.”	Granted
91031	adj, 141a, Church Street, Netherthong, Holmfirth, HD9 3EA	Listed Building Consent for variation of conditions 2. (plans and specifications) on previous permission no. 2019/92158 for Listed Building Consent for erection of attached dwelling (within a Conservation Area)	“Object on the issues of safe access and turning without having to reverse into the junction; concern that gates would mean that cars would have to pause on New Road to turn causing obstruction and increasing danger. <i>Comment: These concerns have been noted and will be assessed as part of the allied planning application, as they are outside the realms of Listed Building Consent.</i> ”	Granted
91692	Cote Cottage, Cote Lane, Holmfirth, HD9 2RP	Erection of detached office outbuilding and demolition of existing timber office outbuilding	Support	Granted
91045	Shaley Farm, Shaley, Sandy Gate, Scholes, Holmfirth, HD9 1RY	Erection of extension to agricultural building to form stables and formation of Manege	Support	Granted
91469	Totties Garden Centre And Nursery, Downshutts Lane, Totties, Holmfirth, HD9 1AU	Erection of open sided canopy to gable end of agricultural barn, erection of steel portal framed building over existing agricultural concrete building and extended to include amenity block, and siting and installation of 4 Glamping Pods	Support	Granted
91897	69, Town Gate, Hepworth, Holmfirth, HD9 1TE	Demolition of existing extension and erection of two storey side extension, porch extension and replacement windows (within a Conservation Area)	“In support subject to conservation area approval.”	Granted

Holme Valley Parish Council

Planning applications lodged with the Peak District National Park Authority from 30 06 2020 to 28 07 2020 - List 2021/02PD. The following applications will be considered by Holme Valley Parish Council ahead of the virtual Planning Committee meeting 03/08/2020. Where appropriate, recommendations will be made to the Peak District National Park Authority Planning Services regarding whether or not they should be approved, but the decisions will be taken by the Peak District National Park Authority Planning Services.

Local residents can email deputyclerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk to submit their views on applications or, better still, attend the virtual meeting by Zoom. Contact the Deputy Clerk for an invite.

Full details regarding deadline dates for comments and how to submit a comment can be obtained from the PDNPA website: <http://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/planning/have-your-say/comment-on-an-application>

HVPC Reference:	2021/02PD/01
Application No:	NP/K/0520/0416
Location:	8 The Village, Woodhead Road, Holme, Holmfirth,
Ward/Councillors:	Upper Holme Valley – KB , TB
Proposed Development:	Creation of a driveway by using a portion of the existing garden
OS Map Ref:	-
Link:	https://portal.peakdistrict.gov.uk/result/YToyOntzOjE0OjJPYmplY3RfVHlwZV9JRCI7czoxOjI3IjtzOjE2OjJPYmplY3RfUmVmZXJlbnNlIjtzOjE0OjJOUUC9LLzA1MjAvMDQxNii7fQ==
HVPC Comment:	Concern about access and effect on the highway; defer to Highways Officer
Decision:	

Subject: Re: Formal Consultation - Residential Annexes SPD
From: Rich McGill <deputyclerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>
Date: 04/08/2020, 12:00
To: Cooper Joanne <Joanne.Cooper@peakdistrict.gov.uk>

To whom it concerns:

Feedback from Holme Valley Parish Council on the Residential Annexes SPD:

1. Is the content of the SPD too complex? (bearing in mind its intended audience) - **The Council thought that the SPD is accessible and very useful for the general public.**
2. Does the terminology used cause any confusion? - **No. The Council think that it is useful though perhaps a different, simpler word/phrase than "Terminology" might be used.**
3. Is the location of "Chapter 2: Terminology" within the document appropriate, or whether it be best placed in an appendix? - **The Council thought that Terminology should remain where it is.**

Kind regards,

Rich

On 29/07/2020 12:46, Cooper Joanne wrote:

We would be grateful for any comments you have in respect of the Residential Annexes SPD. In particular, the matters which we would like your feedback on are as follows:

1. Is the content of the SPD too complex? (bearing in mind its intended audience)
2. Does the terminology used cause any confusion?
3. Is the location of "Chapter 2: Terminology" within the document appropriate, or whether it be best placed in an appendix?

--

Rich McGill

Deputy Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer

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Holmfirth Civic Hall
Huddersfield Road
Holmfirth HD9 3AS

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Please note that the office is open to the public on Tuesdays/Thursdays 10am-3pm

Peak District National Park Management Plan

Annual Monitoring Report 2019-20





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Foreword

The second year's delivery of the 2018-23 Peak District National Park Management Plan has been highly eventful. The pressures placed on farmers and local communities due to flood water and wildfires, in turn have been over taken by the singular priority of responding to Covid 19 with radical measures to protect the population from the spread of the disease.

Despite being over-shadowed by events I feel it is still important to recognise the hard work and endeavour of all who care for the National Park and draw attention to their achievements. The Management Plan was built on a new approach and I feel confident in saying that it is starting to provide results.

The Moors for the Future Partnership continues to deliver excellent results. This has been one of the busiest years for moorland restoration with 1024 Ha of sphagnum planted, 5300 gully blocks installed, 108 Ha of invasive species controlled and 27 Ha of bare peat restored. Alongside the practical work, scientific monitoring has continued apace with over 600 quadrats surveyed and water table measurements taken at 1000 locations producing 11,000 individual readings to build our understanding of the valuable moorland habitat.

I would also like to cautiously welcome the first signs of improvement from our upland birds. Survey work has recorded good progress with some birds of prey species, a reduction in wildlife crime and improving relationships between raptor groups and game keepers. However there is still some way to go to restore breeding birds to the levels seen in the 1990s showing how important it is that we continue to support this areas of work.

Our work to support a future for farming is progressing. The White Peak has been selected as part of DEFRA's tests and trials programme to develop the new Environmental Land Management Scheme which will fund farmers and land managers after our departure from the European Union. This raises the prospect of being able to tailor future funding arrangements to best suit local needs.

We are maintaining our focus on encouraging enjoyment with understanding. There is a new system for recording and advertising public events which provides a clear opportunity for event organisers to make their events as successful and compatible with the place as possible. Plus a promotional drive to breathe new life into the countryside code via the #PeakDistrictProud initiative and I would encourage you all to support this via your own local networks.

The following pages provide more detail on our progress in 2019/20 delivery of the Peak District National Park Management Plan 2018-23. Please feel proud of what we have achieved so far and consider how you may continue to support delivering these intentions in the future.

Yours sincerely

Dianne Jeffrey
Independent Chair of the Peak District National Park Management Plan Advisory Group



Introduction

The National Park Management Plan provides the framework that encourages everyone to work together to achieve national park purposes. It is not a plan for an individual organisation or group but a plan for the place. It is, therefore, a partnership plan. It is the single most important strategic document for the Peak District National Park. It shares with everyone what the main issues and priorities are. It then sets out how, together, we are going to tackle those issues over the next five years.

Since 2007 the National Park Management Plan has been overseen by an Advisory Group of partners who have monitored delivery and provided advice to the organisations involved. The group contains representatives from the following organisations:

Derbyshire County Council
 Environment Agency
 Farmers & Land Managers Forum
 Friends of the Peak District
 Historic England
 Local Access Forum
 Local Nature Partnership
 National Park Authority
 National Trust
 Natural England
 Peak Park Parishes Forum
 Rural Action Derbyshire
 Sheffield City Council
 Staffordshire Moorlands District Council
 Experience Peak District and Derbyshire

The management plan is organised around six main themes known as Areas of Impact, which are in turn broken down into a series of intentions.

Areas of Impact

- 1: Preparing for a future climate
- 2: Ensuring a future for farming and land management
- 3: Managing landscape conservation on a big scale
- 4: A National Park for everyone
- 5: Encouraging enjoyment with understanding
- 6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

Area of Impact 1:

Preparing for a future climate

Intention 1.1: Reduce the effects of climate change on the special qualities

To reduce the effects of climate change on the special qualities, we will know which special qualities are most affected by climate change, and focus action on reducing these impacts. We will undertake a climate change vulnerability assessment on the special qualities of the National Park & produce a mitigation/adaptation plan setting out priority actions.

Update

We have completed the technical analysis for the vulnerability assessment on the priority 25% of National Park features that make up the special qualities. The assessment has looked at the most up-to-date climate projections (UKCP18) and reviewed all available scientific research on the sensitivity, exposure and the adaptive capacity of each feature in the context of predicted climate trends. This approach has used likely trends and processes to assign an overall score for the vulnerability of each feature. We are now using the feature assessments to determine the National Park special qualities vulnerability to climate change. Then the report will be finalised prior to publication next year.

To expand our actions to address climate change a summit took place on October 15th 2019 at the Pavilion Arts Centre, Buxton. The summit focussed on transport and agriculture / land management, as with the exception of Hope Cement works, these are the largest emitters of greenhouse gases in the National Park. The cement works were excluded from the summit, as mechanisms to reduce those emissions do not involve a partnership approach. A total of 94 delegates attended from potential partner organisations with the ability to support initiatives to reduce the impacts of climate change. The outcome of the summit resulted in two new areas of action being included in the Delivery Plan linked to sustainable transport and land management.

Future Actions:

- Identify mitigation actions & priorities 2020-2021.
- Establish / determine delivery partnership 2021.
- Start implementing mitigation / adaptation plan



Area of Impact 2:

Ensuring a future for farming and land management

Intention 2.1: Secure funding for future land management to benefit all

To secure funding for future land management to benefit all, we will seek to create an ideal future farming and land management payment scheme in the Peak District National Park which helps to conserve and enhance the special qualities.

Update

The Defra contract for the delivery of the White Peak ELMS Phase 1 Test has been signed. This focuses on testing whether the National Character Area assessment can be used as a way of prioritising the public goods to be delivered under the new Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMs) and how farmers and land managers can develop land management plans to deliver those public goods.

Farmer and land manager engagement has taken place via two group and seven one to one engagements. These included pre and post engagement questionnaires, the use of the full White Peak National Character Area (NCA) assessment and NCA summary and the new Carbon Ready Reckoner. The remaining group event and further one to ones are now delayed due to coronavirus but in the meantime National Park farm advisers are exploring how effective it is to carry out one to ones by phone and or video link. The early findings of this exercise show limited knowledge of public goods, an appreciation of the description of the White Peak in the NCA, recognition of the need for trusted advisers and specialist support, the importance of wildlife, cultural heritage and the need to generate public understanding and support.

The Environmental Land Management scheme policy consultation was launched in quarter 4 of 2019/20 with a deadline for responses of the 5 May 2020. The consultation has been paused due to Covid 19 but a revised deadline for consultation responses is not yet known.

Future Actions:

To have a new support package available from 2023.

Note: The new Agriculture Bill and policy statement provides a planned timescale of 2025 to have new environmental land management arrangements in place

Intention 2.2: Ensure that the management of upland moors delivers environmental, social & economic benefits

To ensure that the management of upland moors delivers environmental, social & economic benefits; we will seek to restore populations of birds of prey to at least the levels present in the late 1990s, with the addition of hen harrier as a regularly successful breeding species.

Focusing on:

Fire risk	Resilient sustainable moorland
Visitor engagement	Moorland birds

Regular monitoring of progress against these areas of focus is carried out in partnership between Natural England, the Moorland Association and the National Park Authority. There is also an annual up-date on progress and agreement on the focus for the future year's activity with moorland owners, agents and keepers.

Area of Impact 2:

Ensuring a future for farming and land management
(continued)

Update

Fire Operations Group

The fire risk map has been updated using the latest data. This has shown a significant change in the risk analysis, as it places less risk on access routes which were found to be the main risk area on the previous assessment. It now also identifies the risk areas on the urban edge of the moors, with some clear high risk areas which have unfortunately proved to be correct with the most recent fire events.

Following on from the wettest February on record were a worrying number of spring fires which extended into the Covid19 lockdown period. Plans have been put in place to increase resilience in the face of greater fire risk under changing climate condition. Resources are being made available in Calderdale and other local authority areas across the South Pennines, and Dark Peak will hopefully follow. This will include rolling out the new fire risk mapping (now available for the Dark Peak) across the wider South Pennines. It will also look at improving both resilience and response to the issue of fire across the landscape. The Fire service requested a cease to management burning in the current Covid19 lockdown.

Access and Engagement

This is mostly being addressed through the #PeakDistrictProud campaign. More details on which can be found under Intention 5.1

Sustainable Moorland Management Group

The number of Long Term Management Plans signed up to by landowners in the National Park now stands at ten, with one more close to signing and three others in progress. Work on these is on hold until such time as Natural England can meet with the site owners and also get back out on site safely to assess each case. These plans are Natural England's main vehicle for agreeing the objectives of management on protected uplands.

The Secretary of State has written to moorland owners to inform them that legislation on moorland burning will be forthcoming later this year. Natural England have agreed with the Moorland Association that their Position Statement on not allowing the burning of heather on blanket bog will stand. However they will take any new, independently verified research into consideration around burning heather as a management tool in the future.

The Infrastructure and Planning events that were meant to be held in March have been postponed with an intention of rescheduling them in August or September 2020.

Moorland Birds

There is the first signs of improvement from our upland birds. Survey work has recorded good progress with some birds of prey species, a reduction in wildlife crime and improving relationships between raptor groups and game keepers. However there is still some way to go to restore breeding birds to the levels seen in the 1990s. The lock down is currently impacting on the ability of the raptor volunteers to carry out monitoring at the start of the bird nesting season. The Moorland Bird Survey report is being reviewed at present to ensure the data, results and conclusions are sound. It will be published as soon as that work is complete.



Area of Impact 3:

Managing landscape conservation on a big scale

Intention 3.1: Establish monitoring at a landscape scale

We want to work with partners to help us to understand how and why the landscape is changing, whether changes are positive or not and how we should address the changes to conserve and enhance the Special Qualities of the Peak District National Park.

Update

To start this process, we have begun by identifying a programme of research to help us assess how the Peak District landscape is changing in a meaningful and practical way. Landscape incorporates many components; this means that a single project or indicator cannot explain landscape change. The programme of research we have selected aims to broadly measure change across the following themes;

- Land Cover (including long term change) – what is happening on the ground?
- Landscape Quality – what are the features and factors impacting positively and negatively on the landscape?
- Public Perception – how people feel and respond to change?
- Built Development – extent and visual influence and impact?
- Recording areas of known change e.g. what impact have our restoration activities had; what do we know about the impact of moorland fires?
- Climate Change – What are the vulnerabilities and adaptive capacity of National Park features?
- Landscape metrics – how do data and Environment Plan indicators contribute to environmental and landscape change?

These themes will be measured by a series of research projects that will be brought together in a Landscape Assessment every 5 years that will feed in to the National Park Management Plan, National Park Authority Corporate Strategy, the Local Plan and national policy.

Intention 3.2: Develop a White Peak partnership

The White Peak Partnership is working through task and finish groups on key areas for development. The White Peak Pilot Ideas proposal has been accepted for phase 1 of Defra's Tests and Trials for the new Environmental Land Management scheme and this has remained their key area of focus throughout the year.

Defra have asked us and the other proposals to look at certain key policy questions.

The White Peak Project will test:

- Use of a National Character Area framework to deliver public goods and the 25 Year Environment Plan in language accessible to land managers.
- Development of a 'ready reckoner' to show the public goods being delivered e.g. carbon.
- Trial of a nature recovery network.

The partnerships success has been key to the delivery of Intention 2.1 securing funding for future land management for the benefit of all, and further information is provided under than section.

Intention 3.3: Maintain existing landscape scale delivery

To maintain existing landscape scale delivery we will develop a clear long term vision, plan and have funding in place for the Dark Peak and South Pennines to 2050. We will develop a clear future plan and funding to

Area of Impact 3:

Managing landscape conservation on a big scale
(continued)

develop and continue landscape scale delivery on the South West Peak.

This has been one of Moors for the Future's most productive years with 5200 bags of brash cut transported and spread to help stabilise the ground, 5300 gully blocks installed to raise the water table and slow erosion, 1024 Ha of sphagnum moss planted to restart the creation of new peat, 27 Ha of bare peat revegetated and 108 Ha of invasive rhododendron plants removed.

The summer vegetation campaign was completed again this year which has been providing data since 2003. Over 600 quadrats have been visited to provide a vital record of species and each quadrat is also photographed to help long term interpretation. With this information we able to monitor the progress in halting the decline of nature across the blanket bog landscape. The autumn water table campaign was completed with over 1,000 manual dip wells visited each week, producing approximately 11,000 measurements during the period.

Natural England have agreed to support Moors for the Future in the development of an environmental features map. This will help to show physical land management delivery completed to date to help demonstrate the amount of good restoration work that has already taken place in the Peak District National Park.

Asset Management Plan 7 (AMP7) arrangements with Severn Trent Water are now approaching the delivery phase. Discussions are still underway with two other water utilities. These plans identify the water industries investment over a five year period and are linked to their charges for water by the regulator Ofwat.

Planning is also underway to work with other partnerships across the North of England linking the whole blanket bog landscape between Sheffield and Scotland in a project known as the Great North Bog.

Future Actions:

Agreed targets for the percentage of blanket bog in the Dark Peak and South Pennines in improved ecological condition:

- 30% of Blanket Bog across the Southern Pennines to be in state 6 by 2050
- 90% of Dark Peak Blanket Bog moved out of state 2 by 2023 (bare peat to be revegetated)
- 25% of the Southern Pennine Blanket bogs to be moved out of state 2 by 2023



Area of Impact 4:

A National Park for everyone

Intention 4.1 and 4.2 Overcome physical and perceived barriers to access

By 2023 we will be encouraging a wider range of people to enjoy the Peak District National Park at an appropriate scale and adding value to the visitor economy.

Update

A Peak District State of Tourism Report 2019 has been produced. This consolidates information on volume and value, the market, the destination, impacts and issues.

We are working with other English National Parks partners on a proposition for Phase 2 of the 'English National Parks Experience', this time focusing on the 'final mile', our domestic audience and sustainable transport. A funding bid has been submitted but the decision is delayed by Covid19.



Area of Impact 5:

Encouraging enjoyment with understanding

Intention 5.1: Balance opportunities for enjoyment with conserving a fragile environment

To balance opportunities for enjoyment with conserving a fragile environment we will provide a refreshed Countryside Code underpinning a Peak District brand which all relevant partners promote equally and consistently.

A Partner Workshop was held in summer 2019 as part of National Trust's Peoples Landscape Project to kick start our efforts to refresh the Countryside Code.

Area of Impact 5:

Encouraging enjoyment with understanding
(continued)

This workshop and the working group it fostered, identified the impact of visitor behaviour, the audience groups we need to work with, the key messages we would need to share, and the most effective methods to do this. The result was the #PeakDistrictProud campaign

#PeakDistrictProud shares the positive ways in which people can help care for the national park; from taking home your litter and avoiding BBQs, to keeping your dog a lead during periods of wildlife activity and the use of drones, among a range of other actions.

The campaign – using a series of montage images captured from throughout the history of the Peak District – builds upon the core messages of 'respect, protect and enjoy' found in the Countryside Code. The campaign took a deliberate step away from more traditional warning or advisory signage currently found in many outdoor locations.

Led by the Peak District National Park Authority and National Trust, the campaign has based its seasonal messages on workshops held with a wide range of national park communities including conservationists, landowners and managers, local user groups and young people.

For more information follow the following link: <https://peakdistrictproud.co.uk/>

Intention 5.2: Ensure shared responsibility

To ensure shared responsibility we will review and develop the current arrangements for events management in the Peak District.

The events notification system has been replaced with event guidance and a code of conduct for event organisers to sign up to. If they do this their events will be able to be added to a calendar and promoted on the National Park Authority website. Feedback from stakeholders about the new guidance and code of conduct has been very positive. Once things are back to normal, we will monitor this closely in its first year of operation and review performance at the end of the season.

Intention 5.3: Develop an awareness and understanding of the benefits of the Peak District National Park

Utilising the valuable work of Inspired by the Peak District and the Peak District Environmental Quality Mark, consider a revised approach to the promotion of the peak District brand so we establish a provenance which is coherent and effective at promoting the link between business development, the special qualities and the unique offer of the Peak District National Park.

A group was convened in 2019 to promoting the link between business development, the special qualities and the unique offer of the Peak District National Park. In a series of meetings discussions have taken place on how we can influence Local Industry with a focus on "Clean, green productivity linked to a high quality of life" and using "Positive planning powers; allied with a proactive enabling role from District Councils"



Area of Impact 6:

Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

Intention 6: Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy

To support thriving and sustainable communities and economy, we will first define what is meant by thriving and sustainable communities, in the context of the National Park Management Plan.

Work commenced to complete a village statement and audit for every parish by 2020, enabling a state of communities report to be drafted and an index of key indicators to be created as part of developing issues and options for a the new Local Plan. 93 Parish Statements have now been produced. In 60 cases the Parish Councils have chosen to engage closely with National Park Officers.

Discussion has taken place between the National Park Authority and the Peak Park Parishes Forum (PPPF) on separate pieces of work to define and better understand the concept of thriving and sustainable communities. PPPF have produced their own definition and National Park Authority officers welcomed a discussion in order to move towards a common definition,

Intention 6.1: Improve access to services

To improve access to services we will work with providers to improve broadband and mobile connectivity across the National Park in line with the UK's Next Generation Access (NGA) standards.

An interactive map of the current situation in Derbyshire is available via this link; MAP and Staffordshire via this link: MAP. A meeting occurred with Digital Derbyshire in October to discuss the expansion of broadband. The coverage of the National Park is improving gradually, but still likely to have difficulties in the most isolated areas.

The roll-out of improved mobile coverage to more remote areas and upgrading to 4G is starting to show improvements in the parts of the National Park that were previously poorly covered such as Monyash.

There was a meeting in August between National Parks England and Mobile UK to review the roll-out in National Parks. The National Park Authority met with National Parks England and Mobile UK, the industry body, to discuss how to improve mobile coverage in national parks. The industry is seeking more deregulation and the Government is considering a scheme to encourage better coverage.

Intention 6.2: Support the provision of locally needed housing

To support the provision of locally needed housing we will work through the National Park Management Plan Advisory Group Housing Sub-Group to address the local need for appropriate housing in the National Park.

During the year 2019-20 there were applications approved for four new build affordable local needs houses. The Authority also approved two agricultural worker's dwellings and 56 additional open market houses.

National Park Officers have commenced a scoping phase on the required evidence for the next Local Plan review and have also raised the need for shared strategic evidence with constituent authorities through duty to cooperate meetings in the hope that key pieces of work may be shared to assist cross boundary planning and make effective use of resources.

Area of Impact 6:

Supporting thriving and sustainable communities and economy
(continued)

A new piece of research was completed into the potential for a Community Land Trusts in the National Park to aid in the provision of affordable housing. Looking into next year Officers will make arrangements for a parish and community event focussed on positive, innovative solutions to address housing needs in the context of the constraints and conservation aims of the National Park. Intended to bring together partners and encourage communities to come forward and take up the opportunity of joint working.

Intention 6.3: Enable local businesses to thrive in a way that is compatible and wherever possible enhances the special qualities of the Peak District National Park

To enable local businesses to thrive in a way that is compatible and, wherever possible, enhances the special qualities of the Peak District National Park, we will assist the development of businesses in conjunction with relevant bodies. Linking business support, grant aid, planning and economic development.

Business Peak District, High Peak Borough Council, Derbyshire County Council and Experience Peak District and Derbyshire and the Local Enterprise Partnership have continued to meet on a regular basis to progress this action.





Looking Forward -

A message from the Chair of the Advisory Group

With the dangers of Covid19 forcing the agenda and the path back to normality unclear it is a worrying time for all of us. I would like to thank everyone for doing their best under very challenging circumstances. With few exceptions, almost everyone has complied completely with the restrictions with good humour and no complaint. This time for reflection has reinforced in my mind the importance of our cherished landscapes to our health and mental wellbeing. Let us work to ensure that our National Parks can be an integral part of the National renewal that we all deserve once the outlook improves.

In the next full year of the Management Plan we intend to confront the impacts of climate change and measure our efforts against the scale of the task ahead. The services provided by the valuable landscapes of the National Park form an essential part of our ability to respond to climate change. We will push for greater peatland restoration, support regenerative agriculture and integrate more trees into the landscape.

As the current situation shows us so clearly, a National Park simply is not a National Park without visitors. To address their impacts we will seek to initiate an ambitious low carbon rural transport scheme which is both environmentally and economically sustainable. This will be one of our greatest tests and I am grateful for the support of partners in moving this forward.

Yours sincerely

Dianne Jeffrey



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HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Holmfirth Civic Hall
Huddersfield Road
HOLMFIRTH
West Yorkshire HD9 3AS

Deputy Clerk to the Council: Mr Rich McGill

Telephone number: 01484 687460
E-mail: deputyclerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

04 August 2020

Conservation Area Officer
Kirklees Council
Planning Services
Huddersfield HD1 2JR

To whom it may concern,

Concerns regarding shop signage and frontage in a Conservation Area

A number of Holme Valley Residents have written and/or spoken to the Parish Council over recent weeks with concerns about the signage of two new businesses in the Holmfirth Conservation Area.

In these difficult times, the Parish Council is delighted that new businesses are setting up in the town. The Council wishes these businesses every success with their new ventures in our locality. We are also conscious that, to be successful, businesses must advertise their products and services through their signage. Our concern, though, is where the appearances of businesses detract from the historical and architectural character of the Holmfirth Conservation Area. Attention-grabbing signs may have a negative impact on historical buildings and on the whole town centre. It is this we wanted to draw attention to.

The shops of concern are two barber's shops which have recently opened in the centre of the town. The first is Razor Barber at 20, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth; the second is Angel Barber at 73, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth. Photos are attached.

The Parish Council discussed residents' concerns at the meeting of the Planning Standing Committee 3rd August 2020. The Planning Standing Committee was not aware of any Planning Applications for these shops with regarding to the frontage or advertisement consent.

Members wanted to express to Kirklees Planning Officers that they felt that these frontages were not in keeping with guidelines regarding the Conservation Area and were unsympathetic to the historical and architectural character of the town.

Holme Valley Parish Council hopes that action may be taken with the aim of supporting these new Holmfirth businesses to bring their signage in line with Conservation Area guidelines.

Yours sincerely,

Rich McGill
Deputy Clerk to the Parish Council



Razor Barber 20, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth



Angel Barber 73, Huddersfield Road, Holmfirth

----- Forwarded Message -----

Subject:Holmfirth public footpath 60 at Wolfstones Road - Department for Transport (DfT) draft stopping up order, section 247 Town & Country Planning Act 1990

Date:Tue, 25 Aug 2020 17:33:26 +0000

From:PublicRightsofWay <publicrightsofway@kirklees.gov.uk>

To:PublicRightsofWay <publicrightsofway@kirklees.gov.uk>

[Holmfirth public footpath 60 at Wolfstones Road - Department for Transport \(DfT\) draft stopping up order under section 247, Town & Country Planning Act 1990](#)

Hello all,

This email is blind copied to recipients.

You may recall that Kirklees Council considered and refused an application for an order to divert public footpath 60 at Wolfstones, under section **257** of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, in January 2020.

A separate section (s247) in the same 1990 Act provides for applications to stop up highways to be made direct to the Secretary of State of the relevant government department.

Kirklees Council has been informed by the Department for Transport (DfT) that it has published the attached draft stopping up order, under section **247** of the 1990 Act.

It would involve the stopping up of part of Holmfirth footpath 60 and the provision of a new public footpath route.

To avoid confusion, we would bring your attention to the current situation, and would note that Kirklees Council has not applied for, or made, the new draft section 247 order.

Kirklees Council has received the attached draft order information from the DfT.

In the attached notice, the DfT gives the following information, including how to respond to the draft section 247 order.

“Copies of the draft Order and relevant plan may be obtained, free of charge, from the addresses stated below (quoting NATTRAN/Y&H/S247/4337) in the 28 days commencing on

01 September 2020.

Any person may object to the making of the proposed order by stating their reasons in writing to the Secretary of State at nationalcasework@df.gov.uk or National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR, quoting the above reference. Objections should be received by midnight on **29 September 2020**. Any person submitting any correspondence is advised that your personal data and correspondence will be passed to the applicant/agent to be considered. If you do not wish your personal data to be forwarded, please state your reasons when submitting your correspondence.”

The attached draft order notice specifies a 28-day timeframe for responses starting on 1 September 2020, so anyone wishing to send comment to the DfT may wish to wait until that date, or check with the DfT’s national casework team directly.

I understand from the government’s website that the applicant must display and maintain a copy of the section

247 draft order notice in a prominent position at each end of the area of highway/footpath to be “stopped-up” during the 28-day consultation period.

If the new draft order is opposed, it may lead to the DfT arranging a public inquiry on behalf of the Secretary of State, prior to making its decision.

Regards,
Giles

Giles Cheetham
Definitive Map Officer – Public Rights of Way
Streetscene & Housing Service
Kirklees Council, Flint Street, Fartown, Huddersfield, HD1 6LG

Tel: 01484 221000 – ask for Giles Cheetham

✉ giles.cheetham@kirklees.gov.uk

🌐 www.kirklees.gov.uk/

o Public rights of way: local authority responsibilities <https://www.gov.uk/public-rights-of-way-local-authority-responsibilities>

o Public rights of way: landowner responsibilities <https://www.gov.uk/public-rights-of-way-landowner-responsibilities>

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PUBLIC NOTICE

DEPARTMENT FOR TRANSPORT

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

The Secretary of State gives notice of the proposal to make an Order under section 247 of the above Act to authorise the stopping up and diversion of a length of Footpath Holmfirth 60, at the Wolfstones Heights Farm site, at Holmfirth in the Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees.

If made, the Order would authorise the stopping up only to enable development as permitted by Kirklees Council under references 2014/62/92814/W and 2017/62/91374/W.

Copies of the draft Order and relevant plan may be obtained, free of charge, from the addresses stated below (quoting NATTRAN/Y&H/S247/4337) in the 28 days commencing on 01 September 2020.

Any person may object to the making of the proposed order by stating their reasons in writing to the Secretary of State at nationalcasework@dft.gov.uk or National Transport Casework Team, Tyneside House, Skinnerburn Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE4 7AR, quoting the above reference. Objections should be received by midnight on **29 September 2020**. Any person submitting any correspondence is advised that your personal data and correspondence will be passed to the applicant/agent to be considered. If you do not wish your personal data to be forwarded, please state your reasons when submitting your correspondence.



G Patrick, Casework Manager

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

THE DIVERSION OF HIGHWAY (YORKSHIRE AND THE HUMBER) (NO.) ORDER 20..

The Secretary of State makes this Order in exercise of powers under section 247 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("the Act").

1. (1) The Secretary of State authorises the diversion of the highway specified in column (1) of the Schedule to this Order, being satisfied that it is necessary to do so to enable development to be carried out in accordance with planning permissions granted by Kirklees Council under references 2014/62/92814/W and 2017/62/91374/W.

(2) The diversion of the said highway shall be affected by -

- (a) the stopping up of a length of the highway specified in column (1) of the Schedule to this Order, as described in column (2) of the Schedule and as shown in zebra hatch on plan number NATTRAN/Y&H/S247/4337; and
- (b) the provision by the developer, to the reasonable satisfaction of Kirklees Council, of a new highway which shall be a footpath along the diverted route described in column (3) of the Schedule (to take the place of the aforementioned length of stopped up highway in (a) above) and shown in vertical stripe and labelled 'C' on plan number NATTRAN/Y&H/S247/4337.

2. No part of the highway to be stopped up in pursuance of Article 1 (2) (a) of this Order shall take place earlier than the date on which Kirklees Council certify to the developer that the provisions of Article 1 (2) (b) have been complied with; and

3. Where immediately before the date of this Order there is any apparatus of statutory undertakers under, in, on, over, along or across any highway authorised to be stopped up pursuant to this Order then, subject to section 261(4) of the Act, those undertakers shall have the same rights as respects that apparatus after that highway is stopped up as they had immediately beforehand.

4. This Order shall come into force on the date on which notice that it has been made is first published in accordance with section 252(10) of the Act, and may be cited as the Diversion of Highway (Yorkshire and the Humber) (No.) Order 20.. .

Signed by authority of
the Secretary of State

DAVE CANDLISH
An Official in the
National Transport Casework Team
Department for Transport

THE SCHEDULE



Description of highway to be stopped up and diverted

The highway to be diverted is at Holmfirth in the Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees.

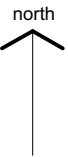
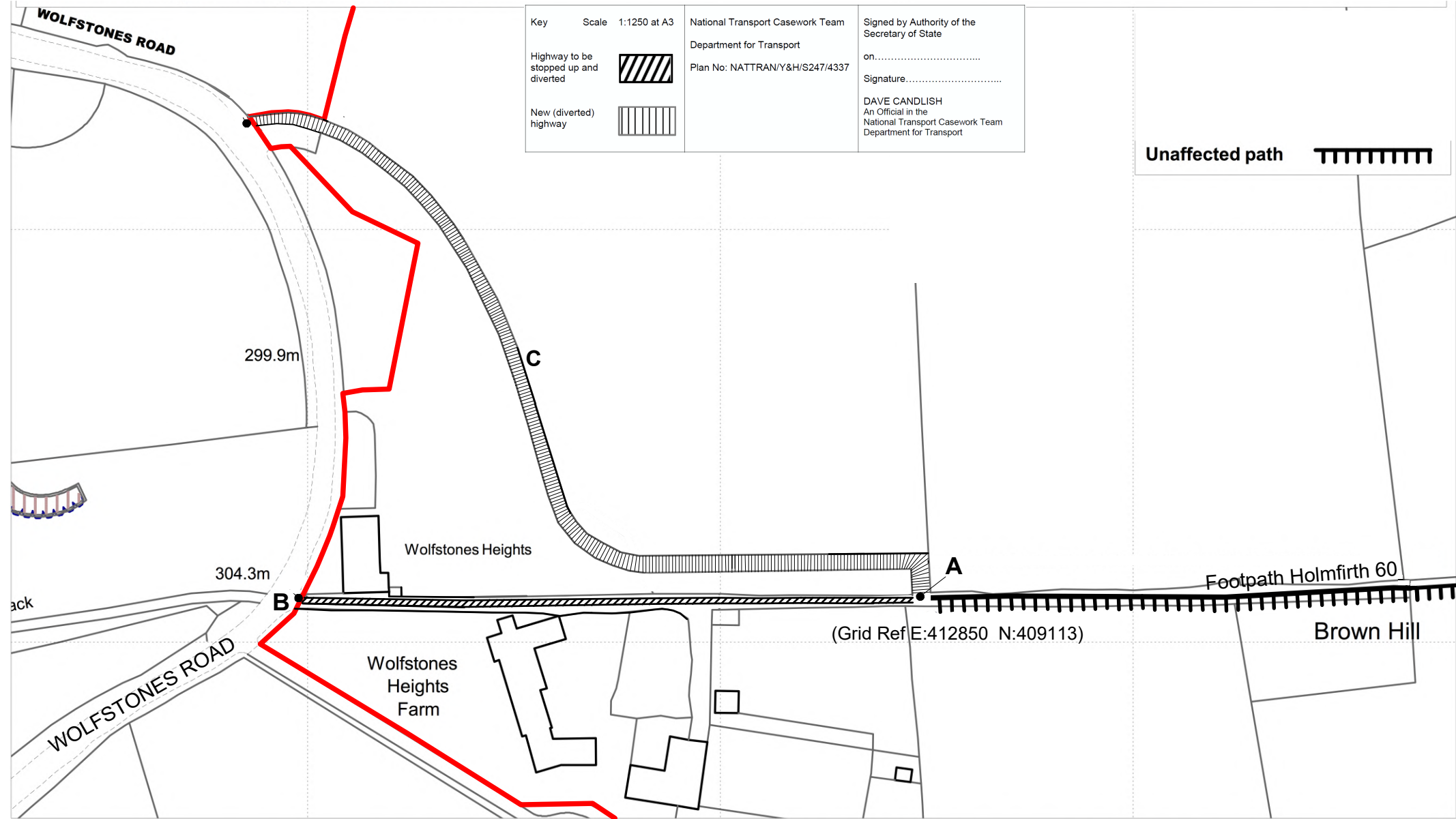
Column (1)	Column (2)	Column (3)
Highway to be diverted	Length of Highway to be stopped up	Reference letter of new (diverted) highway
A length of Footpath Holmfirth 60	A length of Footpath Holmfirth 60 at the Wolfstones Heights Farm site, commencing at grid reference E:412850 N:409113 (Point A) and extending in a westerly direction for a distance of 151 metres to Wolfstones Road (Point B). It has a maximum width of 1.2 metres.	C A length of footpath commencing at grid reference E:412850 N:409113 (Point A) and extending overall in a general north westerly direction for a distance of 226 metres. It has a varying width between 2.4 and 3 metres.

DRAFT

HIGHWAY AT HOLMFIRTH IN THE METROPOLITAN BOROUGH OF KIRKLEES

Key	Scale 1:1250 at A3	National Transport Casework Team	Signed by Authority of the Secretary of State
Highway to be stopped up and diverted		Department for Transport	on.....
New (diverted) highway		Plan No: NATTRAN/Y&H/S247/4337	Signature.....
			DAVE CANDLISH An Official in the National Transport Casework Team Department for Transport

Unaffected path 



Subject: Fw: Holmfirth public footpath 60 at Wolfstones Road - Department for Transport (DfT) draft stopping up order, section 247 Town & Country Planning Act 1990
From: Noel Scanlon <noel.scanlon@nsconsult.co.uk>
Date: 27/08/2020, 08:55
To: "clerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk" <clerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>
CC: "deputyclerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk" <deputyclerk@holmevalleyparishcouncil.gov.uk>

Dear Sir/Madam

I am the agent for this diversion application being administered by the Department for Transport ('DfT'), by which you will have been consulted.

Given the HVPC's previous support for the proposal when Mr. Butterfield (the landowner and applicant) applied to the Council for the diversion, we had asked the DfT several weeks ago to let us know in order that we may notify you of the impending approach. Unfortunately the DfT did not accede to this request and went straight to consultation.

The proposed diversion is the same as applied for to the Council, which earlier this year refused to make an order notwithstanding the support of the HVPC and the Rights of Way officer recommendation to the Committee.

Our reason for writing is that we hoped that, given the Parish Council's support for the diversion previously, that it will again be supportive of the proposal, which is the same proposal.

I cannot see when the next HVPC Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for, but presumably one is being arranged during September 2020. I did attend the HVPC Planning Committee to answer their questions late last year, which did result in support for the proposed diversion, following what were apparent previous misconceptions. I am more than happy to attend again if the HVPC would like me to, or feels that this would be otherwise useful or helpful.

We do obviously hope that the HVPC's support for the proposed diversion continues. Should the Chair of the HVPC Planning Committee wish for this to happen, please do let me know. Please also do not hesitate to contact me if there are any other queries from the HVPC.

Yours faithfully

Noel Scanlon

Director & Consultant

NSCL

Tel: 07921 385901

Email: noel.scanlon@nsconsult.co.uk



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— Attachments: —

Y&H4337_Draft_Order.pdf	163 KB
Y&H4337_Draft_Plan.pdf	4.8 MB
Y&H4337_Draft_Notice.pdf	56.4 KB

Re: NATTRAN/Y&H/S247/4337

Proposed diversion of public footpath Footpath 60 (part) at Wolfstones Heights Farm, Holmfirth, Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees. Town & Country Planning Act 1990, Section 247

Dear Sir/Madam

Please find below a letter of objection from Holmfirth Walkers are Welcome to this proposed Order under Section 247 of the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.

Dear Sir/Madam

Holmfirth Walkers are Welcome would like to place an objection to the above proposal.

I represent Holmfirth Walkers are Welcome whose mission is to promote recreational walking for residents and tourists alike in the Holme Valley. Based at the Tourist Office in Holmfirth we have about 100 regular members.

This ancient path is not just any old path used by a few dog walkers but a very popular historical route used by locals and tourists alike. In fact, the leaflet incorporating this route is one of the most popular walking leaflets which we distribute from the tourist office in Holmfirth. Recreational walking is an important contribution to the local economy in the Holme Valley and this footpath is used by hundreds of walkers weekly throughout the year.

This historic path, part of which is an ancient coffin road, goes in an almost straight line from Netherthong to the summit of Wolfstones a very popular local beauty spot.

99% of users carry straight on across the road to the summit of Wolfstones made even more popular by the recent erection of a memorial near the summit.

This lengthy diversion will take users a considerable distance out of their way to emerge on a narrow and busy road. They will then have to negotiate this potentially dangerous road, it is impossible to walk on the verge due to large stones having been placed there, to regain the path to the summit..

This diversion, if passed, would benefit one person and considerably disadvantage 100's of users

To allow the diversion of this iconic and historic route would be an act of iconoclastic vandalism!



**The Ramblers' Association
Huddersfield Group**

Secretary: Susan Genoves
Chairman: Tim Riley

huddersfield.ramblers@yahoo.co.uk

27 August 2020

Re: NATTRAN/Y&H/S247/4337

Proposed diversion of public footpath Footpath 60 (part) at Wolfstones Heights Farm, Holmfirth, Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees. Town & Country Planning Act 1990, Section 247

Dear Secretary of State,

I write with regard to the proposal to make an Order to stop up part of the above public footpath and create a diversion at Wolfstones Heights Farm, near Holmfirth in the Metropolitan Borough of Kirklees.

Huddersfield Ramblers wishes to **object to the proposed Order**.

Background

On 30 January 2020 the planning sub-committee of Kirklees Council, the responsible local authority, **refused authority for an Order to be made** under Section 257 of the 1990 Act to stop up part of the footpath and create a diversion, on an identical basis, at the same site. The Council's decision, passed by 11 votes to 1, is recorded [here](#) in the minutes of its sub-committee meeting (item 12). It followed detailed representations made by footpath user groups and members of the public about the demerits of the proposed stopping up and diversion, which included a risk to public safety on the proposed diversion route to be created.

Nothing about the new proposal is different. This simply represents an attempt by the rebuffed applicant to try to achieve their desired outcome through use of a different part of the 1990 Act.

We note that it is highly unusual for matters relating to public rights of way to be considered under Section 247 of the Act. Section 257 provides the legal framework for matters relating to rights of way, and it was under this Section that an Order has already been sought – and refused.

Our reasons for objecting to the Order

Our principal reason in Huddersfield Ramblers for objecting to this proposed Order is the same as for the previous (refused) Order: **the proposed diversion would place the overwhelming majority of users of Footpath 60 at risk by forcing them to walk for over 200 yards along a rural minor road with fast traffic and poor visibility, which under the existing arrangement they do not have to do.**

We know that the “overwhelming majority” of users of the Footpath would be disadvantaged in this way because of data collected by the applicant themselves in support of their previous application for an Order under Section 257!

At that time, the applicant commissioned professional surveys from a planning consultant, Noel Scanlon Consultancy Ltd, and a highways consultant, Paragon Highways, to study usage of Footpath 60 and the road onto which the path exits, Wolfstones Road, by pedestrians and (in the case of the road) motor vehicles. I have attached a copy of the reports produced by both consultants.

Sections 5.7.7 and 6.10.5.4 of Mr Scanlon's report stated that the proposed new point of exit from the diverted footpath onto Wolfstones Road would be "preferable" to the current termination point (point B on your plan) in terms of "safety". Huddersfield Ramblers cannot support this conclusion: in fact, far from backing up the applicant's position that the proposed diversion route is safer and more convenient for pedestrians, the report by Paragon Highways provides evidence to the contrary, as shown below.

When we made our initial objections to Kirklees Council to the previous application to divert this footpath in 2017, and an amended application in 2018, we in Huddersfield Ramblers stated that it was our belief that most users of Footpath 60 continue their walk from the existing exit point (point B on your plan) either by going south towards Upperthong or by crossing straight over the road to enter the land owned by Holme Valley Land Charity, to which permissive access has been granted for many generations, and thus gain the trig point at the summit of Wolfstones Height. In those earlier objections I made an educated guess that around 80% of users of Footpath 60 proceed towards, or come from, these two directions. Very few users of the footpath, I estimated, came from or were proceeding towards the north, so the number of footpath users who stood to be disadvantaged by the proposed diversion was always going to be high.

The traffic survey subsequently carried out by Paragon Highways provided irrefutable evidence in support of my original estimate. The figures in Paragon's report show:

- That, on 30/11/2017, 11 of the pedestrians arriving at point B on your plan who had used, or were intending to use, Footpath 60, had arrived there from Upperthong or the trig point on Wolfstones Height, or were proceeding thereto, compared to only 2 pedestrians who had used or intended to use Footpath 60 who had arrived from or were proceeding to the north (Moor Lane) direction;
- That, on 03/12/2017, 19 of the pedestrians arriving at point B who had used, or were intending to use, Footpath 60, had arrived there from Upperthong or the trig point on Wolfstones Height, or were proceeding thereto, compared to only 4 pedestrians who had used or intended to use Footpath 60 who had arrived from or were proceeding to the north (Moor Lane) direction;
- That, on 11/02/2019, 12 of the pedestrians arriving at point B who had used, or were intending to use, Footpath 60, had arrived there from Upperthong or the trig point on Wolfstones Height, or were proceeding thereto, compared to 0 (zero) pedestrians who had used or intended to use Footpath 60 who had arrived from or were proceeding to the north (Moor Lane) direction;
- That, on 17/03/2019, 24 of the pedestrians arriving at point B who had used, or were intending to use, Footpath 60, had arrived there from Upperthong or the trig point on Wolfstones Height, or were proceeding thereto, compared to 0 (zero) pedestrians who had used or intended to use Footpath 60 who had arrived from or were proceeding to the north (Moor Lane) direction.

Therefore, if the Paragon data is to be believed – and it seems to have been rigorously acquired – then more than **90%** of pedestrians who use Footpath 60 to arrive at Point B on your plan have the Wolfstones Height trig point or Upperthong as their destination, or have come from those places. This diversion would, the data showed, negatively affect the

overwhelming majority of users of Footpath 60, who would be **forced to walk for over 200 yards along a rural minor road with fast traffic and poor visibility.**

Mr Scanlon's report, rather oddly, but perhaps understandably given the aims of his client, seemed to harp on the fact that more pedestrians walk on the road than use the footpath "in any event" (6.10.5.3). This is true, according to the Paragon survey, but is disingenuous on Mr Scanlon's part. **The intentions and destinations of pedestrians who do not plan to incorporate Footpath 60 into their route at all are immaterial in any consideration of whether the path should be diverted.** What is at issue is whether **those who are using the footpath** are disadvantaged by the proposed diversion.

In objecting to the application under Section 257, several other path user groups made comments about the architectural and historical interest of the group of buildings, and the merits or demerits of the views from either route. We note these comments. However, in Huddersfield Ramblers we believe that this issue should turn first and foremost on the **safety** of users of the path. Mr Scanlon's report states – in rather strangled syntax – that "*the visibility for pedestrians egressing the new footpath location of oncoming traffic on Wolfstones Road is considerably improved from the existing situation. Intervisibility [??] for drivers travelling along the major road of pedestrians stepping onto the carriageway or verge is also to a high standard.*"

We believe that there is no significant advantage to the proposed new exit on these grounds. From the existing exit (point B on your plan), walkers have an uninterrupted view down the road to the south (towards Upperthong) and a more restricted, but still perfectly good, view along the road to the north. From the proposed new exit, walkers have a good view down the road to the north (towards Moor Lane) and a more restricted, but still good, view to the south. It is, as they say, six of one, half a dozen of the other.

But recreational walkers, whether they are dog-walkers or committed hikers, do not like walking on public tarmac roads for longer than they need to. There are several reasons for this; a principal one is that they go walking in the countryside precisely as an escape from cars and traffic. Overriding even this, though, is the safety aspect. Drivers on rural roads do not always show the same care as they would in urban areas, and the sudden presence of pedestrians on roads usually free from people can cause drivers surprise. Dogs being walked add to the risk. It is beside the point to maintain, as Mr Scanlon does, that "the local highway network operates safely" (6.10.5.5). **Any more time spent walking along the road than is required by the current arrangement can only increase the risk to pedestrians** – and the Paragon report shows that this would apply to over 90% of the users of Footpath 60, who, as the data shows, are going to or from Upperthong or the Wolfstones Height trig point¹. To state, as Mr Scanlon does, that the effect on distance and journey time would be "neutral" (6.10.3.3) is simply fatuous – unless, that is, one belongs to the small percentage of path users heading in other directions (northwards).

In Huddersfield Ramblers we are also completely unconvinced that the physical risk to walkers from vehicles using the current route (A to B on the plan) along the drive of Wolfstones Heights Farm outweighs the risk they would face by having to walk along the public road if the diversion is approved. We note Mr Scanlon's comments about access for emergency vehicles but cannot see visits by such vehicles as being anything other than exceptional events. Of course there may be construction vehicles if the works enabled by the planning permissions begin, but they should cease when complete. As for the applicant's own use of the drive and the "potential conflict between pedestrians and vehicles" (7.7), Mr Scanlon's description of the drive's "relative awkwardness, limited manoeuvrability and

¹ At present, users emerging on Wolfstones Road at Point B who intend to proceed to Wolfstones Height trig point can cross the tarmac in seven paces. The proposed diversion will see them having to use the road for over 200m.

visibility” (3.2) should be sufficient indication that motorists on the drive should be proceeding slowly and with caution in any case, as much out of care for themselves and their own vehicles as for any pedestrians who may be present. The drive will of course see daily use by the odd vehicle coming to and from the properties, but owing to its nature it is still a **much safer environment for walkers than a public road with bad bends and a 60 mph speed limit**. I might add that there are many, many public rights of way along access drives that are much narrower and more hazardous than this one.

Mr Scanlon’s report mentions the “necessity” test and the “merits” test – the necessity test having been, at least according to Mr Scanlon, already passed by virtue of the need to implement the proposed development in accordance with the planning permissions. On this we have nothing to say.

We urge the Secretary of State to consider the safety of users of Footpath 60 when considering whether to make an Order. The proposed stopping up and diversion of this route is against the interests of the overwhelming majority of users of the footpath because it places them at increased risk.

Yours sincerely,

Oliver Taylor
Footpaths Secretary
Huddersfield Ramblers

ollietaylor@yahoo.com

Planning Policy Group
PO Box B93
Civic Centre 3
Market Street
Huddersfield
HD1 2JR

Dear Sir/Madam

Re-issue of Notice of the adoption of the Kirklees Council Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint Supplementary Planning Document

The council is contacting you regarding the above document as you have made comments on previous stages or have expressed an interest in being informed about the next stages of this document.

We previously wrote to you to confirm the adoption of the above Supplementary Planning Document including the date Cabinet resolved to adopt the document (26th May 2020). The letter should also have included the formal adoption date. I am therefore writing to you to clarify the formal adoption date as 24th June 2020.

I have attached a copy of the revised Adoption Statement explaining where the relevant documents can be inspected and setting out the rights of any person aggrieved by the decision of the council.

If you require further advice on the content of the document or wish to discuss any implications, please contact the Planning Policy team on the details set out below.

Yours sincerely,

Mathias Franklin

Mathias Franklin
Head of Planning and Development

Kirklees Council
Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Adoption Statement

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Regulations 14 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) that the Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) 2020 was adopted by Kirklees Council on 24th June 2020.

Consultation on the Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint SPD was undertaken from 2nd March 2020 until 30th March 2020. In total 95 representations were received. The SPD was modified to consider representations made, pursuant to section 23(1) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. These modifications are set out in the Consultation Statement. In accordance with regulations 14 and 35 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended), the Huddersfield Town Centre Blueprint SPD Adoption Statement and Consultation Statement have been published.

These are available to view on-line at:

- **Web address:** <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-policy/adopted-supplementary-planning-documents.aspx>
- **or in the Covid circumstances upon application to** local.development@kirklees.gov.uk **for a copy to be delivered by post**
- **or in the Covid 19 circumstances by emailing** Johanna.scrutton@kirklees.gov.uk
- **or by telephoning Planning Policy on (01484) 221627**

Any changes to the availability of documents will be set out at: <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-policy/statement-community-involvement.aspx>

Any person aggrieved by the SPD may apply to the High Court for permission to apply for judicial review of the decision to adopt the SPD. Such an application must be made promptly and, in any event not later than three months after the date on which the SPD was adopted.

For further information, please look at the Council's website:

<https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-policy/adopted-supplementary-planning-documents.aspx> or contact the Planning Policy team by email: local.development@kirklees.gov.uk



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Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

White Paper: Planning for the Future



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If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/> or write to us at:

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For all our latest news and updates follow us on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mhclg>

August 2020

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Scope of the consultation

Topic of this consultation:	This consultation seeks any views on each part of a package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England to streamline and modernise the planning process, improve outcomes on design and sustainability, reform developer contributions and ensure more land is available for development where it is needed.
Scope of this consultation:	This consultation covers a package of proposals for reform of the planning system in England, covering plan-making, development management, development contributions, and other related policy proposals. Views are sought for specific proposals and the wider package of reforms presented.
Geographical scope:	These proposals relate to England only.
Impact Assessment:	The Government is mindful of its responsibility to have regard to the potential impact of any proposal on the Public Sector Equality Duty. In each part of the consultation we would invite any views on the duty. We are also seeking views on the potential impact of the package as a whole on the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Basic Information

To:	This consultation is open to everyone. We are keen to hear from a wide range of interested parties from across the public and private sectors, as well as from the general public.
Body/bodies responsible for the consultation:	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Duration:	This consultation will last for 12 weeks from 6 August 2020.
Enquiries:	For any enquiries about the consultation please contact planningforthefuture@communities.gov.uk .
How to respond:	You may respond by going to our website https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future Alternatively you can email your response to the questions in this consultation to planningforthefuture@communities.gov.uk . If you are responding in writing, please make it clear which questions you are responding to. Written responses should be sent to:

	<p>Planning for the Future Consultation, Planning Directorate, 3rd Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street, London, SW1P 4DF</p> <p>When you reply it would be very useful if you confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- your name,- your position (if applicable), and- the name of organisation (if applicable).
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Foreword from the Prime Minister

I never cease to be amazed by the incredible potential of this country. The vast array of innovations and talent that, when combined with our extraordinary can-do spirit, has brought forth everything from the jet engine to gene editing therapy.

But as we approach the second decade of the 21st century that potential is being artificially constrained by a relic from the middle of the 20th – our outdated and ineffective planning system.

Designed and built in 1947 it has, like any building of that age, been patched up here and there over the decades.

Extensions have been added on, knocked down and rebuilt according to the whims of whoever's name is on the deeds at the time. Eight years ago a new landlord stripped most of the asbestos from the roof.

But make-do-and-mend can only last for so long and, in 2020, it is no longer fit for human habitation.

Thanks to our planning system, we have nowhere near enough homes in the right places. People cannot afford to move to where their talents can be matched with opportunity. Businesses cannot afford to grow and create jobs. The whole thing is beginning to crumble and the time has come to do what too many have for too long lacked the courage to do – tear it down and start again.

That is what this paper proposes.

Radical reform unlike anything we have seen since the Second World War.

Not more fiddling around the edges, not simply painting over the damp patches, but levelling the foundations and building, from the ground up, a whole new planning system for England.

One that is simpler, clearer and quicker to navigate, delivering results in weeks and months rather than years and decades.

That actively encourages sustainable, beautiful, safe and useful development rather than obstructing it.

That makes it harder for developers to dodge their obligations to improve infrastructure and opens up housebuilding to more than just the current handful of massive corporations.

That gives you a greater say over what gets built in your community.

That makes sure start-ups have a place to put down roots and that businesses great and small have the space they need to grow and create jobs.

And, above all, that gives the people of this country the homes we need in the places we want to live at prices we can afford, so that all of us are free to live where we can connect our talents with opportunity.

Getting homes built is always a controversial business. Any planning application, however modest, almost inevitably attracts objections and I am sure there will be those who say this paper represents too much change too fast, too much of a break from what has gone before.

But what we have now simply does not work.

So let's do better. Let's make the system work for all of us. And let's take big, bold steps so that we in this country can finally build the homes we all need and the future we all want to see.

The Rt. Hon. Boris Johnson MP
Prime Minister

Foreword from the Secretary of State

The outbreak of COVID-19 has affected the economic and social lives of the entire nation. With so many people spending more time at home than ever before, we have come to know our homes, gardens and local parks more intimately. For some this has been a welcome opportunity to spend more time in the place they call home with the people they love. For others – those in small, substandard homes, those unable to walk to distant shops or parks, those struggling to pay their rent, or indeed for those who do not have a home of their own at all – this has been a moment where longstanding issues in our development and planning system have come to the fore.

Such times require decisive action and a plan for a better future. These proposals will help us to build the homes our country needs, bridge the present generational divide and recreate an ownership society in which more people have the security and dignity of a home of their own.

Our proposals seek a significantly simpler, faster and more predictable system. They aim to facilitate a more diverse and competitive housing industry, in which smaller builders can thrive alongside the big players, where all pay a fair share of the costs of infrastructure and the affordable housing existing communities require and where permissions are more swiftly turned into homes.

We are cutting red tape, but not standards. This Government doesn't want to just build houses. We want a society that has re-established powerful links between identity and place, between our unmatched architectural heritage and the future, between community and purpose. Our reformed system places a higher regard on quality, design and local vernacular than ever before, and draws inspiration from the idea of design codes and pattern books that built Bath, Belgravia and Bournville. Our guiding principle will be as Clough Williams-Ellis said to cherish the past, adorn the present and build for the future.

We will build environmentally friendly homes that will not need to be expensively retrofitted in the future, homes with green spaces and new parks at close hand, where tree lined streets are the norm and where neighbours are not strangers.

We are moving away from notices on lampposts to an interactive and accessible map-based online system – placing planning at the fingertips of people. The planning process will be brought into the 21st century. Communities will be reconnected to a planning process that is supposed to serve them, with residents more engaged over what happens in their areas.

While the current system excludes residents who don't have the time to contribute to the lengthy and complex planning process, local democracy and accountability will now be enhanced by technology and transparency.

Reforming the planning system isn't a task we undertake lightly, but it is both an overdue and a timely reform. Millions of jobs depend on the construction sector and in every economic recovery, it has played a crucial role.

This paper sets out how we will reform the planning system to realise that vision and make it more efficient, effective and equitable. I am most grateful to the taskforce of experts who have generously offered their time and expert advice as we have developed our proposals for reform – Bridget Rosewell, Miles Gibson, Sir Stuart Lipton, Nicholas Boys Smith, and Christopher Katkowski QC.

The Rt. Hon. Robert Jenrick MP
Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Introduction

The challenge we face – an inefficient, opaque process and poor outcomes

- 1.1. The planning system is central to our most important national challenges: tackling head on the shortage of beautiful, high quality homes and places where people want to live and work; combating climate change; improving biodiversity; supporting sustainable growth in all parts of the country and rebalancing our economy; delivering opportunities for the construction sector, upon which millions of livelihoods depend; the ability of more people to own assets and have a stake in our society; and our capacity to house the homeless and provide security and dignity.¹
- 1.2. To succeed in meeting these challenges, as we must, the planning system needs to be fit for purpose. It must make land available in the right places and for the right form of development. In doing this, it must ensure new development brings with it the schools, hospitals, surgeries and transport local communities need, while at the same time protecting our unmatched architectural heritage and natural environment.
- 1.3. There is some brilliant planning and development. And there are many brilliant planners and developers. But too often excellence in planning is the exception rather than the rule, as it is hindered by several problems with the system as it stands:
 - **It is too complex:** The planning system we have today was shaped by the Town and Country Planning Act 1947, which established planning as nationalised and discretionary in character. Since then, decades of reform have built complexity, uncertainty and delay into the system. It now works best for large investors and companies, and worst for those without the resources to manage a process beset by risk and uncertainty. A simpler framework would better support a more competitive market with a greater diversity of developers, and more resilient places.
 - **Planning decisions are discretionary rather than rules-based:** Nearly all decisions to grant consent are undertaken on a case-by-case basis, rather than determined by clear rules for what can and cannot be done. This makes the English planning system, and those derived from it, an exception internationally, and it has the important consequences of increasing planning risk, pushing up the cost of capital for development and discouraging both innovation and the bringing forward of land for development.² Decisions are also often overturned – of the planning applications determined at appeal, 36 per cent of decisions relating to major

¹ The shortage of affordable homes in and close to the most productive urban centres is a major drag on national productivity – see PwC (2019) “UK Housing market outlook”, available at <https://www.pwc.co.uk/economic-services/ukey/ukey-housing-market-july-2019.pdf>.

² *The EU Compendium of Spatial Planning Systems and Policies*, European Commission (1997); OECD (2017), *Land-use Planning Systems in the OECD: Country Fact Sheets*; Monk, S., Whitehead, C., Burgess, G. & Tang, C. (2013) *International review of land supply and planning systems*, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

applications and 30 per cent of decisions relating to minor applications are overturned.³

- **It takes too long to adopt a Local Plan:** although it is a statutory obligation to have an up to date Local Plan in place, only 50 per cent of local authorities (as of June 2020) do, and Local Plan preparation takes an average of 7 years (meaning many policies are effectively out of date as soon as they are adopted).
- **Assessments of housing need, viability and environmental impacts are too complex and opaque:** Land supply decisions are based on projections of household and business ‘need’ typically over 15- or 20-year periods. These figures are highly contested and do not provide a clear basis for the scale of development to be planned for. Assessments of environmental impacts and viability add complexity and bureaucracy but do not necessarily lead to environmental improvements nor ensure sites are brought forward and delivered;
- **It has lost public trust** with, for example, a recent poll finding that only seven per cent trusted their local council to make decisions about large scale development that will be good for their local area (49 per cent and 36 per cent said they distrusted developers and local authorities respectively).⁴ And consultation is dominated by the few willing and able to navigate the process – the voice of those who stand to gain from development is not heard loudly enough, such as young people. The importance of local participation in planning is now the focus of a campaign by the Local Government Association but this involvement must be accessible to all people;⁵
- **It is based on 20th-century technology:** Planning systems are reliant on legacy software that burden the sector with repetitive tasks. The planning process remains reliant on documents, not data, which reduces the speed and quality of decision-making. The user experience of the planning system discourages engagement, and little use is made of interactive digital services and tools. We have heard that for many developers the worst thing that can happen is for the lead local authority official to leave their job – suggesting a system too dependent on the views of a particular official at a particular time, and not transparent and accessible requirements shaped by communities.
- **The process for negotiating developer contributions to affordable housing and infrastructure is complex, protracted and unclear:** as a result, the outcomes can be uncertain, which further diminishes trust in the system and reduces the ability of local planning authorities to plan for and deliver necessary infrastructure. Over 80 per cent of planning authorities agree that planning

³ MHCLG data, period covering 24 months to end March 2019.

⁴ YouGov polling commissioned by Grosvenor (2019) – available at <https://www.grosvenor.com/Grosvenor/files/a2/a222517e-e270-4a5c-ab9f-7a7b4d99b1f3.pdf>. An overview of wider evidence and studies on public attitudes to planning and development is available in chapter 9 of the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission’s interim report – available at https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/815495/BBB_Commission_Interim_Report_Appendices.pdf.

⁵ See the LGA’s open statement on planning at <https://www.local.gov.uk/keep-planning-local>.

obligations cause delay.⁶ It also further increases planning risk for developers and landowners, thus discouraging development and new entrants.

- **There is not enough focus on design, and little incentive for high quality new homes and places:** There is insufficient incentive within the process to bring forward proposals that are beautiful and which will enhance the environment, health, and character of local areas. Local Plans do not provide enough certainty around the approved forms of development, relying on vague and verbal statements of policy rather than the popularly endorsed visual clarity that can be provided by binding design codes. This means that quality can be negotiated away too readily and the lived experience of the consumer ignored too readily.
- **It simply does not lead to enough homes being built,** especially in those places where the need for new homes is the highest. Adopted Local Plans, where they are in place, provide for 187,000 homes per year across England – not just significantly below our ambition for 300,000 new homes annually, but also lower than the number of homes delivered last year (over 241,000).⁷ The result of long-term and persisting undersupply is that housing is becoming increasingly expensive, including relative to our European neighbours. In Italy, Germany and the Netherlands, you can get twice as much housing space for your money compared to the UK.⁸ We need to address the inequalities this has entrenched.

- 1.4. A poor planning process results in poor outcomes. Land use planning and development control are forms of regulation, and like any regulation should be predictable, and accessible and strike a fair balance between consumers, producers and wider society. But too often the planning system is unpredictable, too difficult to engage with or understand, and favours the biggest players in the market who are best able to negotiate and navigate through the process.
- 1.5. The Government has made significant progress in recent years in increasing house building, with construction rates at a 30-year high in 2019. But these fundamental issues in the system remain, and we are still lagging behind many of our European neighbours. And as the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission found in its interim report last year, too often what we do build is low quality and considered ugly by local residents.⁹

A new vision for England's planning system

- 1.6. This paper and the reforms that follow are an attempt to rediscover the original mission and purpose of those who sought to improve our homes and streets in late

⁶ MHCLG (2019) *The Value and Incidence of Developer Contributions in England 2018/19* available at: <https://gov.uk/government/publications/section-106-planning-obligations-and-the-community-infrastructure-levy-in-england-2018-to-2019-report-of-study>

⁷ MHCLG data on housing supply available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/housing-supply-net-additional-dwellings-england-2018-to-2019>.

⁸ Data from the Deloitte Property Index, available at https://www2.deloitte.com/content/dam/Deloitte/cz/Documents/survey/Property_Index_2016_EN.pdf

⁹ Building Better Building Beautiful Commission (2019) *Creating space for beauty: Interim report*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/815493/BBBC_Commission_Interim_Report.pdf

Victorian and early 20th century Britain. That original vision has been buried under layers of legislation and case law. We need to rediscover it.

- 1.7. Planning matters. Where we live has a measurable effect on our physical and mental health: on how much we walk, on how many neighbours we know or how tense we feel on the daily journey to work or school. Places affect us from the air that we breathe to our ultimate sense of purpose and wellbeing. This is a question of social justice too. Better off people experience more beauty than poorer people and can better afford the rising costs of homes. As a nation we need to do this better. Evidence from the Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA), the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) and the Green Building Council to the Building Better Building Beautiful Commission all emphasised that the evidence on what people want and where they flourish is remarkably consistent.
- 1.8. The Government's planning reforms since 2010 have started to address the underlying issues:
 - last year, we delivered over 241,000 homes, more new homes than at any point in the last 30 years;
 - our reforms to change of use rules have supported delivery of over 50,000 new homes;
 - the rate of planning applications granted has increased since 2010;¹⁰
 - the National Planning Policy Framework, introduced in 2012, has greatly simplified the previously huge volume of policy;
 - we have introduced a simplified formula for assessing housing need and clearer incentives for local authorities to have up to date plans in place;
 - we have introduced greater democratic accountability over infrastructure planning, giving elected Ministers responsibility for planning decisions about this country's nationally significant energy, transport, water, wastewater and waste projects;
 - we have continued to protect the Green Belt;
 - protections for environmental and heritage assets – such as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Conservation Areas – continue to protect our treasured countryside and historic places; and
 - we have democratised and localised the planning process by abolishing the top-down regional strategies and unelected regional planning bodies, and empowered communities to prepare a plan for their area, through our introduction of neighbourhood planning – with over 2,600 communities taking advantage of our reforms so far.
- 1.9. But the simple truth is that decades of complexity and political argument have resulted in a system which is providing neither sufficient homes nor good enough

¹⁰ See

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/875032/Planning_Application_Statistics_October_to_December_2019.pdf (p.3).

new places. Nor is it fairly using the talents and passions of public sector planners who often feel over-worked and under-appreciated, trapped between the urgent need for more homes, an insufficiently competitive market and a policy framework which makes it almost impossible for them to insist upon beautiful and sustainable new homes and places.

- 1.10. The planning system needs to be better at unlocking growth and opportunity in all parts of the country, at encouraging beautiful new places, at supporting the careful stewardship and rebirth of town and city centres, and at supporting the revitalisation of existing buildings as well as supporting new development.
- 1.11. It is also time for the planning system finally to move towards a modernised, open data approach that creates a reliable national picture of what is happening where in planning, makes planning services more efficient, inclusive and consistent, and unlocks the data needed by property developers and the emerging Property Technology (PropTech) sector, to help them make more informed decisions on what to build and where.
- 1.12. We wish to:
 - **be more ambitious for the places we create**, expecting new development to be beautiful and to create a 'net gain' not just 'no net harm';
 - **move the democracy forward** in the planning process and give neighbourhoods and communities an earlier and more meaningful voice in the future of their area as plans are made, harnessing digital technology to make it much easier to access and understand information about specific planning proposals. More engagement should take place at the Local Plan phase;
 - **improve the user experience of the planning system**, to make planning information easier to find and understand and make it appear in the places that discussions are happening, for example in digital neighbourhood groups and social networks. New digital engagement processes will make it radically easier to raise views about and visualise emerging proposals whilst on-the-go on a smart phone;
 - **support home ownership**, helping people and families own their own beautiful, affordable, green and safe homes, with ready access to better infrastructure and green spaces;
 - **increase the supply of land available for new homes where it is needed** to address affordability pressures, support economic growth and the renewal of our towns and cities, and foster a more competitive housing market;
 - **help businesses to expand** with readier access to the commercial space they need in the places they want and supporting a more physically flexible labour market;
 - **support innovative developers and housebuilders**, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and self-builders, those looking to build a diverse range of types and tenure of housing, and those using innovative modern methods of construction (MMC);
 - **promote the stewardship and improvement of our precious countryside and environment**, ensuring important natural assets are preserved, the development

potential of brownfield land is maximised, that we support net gains for biodiversity and the wider environment and actively address the challenges of climate change; and

- **create a virtuous circle of prosperity in our villages, towns and cities**, supporting their ongoing renewal and regeneration without losing their human scale, inheritance and sense of place. We need to build more homes at gentle densities in and around town centres and high streets, on brownfield land and near existing infrastructure so that families can meet their aspirations. Good growth will make it easier to level up the economic and social opportunities available to communities.
- 1.13. Underpinning this, we need to modernise the day-to-day operation of the planning system. Residents should not have to rely on planning notices attached to lamp posts, printed in newspapers or posted in libraries. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the need for modern digital planning services that can be accessed from home, and many planners and local authorities have responded brilliantly to this challenge. The planning system must build on this success and follow other sectors in harnessing the benefits which digitisation can bring – real time information, high quality virtual simulation, straightforward end-to-end processes. It should be based on data, not documents, inclusive for all members of society, and stimulate the innovation of the great British design industry.
- 1.14. There are growing calls for change, and for the shape that it should take – based on a bold vision for end-to-end reform, rather than further piecemeal change within the existing system. Recent reports from think tanks and the Government-appointed Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission are the latest prominent voices to have added to the chorus.¹¹

Proposals

- 1.15. We will undertake fundamental reform of the planning system to address its underlying weaknesses and create a system fit for the 21st century. We want to hear your views on our proposals:
- 1.16. **First, we will streamline the planning process with more democracy taking place more effectively at the plan making stage**, and will replace the entire corpus of plan-making law in England to achieve this:
- **Simplifying the role of Local Plans**, to focus on identifying land under three categories - *Growth* areas suitable for substantial development, and where outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Plan; *Renewal* areas suitable for some development, such as gentle densification; and *Protected* areas where – as the name suggests – development is restricted. This could halve the time it takes to secure planning

¹¹ See Policy Exchange (2020) “A planning system for the 20th century”, available at: <https://policyexchange.org.uk/publication/rethinking-the-planning-system-for-the-21st-century/>; Centre for Cities (2020) “Planning for the future”, available at: <https://www.centreforcities.org/publication/planning-for-the-future/>; Building Better Building Beautiful Commission (2020) “Living with beauty: promoting health, well-being and sustainable growth”, available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/living-with-beauty-report-of-the-building-better-building-beautiful-commission>; Create Streets (2018) “From NIMBY to YIMBY”, and (2018) “More Good Homes”.

permission on larger sites identified in plans. We also want to allow local planning authorities to identify sub-areas in their *Growth* areas for self and custom-build homes, so that more people can build their own homes.

- **Local Plans should set clear rules rather than general policies for development.** We will set out general development management policies nationally, with a more focused role for Local Plans in identifying site and area-specific requirements, alongside locally-produced design codes. This would scale back the detail and duplication contained in Local Plans, while encouraging a much greater focus on design quality at the local level. Plans will be significantly shorter in length (we expect a reduction in size of at least two thirds), as they will no longer contain a long list of “policies” of varying specificity – just a core set of standards and requirements for development.
- **Local councils should radically and profoundly re-invent the ambition, depth and breadth with which they engage with communities** as they consult on Local Plans. Our reforms will democratise the planning process by putting a new emphasis on engagement at the plan-making stage. At the same time, we will streamline the opportunity for consultation at the planning application stage, because this adds delay to the process and allows a small minority of voices, some from the local area and often some not, to shape outcomes. We want to hear the views of a wide range of people and groups through this consultation on our proposed reforms.
- **Local Plans should be subject to a single statutory “sustainable development” test**, and unnecessary assessments and requirements that cause delay and challenge in the current system should be abolished. This would mean replacing the existing tests of soundness, updating requirements for assessments (including on the environment and viability) and abolishing the Duty to Cooperate.
- **Local Plans should be visual and map-based, standardised, based on the latest digital technology, and supported by a new standard template.** Plans should be significantly shorter in length, and limited to no more than setting out site- or area-specific parameters and opportunities.
- **Local authorities and the Planning Inspectorate will be required through legislation to meet a statutory timetable (of no more than 30 months in total)** for key stages of the process, and there will be sanctions for those who fail to do so.
- **Decision-making should be faster and more certain**, within firm deadlines, and should make greater use of data and digital technology.
- **We will seek to strengthen enforcement powers and sanctions** so that as we move towards a rules-based system, communities can have confidence those rules will be upheld.
- **We will develop a comprehensive resources and skills strategy for the planning sector to support the implementation of our reforms** – so that, as we bring in our reforms, local planning authorities are equipped to create great communities through world-class civic engagement and proactive plan-making.

1.17. **Second, we will take a radical, digital-first approach to modernise the planning process. This means moving from a process based on documents to a process driven by data.** We will:

- **Support local planning authorities to use digital tools to support a new civic engagement process for local plans and decision-making**, making it easier for people to understand what is being proposed and its likely impact on them through visualisations and other digital approaches. We will make it much easier for people to feed in their views into the system through social networks and via their phones.
- **Insist local plans are built on standardised, digitally consumable rules and data**, enabling accessible interactive maps that show what can be built where. The data will be accessed by software used across the public sector and also by external PropTech entrepreneurs to improve transparency, decision-making and productivity in the sector.
- **Standardise, and make openly and digitally accessible, other critical datasets that the planning system relies on**, including planning decisions and developer contributions. Approaches for fixing the underlying data are already being tested and developed by innovative local planning authorities and we are exploring options for how these could be scaled nationally.
- **Work with tech companies and local authorities to modernise the software used for making and case-managing a planning application**, improving the user-experience for those applying and reducing the errors and costs currently experienced by planning authorities. A new more modular software landscape will encourage digital innovation and will consume and provide access to underlying data. This will help automate routine processes, such as knowing whether new applications are within the rules, making decision making faster and more certain.
- **Engage with the UK PropTech sector through a *PropTech Innovation Council*** to make the most of innovative new approaches to meet public policy objectives, help this emerging sector to boost productivity in the wider planning and housing sectors, and ensure government data and decisions support the sector's growth in the UK and internationally.

1.18. **Third, to bring a new focus on design and sustainability**, we will:

- **Ensure the planning system supports our efforts to combat climate change and maximises environmental benefits**, by ensuring the National Planning Policy Framework targets those areas where a reformed planning system can most effectively address climate change mitigation and adaptation and facilitate environmental improvements.
- **Facilitate ambitious improvements in the energy efficiency standards for buildings** to help deliver our world-leading commitment to net-zero by 2050.
- **Ask for beauty and be far more ambitious for the places we create, expecting new development to be beautiful, and to create a 'net gain' not just 'no net harm'**, with a greater focus on 'placemaking' and 'the creation of beautiful places' within the National Planning Policy Framework.
- **Make it easier for those who want to build beautifully through the introduction of a fast-track for beauty** through changes to national policy and legislation, to

automatically permit proposals for high quality developments where they reflect local character and preferences.

- **Introduce a quicker, simpler framework for assessing environmental impacts and enhancement opportunities**, that speeds up the process while protecting and enhancing England's unique ecosystems.
 - **Expect design guidance and codes – which will set the rules for the design of new development – to be prepared locally and to be based on genuine community involvement rather than meaningless consultation**, so that local residents have a genuine say in the design of new development, and ensure that codes have real 'bite' by making them more binding on planning decisions.
 - **Establish a new body to support the delivery of design codes in every part of the country**, and give permanence to the campaigning work of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission and the life of its co-chairman the late Sir Roger Scruton.
 - **Ensure that each local planning authority has a chief officer for design and place-making**, to help ensure there is the capacity and capability locally to raise design standards and the quality of development.
 - **Lead by example by updating Homes England's strategic objectives to give greater emphasis to delivering beautiful places.**
 - **Protect our historic buildings and areas** while ensuring the consent framework is fit for the 21st century.
- 1.19. **Fourth, we will improve infrastructure delivery in all parts of the country and ensure developers play their part**, through reform of developer contributions. We propose:
- **The Community Infrastructure Levy and the current system of planning obligations will be reformed as a nationally-set value-based flat rate charge ('the Infrastructure Levy')**. A single rate or varied rates could be set. We will aim for the new Levy to raise more revenue than under the current system of developer contributions, and deliver at least as much – if not more – on-site affordable housing as at present. This reform will enable us to sweep away months of negotiation of Section 106 agreements and the need to consider site viability. We will deliver more of the infrastructure existing and new communities require by capturing a greater share of the uplift in land value that comes with development.
 - **We will be more ambitious for affordable housing provided through planning gain**, and we will ensure that the new Infrastructure Levy allows local planning authorities to secure more on-site housing provision.
 - **We will give local authorities greater powers to determine how developer contributions are used**, including by expanding the scope of the Levy to cover affordable housing provision to allow local planning authorities to drive up the provision of affordable homes. We will ensure that affordable housing provision supported through developer contributions is kept at least at current levels, and that it is still delivered on-site to ensure that new development continues to support mixed communities. Local authorities will have the flexibility to use this funding to support both existing communities as well as new communities.

- **We will also look to extend the scope of the consolidated Infrastructure Levy and remove exemptions from it** to capture changes of use through permitted development rights, so that additional homes delivered through this route bring with them support for new infrastructure.
- 1.20. **Fifth, to ensure more land is available for the homes and development people and communities need, and to support renewal of our town and city centres,** we propose:
- **A new nationally-determined, binding housing requirement that local planning authorities would have to deliver through their Local Plans.** This would be focused on areas where affordability pressure is highest to stop land supply being a barrier to enough homes being built. We propose that this would factor in land constraints, including the Green Belt, and would be consistent with our aspirations of creating a housing market that is capable of delivering 300,000 homes annually, and one million homes over this Parliament.
 - **To speed up construction where development has been permitted,** we propose to make it clear in the revised National Planning Policy Framework that the masterplans and design codes for sites prepared for substantial development should seek to include a variety of development types from different builders which allow more phases to come forward together. We will explore further options to support faster build out as we develop our proposals for the new planning system.
 - **To provide better information to local communities, to promote competition amongst developers, and to assist SMEs and new entrants to the sector,** we will consult on options for improving the data held on contractual arrangements used to control land.
 - **To make sure publicly-owned land and public investment in development supports thriving places,** we will:
 - ensure decisions on the locations of new public buildings – such as government offices and further education colleges – support renewal and regeneration of town centres; and
 - explore how publicly-owned land disposal can support the SME and self-build sectors.

The change we will see – a more engaging, equitable and effective system

- 1.21. Our proposals will greatly improve the user experience of the planning system, making it fit for the next century.
- 1.22. **Residents** will be able to engage in a much more democratic system that is open to a wider range of people whose voice is currently not heard. Residents will no longer have to rely on planning notices attached to lamp posts, printed in newspapers and posted in libraries to find out about newly proposed developments. Instead people will be able to use their smartphone to give their views on Local Plans and design codes as they are developed, and to see clearer, more visual information about development proposals near them – rather than current planning policies and

development proposals presented in PDF documents, hundreds of pages long. And existing and new residents alike will gain from more affordable, green and beautiful homes near to where they want to live and work.

- 1.23. **Communities** will be able to trust the planning system again as their voice will be heard from the beginning of the process and better use of digital technology will make it radically easier for people to understand what is being proposed in their neighbourhoods and provide new ways to feed their views into the reformed system. Local Plans will be developed over a fixed 30-month period with clear engagement points, rather than the current inconsistent process which takes seven years on average. The Infrastructure Levy will be more transparent than Section 106, and local communities will have more control over how it is spent. Communities will be able to set standards for design upfront through local design codes. And with more land available for homes where they are most needed, and a renewed focus on the beauty of new development, communities will be able to grow organically and sustainably, and development will enhance places for everyone.
- 1.24. **Innovators, entrepreneurs and businesses** will benefit from a planning system that is much more adaptable to the changing needs of the economy. A greater amount of land available near to workplaces, and a more flexible approach to how that land can be used, will make it much easier for firms to set up and expand in the most productive locations – for example, spin-out companies looking to set up near to research-intensive universities. A reformed system that is based upon data, rather than documents will help to provide the data that innovators and entrepreneurs, including the burgeoning PropTech sector, need to build new technology to help improve citizen engagement and planning processes.
- 1.25. **Small builders, housing associations and those building their own home**, will find this system much easier, less costly and quicker to navigate, with more land available for development, and clearer expectations on the types of development permitted, helping them to find development opportunities and use innovative construction methods. With permission for the principle of development secured automatically in many cases, a major hurdle in the process will be removed, taking two to three years out of the process. The system of developer contributions will make it much easier for smaller developers, who will not have to engage in months of negotiation and can instead get on with the job of building. And a shorter, more certain process will remove significant risk from the process, lowering the need for developers to secure long development pipelines and lowering the regulatory barriers to entry that currently exist in the market. A data-led planning system will help developers of all sizes and experience to find the planning information they need to understand what can be built and where, which will provide greater certainty to them and their investors.
- 1.26. **Local authorities**, including Mayoral combined authorities, will be liberated to plan and able to focus on what they do best, with the shackles of current burdensome assessments and negotiations removed. They will be able to give more attention to improving the quality of new development and focus on those large and special sites that need the most consideration. And the Government will support modernisation of the planning process so that routine tasks are automated and decision-making, and plan-making, is improved by better access to the data local authorities need.

- 1.27. **And for our children and grandchildren**, our reforms will leave an inheritance of environmental improvement – with environmental assets protected, more green spaces provided, more sustainable development supported, new homes that are much more energy efficient and new places that can become the heritage of the future, built closer to where people want to live and work to reduce our reliance on carbon-intensive modes of transport.
- 1.28. This consultation document does not address every detailed part of the planning system, its function and objectives, but rather focuses on the key reforms that can help improve the delivery and quality of homes and neighbourhoods, set within our drive towards net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
- 1.29. And fixing the planning system alone will not be enough – it will require a collective effort between Government, communities, businesses and developers over the long-term. But fixing the planning system should be the starting point for these efforts.

Pillar One – Planning for development

Overview

- 2.1. The starting point for an effective planning system is to establish a clear and predictable basis for the pattern and form of development in an area. The current system of land use planning in England is principally based on local plans, brought forward by local planning authorities on behalf of their communities. But in contrast to planning systems in places like Japan, the Netherlands and Germany, where plans give greater certainty that development is permitted in principle upfront, plans in England are policy-based, with a separate process required to secure permission on the sites that it designates for development.
- 2.2 Local Plans are a good foundation on which to base reform, as they provide a route for local requirements to be identified and assessed, a forum for political debate and for different views on the future of areas to be heard. The National Planning Policy Framework provides a clear basis for those matters that are best set in national policy.
- 2.3 However, change is needed. Layers of assessment, guidance and policy have broadened the scope of Local Plans, requiring a disproportionate burden of evidence to support them. As a result, Local Plans take increasingly long to produce, on average over seven years; have become lengthier documents of increasing complexity, in some cases stretching to nearly 500 pages; are underpinned by vast swathes of evidence base documents, often totalling at least ten times the length of the plan itself, and none of which are clearly linked, standardised, or produced in accessible formats; and include much unnecessary repetition of national policy.
- 2.4 It is difficult for users of the planning system to find the information they need, and when they do, it is difficult to understand. Few people read the array of evidence base documents which accompany plans and these assessments do not sufficiently aid decision-making. Much of this evidence becomes dated very quickly, and production times often render policies out of date as soon as they are adopted. Furthermore, even when the plan is in place, it cannot be relied on as the definitive statement of how development proposals should be handled.
- 2.5 Local Plans should instead be focused on where they can add real value: allocating enough land for development in the right places, giving certainty about what can be developed on that land, making the process for getting permission for development as simple as possible, and providing local communities a genuine opportunity to shape those decisions. To this end, Local Plans should:
 - be based on transparent, clear requirements for local authorities to identify appropriate levels of, and locations for, development that provide certainty and that applicants and communities can easily understand;
 - communicate key information clearly and visually so that plans are accessible and easily understandable, and communities can engage meaningfully in the process of developing them;

- be published as standardised data to enable a strategic national map of planning to be created;
- be developed using a clear, efficient and standard process;
- benefit from a radically and profoundly re-invented engagement with local communities so that more democracy takes place effectively at the plan-making stage; and
- set clear expectations on what is required on land that is identified for development, so that plans give confidence in the future growth of areas and facilitate the delivery of beautiful and sustainable places.

Questions

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?

[Yes / No]

2(a). If no, why not?

[Don't know how to / It takes too long / It's too complicated / I don't care / Other – please specify]

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?

[Social media / Online news / Newspaper / By post / Other – please specify]

4. What are your top three priorities for planning in your local area?

[Building homes for young people / building homes for the homeless / Protection of green spaces / The environment, biodiversity and action on climate change / Increasing the affordability of housing / The design of new homes and places / Supporting the high street / Supporting the local economy / More or better local infrastructure / Protection of existing heritage buildings or areas / Other – please specify]

Proposals

2.6. We propose a new role for Local Plans and a new process for making them, by replacing the existing primary and secondary legislation.

A NEW APPROACH TO PLAN-MAKING

2.7. Local Plans should have a clear role and function, which should be, first, to identify land for development and sites that should be protected; and, second, to be clear about what development can take place in those different areas so that there is greater certainty about land allocated for development and so that there is a faster route to securing permission. They should be assessed against a single statutory “sustainable development” test to ensure plans strike the right balance between environmental, social and economic objectives.

Proposal 1: The role of land use plans should be simplified. We propose that Local Plans should identify three types of land – *Growth* areas suitable for substantial development, *Renewal* areas suitable for development, and areas that are *Protected*.

2.8. All areas of land would be put into one of these three categories:

- ***Growth* areas “suitable for substantial development”** – we propose that the term substantial development be defined in policy to remove any debate about this descriptor. We envisage this category would include land suitable for comprehensive development, including new settlements and urban extension sites, and areas for redevelopment, such as former industrial sites or urban regeneration sites. It could also include proposals for sites such as those around universities where there may be opportunities to create a cluster of growth-focused businesses. Sites annotated in the Local Plan under this category would have outline approval for development (see proposal 5 for more detail). Areas of flood risk would be excluded from this category (as would other important constraints), unless any risk can be fully mitigated;
- ***Renewal* areas “suitable for development”** – this would cover existing built areas where smaller scale development is appropriate. It could include the gentle densification and infill of residential areas, development in town centres, and development in rural areas that is not annotated as *Growth* or *Protected* areas, such as small sites within or on the edge of villages. There would be a statutory presumption in favour of development being granted for the uses specified as being suitable in each area. Local authorities could continue to consider the case for resisting inappropriate development of residential gardens;
- **Areas that are *Protected*** – this would include sites and areas which, as a result of their particular environmental and/or cultural characteristics, would justify more stringent development controls to ensure sustainability. This would include areas such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs), Conservation Areas, Local Wildlife Sites, areas of significant flood risk and important areas of green space. At a smaller scale it can continue to include gardens in line with existing policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. It would also include areas of open countryside outside of land in *Growth* or *Renewal* areas. Some areas would be defined nationally, others locally on the basis of national policy, but all would be annotated in Local Plan maps and clearly signpost the relevant development restrictions defined in the National Planning Policy Framework.

2.9. This new-style Local Plan would comprise an interactive web-based map of the administrative area where data and policies are easily searchable, with a key and accompanying text. Areas and sites would be annotated and colour-coded in line with their *Growth*, *Renewal* or *Protected* designation, with explanatory descriptions set out in the key and accompanying text, as appropriate to the category.

2.10. In *Growth* and *Renewal* areas, the key and accompanying text would set out suitable development uses, as well as limitations on height and/or density as relevant. These could be specified for sub-areas within each category, determined locally but having regard to national policy, guidance and legislation (including the National Model Design Code and flexibilities in use allowed by virtue of the new Use Classes Order and permitted development). For example, it may be appropriate for some areas to be identified as suitable for higher-density residential development,

or for high streets and town centres to be identified as distinct areas. In *Growth* areas, we would also want to allow sub-areas to be created specifically for self and custom-build homes, and community-led housing developments, to allow a range of housing aspirations to be met and help create diverse and flourishing communities. In the case of self and custom-build homes, local authorities should identify enough land to meet the requirements identified in their self-build and custom housebuilding registers. For *Protected* areas, the key and accompanying text would explain what is permissible by cross-reference to the National Planning Policy Framework.

- 2.11. **Alternative options:** Rather than dividing land into three categories, we are also interested in views on more binary models. One option is to combine *Growth* and *Renewal* areas (as defined above) into one category and to extend permission in principle to all land within this area, based on the uses and forms of development specified for each sub-area within it.
- 2.12. An alternative approach would be to limit automatic permission in principle to land identified for substantial development in Local Plans (*Growth* areas); other areas of land would, as now, be identified for different forms of development in ways determined by the local planning authority (and taking into account policy in the National Planning Policy Framework), and subject to the existing development management process.

Question

5. Do you agree that Local Plans should be simplified in line with our proposals?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 2: Development management policies established at national scale and an altered role for Local Plans.

- 2.13. With the primary focus of plan-making on identifying areas for development and protection, we propose that development management policy contained in the plan would be restricted to clear and necessary site or area-specific requirements, including broad height limits, scale and/or density limits for land included in *Growth* areas and *Renewal* areas, established through the accompanying text. The National Planning Policy Framework would become the primary source of policies for development management; there would be no provision for the inclusion of generic development management policies which simply repeat national policy within Local Plans, such as protections for listed buildings (although we are interested in views on the future of optional technical standards). We propose to turn plans from long lists of general “policies” to specific development standards.
- 2.14. Local planning authorities and neighbourhoods (through Neighbourhood Plans) would play a crucial role in producing required design guides and codes to provide certainty and reflect local character and preferences about the form and appearance of development. This is important for making plans more visual and engaging. These could be produced for a whole local authority area, or for a smaller area or site (as annotated in the Local Plan), or a combination of both. Design guides and codes would ideally be produced on a ‘twin track’ with the Local Plan, either for inclusion within the plan or prepared as supplementary planning documents.

- 2.15. We want to move to a position where all development management policies and code requirements, at national, local and neighbourhood level, are written in a machine-readable format so that wherever feasible, they can be used by digital services to automatically screen developments and help identify where they align with policies and/or codes. This will significantly increase clarity for those wishing to bring forward development, enabling automation of more binary considerations and allowing for a greater focus on those areas where there is likely to be greater subjectivity.
- 2.16. **Alternative options:** Rather than removing the ability for local authorities to include general development management policies in Local Plans, we could limit the scope of such policies to specific matters and standardise the way they are written, where exceptional circumstances necessitate a locally-defined approach. Another alternative would be to allow local authorities a similar level of flexibility to set development management policies as under the current Local Plans system, with the exception that policies which duplicate the National Planning Policy Framework would not be allowed.

Question

6. Do you agree with our proposals for streamlining the development management content of Local Plans, and setting out general development management policies nationally?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 3: Local Plans should be subject to a single statutory “sustainable development” test, replacing the existing tests of soundness.

- 2.17. This would consider whether the plan contributes to achieving sustainable development in accordance with policy issued by the Secretary of State. The achievement of sustainable development is an existing and well-understood basis for the planning system, and we propose that it should be retained.
- 2.18. A simpler test, as well as more streamlined plans, should mean fewer requirements for assessments that add disproportionate delay to the plan-making process.
- 2.19. Specifically:
- we propose to abolish the Sustainability Appraisal system and develop a simplified process for assessing the environmental impact of plans, which would continue to satisfy the requirements of UK and international law and treaties (see our proposals under Pillar Two);
 - the Duty to Cooperate test would be removed (although further consideration will be given to the way in which strategic cross-boundary issues, such as major infrastructure or strategic sites, can be adequately planned for, including the scale at which plans are best prepared in areas with significant strategic challenges); and
 - a slimmed down assessment of deliverability for the plan would be incorporated into the “sustainable development” test.
- 2.20. Plans should be informed by appropriate infrastructure planning, and sites should not be included in the plan where there is no reasonable prospect of any

infrastructure that may be needed coming forward within the plan period. Plan-making policies in the National Planning Policy Framework will make this clear.

- 2.21. The new-style digital Local Plan would also help local planning authorities to engage with strategic cross-boundary issues and use data-driven insights to assess local infrastructure needs to help decide what infrastructure is needed and where it should be located.
- 2.22. **Alternative option:** Rather than removing the existing tests of soundness, an alternative option could be to reform them in order to make it easier for a suitable strategy to be found sound. For example, the tests could become less prescriptive about the need to demonstrate deliverability. Rather than demonstrating deliverability, local authorities could be required to identify a stock of reserve sites which could come forward for development if needed.

Questions

7(a). Do you agree with our proposals to replace existing legal and policy tests for Local Plans with a consolidated test of “sustainable development”, which would include consideration of environmental impact?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

7(b). How could strategic, cross-boundary issues be best planned for in the absence of a formal Duty to Cooperate?

Proposal 4: A standard method for establishing housing requirement figures which ensures enough land is released in the areas where affordability is worst, to stop land supply being a barrier to enough homes being built. The housing requirement would factor in land constraints and opportunities to more effectively use land, including through densification where appropriate, to ensure that the land is identified in the most appropriate areas and housing targets are met.

- 2.23. Local Plans will need to identify areas to meet a range of development needs – such as homes, businesses and community facilities – for a minimum period of 10 years. This includes land needed to take advantage of local opportunities for economic growth, such as commercial space for spin-out companies near to university research and development facilities, or other high productivity businesses.
- 2.24. Debates about housing numbers tend to dominate this process, and a standard method for setting housing requirements would significantly reduce the time it takes to establish the amount of land to release in each area. This has historically been a time-consuming process which ultimately has not led to enough land being released where it is most needed (as reflected by worsening affordability). A standard requirement would differ from the current system of local housing need in that it would be binding, and so drive greater land release.
- 2.25. It is proposed that the standard method would be a means of distributing the national housebuilding target of 300,000 new homes annually, and one million homes by the end of the Parliament, having regard to:

- the size of existing urban settlements (so that development is targeted at areas that can absorb the level of housing proposed);
 - the relative affordability of places (so that the least affordable places where historic under-supply has been most chronic take a greater share of future development);
 - the extent of land constraints in an area to ensure that the requirement figure takes into account the practical limitations that some areas might face, including the presence of designated areas of environmental and heritage value, the Green Belt and flood risk. For example, areas in National Parks are highly desirable and housing supply has not kept up with demand; however, the whole purpose of National Parks would be undermined by multiple large scale housing developments so a standard method should factor this in;
 - the opportunities to better use existing brownfield land for housing, including through greater densification. The requirement figure will expect these opportunities to have been utilised fully before land constraints are taken into account;
 - the need to make an allowance for land required for other (non-residential) development; and
 - inclusion of an appropriate buffer to ensure enough land is provided to account for the drop off rate between permissions and completions as well as offering sufficient choice to the market.
- 2.26. The standard method would make it the responsibility of individual authorities to allocate land suitable for housing to meet the requirement, and they would continue to have choices about how to do so: for example through more effective use of existing residential land, greater densification, infilling and brownfield redevelopment, extensions to existing urban areas, or new settlements. The existing policy for protecting the Green Belt would remain. We also propose that it would be possible for authorities to agree an alternative distribution of their requirement in the context of joint planning arrangements. In particular, it may be appropriate for Mayors of combined authorities to oversee the strategic distribution of the requirement in a way that alters the distribution of numbers, and this would be allowed for.
- 2.27. In the current system the combination of the five-year housing land supply requirement, the Housing Delivery Test and the presumption in favour of sustainable development act as a check to ensure that enough land comes into the system. Our proposed approach should ensure that enough land is planned for, and with sufficient certainty about its availability for development, to avoid a continuing requirement to be able to demonstrate a five-year supply of land. However, having enough land supply in the system does not guarantee that it will be delivered, and so we propose to maintain the Housing Delivery Test and the presumption in favour of sustainable development as part of the new system.
- 2.28. **Alternative option:** It would be possible to leave the calculation of how much land to include in each category to local decision, but with a clear stipulation in policy that this should be sufficient to address the development needs of each area (so far as possible subject to recognised constraints), taking into account market signals indicating the degree to which existing needs are not being met. As now, a standard method could be retained to underpin this approach in relation to housing; and it

would be possible to make changes to the current approach that ensure that meeting minimum need is given greater weight to make sure sufficient land comes forward. However, we do not think that this approach would carry the same benefits of clarity and simplicity as our preferred option, and would also require additional safeguards to ensure that adequate land remains available, especially once the assessment of housing need has been translated into housing requirements. We would, therefore, propose to retain a five-year housing land supply requirement with this approach.

- 2.29. We have published a separate consultation on proposed changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need which is currently used in the process of establishing housing requirement figures. The future application of the formula proposed in the revised standard method consultation will be considered in the context of the proposals set out here. In particular, the methodology does not yet adjust for the land constraints, including Green Belt. We will consider further the options for doing this and welcome proposals.

Questions

8(a). Do you agree that a standard method for establishing housing requirements (that takes into account constraints) should be introduced?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

8(b). Do you agree that affordability and the extent of existing urban areas are appropriate indicators of the quantity of development to be accommodated?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

A streamlined development management process with automatic planning permission for schemes in line with plans

Proposal 5: Areas identified as *Growth* areas (suitable for substantial development) would automatically be granted outline planning permission for the principle of development, while automatic approvals would also be available for pre-established development types in other areas suitable for building.

- 2.30. There will therefore be no need to submit a further planning application to test whether the site can be approved. Where the Local Plan has identified land for development, planning decisions should focus on resolving outstanding issues – not the principle of development.
- 2.31. In areas suitable for substantial development (*Growth* areas) an outline permission for the principle of development would be conferred by adoption of the Local Plan. Further details would be agreed and full permission achieved through streamlined and faster consent routes which focus on securing good design and addressing site-specific technical issues.
- 2.32. Detailed planning permission could be secured in one of three ways:
- a reformed reserved matters process for agreeing the issues which remain outstanding;

- a Local Development Order prepared by the local planning authority for the development which could be prepared in parallel with the Local Plan and be linked to a master plan and design codes; or
 - for exceptionally large sites such as a new town where there are often land assembly and planning challenges, we also want to explore whether a Development Consent Order under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime could be an appropriate route to secure consents. Similarly, we will consider how the planning powers for Development Corporations can be reformed to reflect this new framework.
- 2.33. In areas suitable for development (*Renewal* areas), there would be a general presumption in favour of development established in legislation (achieved by strengthening the emphasis on taking a plan-led approach, with plans reflecting the general appropriateness of these areas for development). Consent for development would be granted in one of three ways:
- for pre-specified forms of development such as the redevelopment of certain building types, through a new permission route which gives an automatic consent if the scheme meets design and other prior approval requirements (as discussed further under the fast-track to beauty proposals set out under Pillar Two);
 - for other types of development, a faster planning application process where a planning application for the development would be determined in the context of the Local Plan description, for what development the area or site is appropriate for, and with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework; or
 - a Local or Neighbourhood Development Order.
- 2.34. In both the *Growth* and *Renewal* areas it would still be possible for a proposal which is different to the plan to come forward (if, for example, local circumstances had changed suddenly, or an unanticipated opportunity arose), but this would require a specific planning application. We expect this to be the exception rather than the rule: to improve certainty in the system, it will be important for everyone to have confidence that the plan will be the basis for decisions, and so we intend to strengthen the emphasis on a plan-led approach in legislation (alongside giving appropriate status to national planning policy for general development management matters).
- 2.35. In areas where development is restricted (*Protected* areas) any development proposals would come forward as now through planning applications being made to the local authority (except where they are subject to permitted development rights or development orders), and judged against policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 2.36. We will consider the most effective means for neighbours and other interested parties to address any issues of concern where, under this system, the principle of development has been established leaving only detailed matters to be resolved.
- 2.37. Separate to these reforms, we also intend to consolidate other existing routes to permission which have accumulated over time, including simplified planning zones, enterprise zones and brownfield land registers.

Questions

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?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

9(b). Do you agree with our proposals above for the consent arrangements for *Renewal* and *Protected* areas?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

9(c). Do you think there is a case for allowing new settlements to be brought forward under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects regime?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 6: Decision-making should be faster and more certain, with firm deadlines, and make greater use of digital technology

2.38. For all types of planning applications regardless of the category of land, we want to see a much more streamlined and digitally enabled end to end process which is proportionate to the scale and nature of the development proposed, to ensure decisions are made faster. The well-established time limits of eight or 13 weeks for determining an application from validation to decision should be a firm deadline – not an aspiration which can be got around through extensions of time as routinely happens now.

2.39. To achieve this, we propose:

- the greater digitalisation of the application process to make it easier for applicants, especially those proposing smaller developments, to have certainty when they apply and engage with local planning authorities. In particular, the validation of applications should be integrated with the submission of the application so that the right information is provided at the start of the process. For Spending Review, the Government will prepare a specific, investable proposal for modernising planning systems in local government;
- A new, more modular, software landscape to encourage digital innovation and provide access to underlying data. This will help automate routine processes, such as knowing whether new applications are within the rules, which will support faster and more certain decision-making. We will work with tech companies and local planning authorities to modernise the software used for case-managing a planning application to improve the user-experience for those applying and reduce the errors and costs currently experienced by planning authorities;
- shorter and more standardised applications. The amount of key information required as part of the application should be reduced considerably and made machine-readable. A national data standard for smaller applications should be created. For major development, beyond relevant drawings and plans, there should only be one key standardised planning statement of no more than 50 pages to justify the development proposals in relation to the Local Plan and National Planning Policy Framework;

- data-rich planning application registers will be created so that planning application information can be easily found and monitored at a national scale, and new digital services can be built to help people use this data in innovative ways
 - data sets that underpin the planning system, including planning decisions and developer contributions, need to be standardised and made open and digitally accessible;
 - a digital template for planning notices will be created so that planning application information can be more effectively communicated and understood by local communities and used by new digital services;
 - greater standardisation of technical supporting information, for instance about local highway impacts, flood risk and heritage matters. We envisage design codes will help to reduce the need for significant supplementary information, but we recognise there may still need to be site specific information to mitigate wider impacts. For these issues, there should be clear national data standards and templates developed in conjunction with statutory consultees;
 - clearer and more consistent planning conditions, with standard national conditions to cover common issues;
 - a streamlined approach to developer contributions, which is discussed further under Pillar Three;
 - the delegation of detailed planning decisions to planning officers where the principle of development has been established, as detailed matters for consideration should be principally a matter for professional planning judgment.
- 2.40. We also believe there should be a clear incentive on the local planning authority to determine an application within the statutory time limits. This could involve the automatic refund of the planning fee for the application if they fail to determine it within the time limit. But we also want to explore whether some types of applications should be deemed to have been granted planning permission if there has not been a timely determination, to ensure targets are met and local authorities keep to the time limit in the majority of cases. We particularly want to ensure that the facilities and infrastructure that communities value, such as schools, hospitals and GP surgeries, are delivered quickly through the planning system.
- 2.41. There will remain a power to call in decisions by the Secretary of State and for applicants to appeal against a decision by a local planning authority. However, by ensuring greater certainty about the principle of development in Local Plans, we expect to see fewer appeals being considered by the Planning Inspectorate. For those that do go to appeal, we want to ensure the appeals process is faster, with the Inspectorate more digitally responsive and flexible. And to promote proper consideration of applications by planning committees, where applications are refused, we propose that applicants will be entitled to an automatic rebate of their planning application fee if they are successful at appeal.

Question

10. Do you agree with our proposals to make decision-making faster and more certain?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

A new interactive, web-based map standard for planning documents

2.42. Planning documentation should reflect this simplified role for Local Plans and should support community engagement.

Proposal 7: Local Plans should be visual and map-based, standardised, based on the latest digital technology, and supported by a new template.

- 2.43. Interactive, map-based Local Plans will be built upon data standards and digital principles. To support local authorities in developing plans in this new format, we will publish a guide to the new Local Plan system and data standards and digital principles, including clearer expectations around the more limited evidence that will be expected to support “sustainable” Local Plans, accompanied by a “model” template for Local Plans and subsequent updates, well in advance of the legislation being brought into force. This will support standardisation of Local Plans across the country. The text-based component of plans should be limited to spatially-specific matters and capable of being accessible in a range of different formats, including through simple digital services on a smartphone.
- 2.44. To support open access to planning documents and improve public engagement in the plan-making process, plans should be fully digitised and web-based following agreed web standards rather than document based. This will allow for any updates to be published instantaneously and makes it easier to share across all parties and the wider public. Those digital plans should be carefully designed with the user in mind and to ensure inclusivity, so that they can be accessed in different formats, on different devices, and are accessible and understandable by all. Geospatial information associated with plans, such as sites and areas, should also be standardised and made openly available online. Taken together, these changes will enable a digital register of planning policies to be created so that new digital services can be built using this data, and this will also enable any existing or future mapping platforms to access and visualise Local Plans. This will make it easier for anyone to identify what can be built where. The data will be accessed by software used across the public sector and also by external PropTech entrepreneurs to improve transparency, decision-making and productivity in the sector. There should also be a long-term aim for any data produced to support Local Plans to be open and accessible online in machine-readable format and linked to the relevant policies and areas.
- 2.45. By shifting plan-making processes from documents to data, new digital civic engagement processes will be enabled. making it easier for people to understand what is being proposed where and how it will affect them. These tools have the potential to transform how communities engage with Local Plans, opening up new ways for people to feed their views into the system, including through social networks and via mobile phones. Early pilots from local planning authorities using emerging digital civic engagement tools have shown increased public participation from a broader audience, with one PropTech SME reporting that 70% of their users are under the age of 45¹².

¹² For more information see <https://www.commonplace.is/>

- 2.46. To encourage this step-change, we want to support local authorities to radically rethink how they produce their Local Plans, and profoundly re-invent the ambition, depth and breadth with which they engage with communities. We will set up a series of pilots to work with local authorities and tech companies (the emerging ‘PropTech’ sector) to develop innovative solutions to support plan-making activities and make community involvement more accessible and engaging. This could include measures to improve access to live information and data or the use of 3D visualisations and other tools to support good community engagement.

Question

11. Do you agree with our proposals for accessible, web-based Local Plans?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

A STREAMLINED, MORE ENGAGING PLAN-MAKING PROCESS

- 2.47. The average time taken from plan publication to adoption rose from an average of 450 days in 2009 to 815 days in 2019. There is currently no statutory requirement around timescales for key stages of the plan-making process.

Proposal 8: Local authorities and the Planning Inspectorate will be required through legislation to meet a statutory timetable for key stages of the process, and we will consider what sanctions there would be for those who fail to do so.

- 2.48. Under the current system, it regularly takes over a decade for development sites to go through the Local Plan process and receive outline permission. Under our proposals, this would be shortened to 30 months, although we expect many local authorities could do this in a shorter time and we would encourage them to do so where this is practicable. We propose that the process covers five stages, with meaningful public engagement at two stages:
- Stage 1 [6 months]: The local planning authority “calls for” suggestions for areas under the three categories, including comprehensive “best in class” ways of achieving public involvement at this plan-shaping stage for where development should go and what it should look like.
 - Stage 2 [12 months]: The local planning authority draws up its proposed Local Plan, and produces any necessary evidence to inform and justify the plan. “Higher-risk” authorities will receive mandatory Planning Inspectorate advisory visits, in order to ensure the plan is on track prior to submission.
 - Stage 3 [6 weeks]: The local planning authority simultaneously
 - (i) submits the Plan to the Secretary of State for Examination together with a Statement of Reasons to explain why it has drawn up its plan as it has; and
 - (ii) publicises the plan for the public to comment on. Comments seeking change must explain how the plan should be changed and why. Again, this process would embody ‘best in class’ ways of ensuring public involvement. Responses will have a word count limit.
 - Stage 4 [9 months]: A planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State considers whether the three categories shown in the proposed Local Plan are

“sustainable” as per the statutory test and accompanying national guidance and makes binding changes which are necessary to satisfy the test. The plan-making authority and all those who submitted comments would have the right to be “heard” by the inspector (whether face to face, by video, phone or in writing – all at the inspector’s discretion). The inspector’s report can, as relevant, simply state agreement with the whole or parts of the council’s Statement of Reasons, and/or comments submitted by the public.

- Stage 5 [6 weeks]: Local Plan map, key and text are finalised, and come into force.
- 2.49. Taken together, the effect of these reforms would be to greatly simplify and shorten the plan-making and development process, ensuring more land comes through the system and does so at pace.
- 2.50. To support the transition to the new system, we propose a statutory duty for local authorities to adopt a new Local Plan by a specified date – either 30 months from the legislation being brought into force, or 42 months for local planning authorities who have adopted a Local Plan within the previous three years or where a Local Plan has been submitted to the Secretary of State for examination. In the latter case, the 42 month period would commence from the point at which the legislation is brought into force, or upon adoption of the most recent plan, whichever is later.
- 2.51. This should be accompanied by a requirement for each planning authority to review its Local Plan at least every five years. Reviews should be undertaken sooner than five years where there has been a significant change in circumstances, for instance where issues with land supply have been identified through regular monitoring. Where a review concludes that an update is required, then the same 30-month deadline would apply although there would be an expectation that in many cases an update could be completed more quickly.
- 2.52. Local planning authorities that fail to do what is required to get their plan in place, or keep it up to date, would be at risk of government intervention. A range of intervention options will be available, including the issuing of directions and preparation of a plan in consultation with local people. Decisions on intervention would also have regard to:
- the level of housing requirement in the area;
 - the planning context of the area, including any co-operation to get plans in place across local planning authority boundaries;
 - any exceptional circumstances presented by the local planning authority.
- 2.53. **Alternative options:** The existing examination process could be reformed in order to speed up the process. For instance, the automatic ‘right to be heard’ could be removed so that participants are invited to appear at hearings at the discretion of the inspector. Certain Local Plans, that are less complex or controversial, could also be examined through written representations only, as is usually the case with Neighbourhood Plans at present.
- 2.54. A further alternative could be to remove the Examination stage entirely, instead requiring Local Planning Authorities to undertake a process of self-assessment against set criteria and guidance. To supplement this, the Planning Inspectorate could be utilised to audit a certain number of completed plans each year in order to

assess whether the requirements of the statutory sustainability test had been met. However, there is a risk that this option wouldn't provide sufficient scrutiny around whether plans meet the necessary legal and policy tests.

Question

12. Do you agree with our proposals for a 30 month statutory timescale for the production of Local Plans?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 9: Neighbourhood Plans should be retained as an important means of community input, and we will support communities to make better use of digital tools

- 2.55. Since statutory Neighbourhood Plans became part of the system in 2011, over 2,600 communities have started the process of neighbourhood planning to take advantage of the opportunity to prepare a plan for their own areas – and over 1,000 plans have been successfully passed at referendum. They have become an important tool in helping to 'bring the democracy forward' in planning, by allowing communities to think proactively about how they would like their areas to develop.
- 2.56. Therefore, we think Neighbourhood Plans should be retained in the reformed planning system, but we will want to consider whether their content should become more focused to reflect our proposals for Local Plans, as well as the opportunities which digital tools and data offer to support their development and improve accessibility for users. By making it easier to develop Neighbourhood Plans we wish to encourage their continued use and indeed to help spread their use further, particularly in towns and cities. We are also interested in whether there is scope to extend and adapt the concept so that very small areas – such as individual streets – can set their own rules for the form of development which they are happy to see.
- 2.57. Digital tools have significant potential to assist the process of Neighbourhood Plan production, including through new digital co-creation platforms and 3D visualisation technologies to explore proposals within the local context. We will develop pilot projects and data standards which help neighbourhood planning groups make the most of this potential.

Questions

13(a). Do you agree that Neighbourhood Plans should be retained in the reformed planning system?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

13(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?

SPEEDING UP THE DELIVERY OF DEVELOPMENT

- 2.58. Our plans for a simpler and faster planning process need to be accompanied by a stronger emphasis on the faster delivery of development, especially for *Growth* areas where substantial development has been permitted. If local communities

through the new Local Plan process have identified sites for substantial development over the next ten years and developers have secured planning consents, there should be a presumption that these sites will be built out quickly. But as Rt. Hon. Sir Oliver Letwin found in his Independent Review of Build Out Rates in 2018, the build out of large residential developments can be slow due to low market absorption rates, with some sites taking over 20 years to complete.

Proposal 10: A stronger emphasis on build out through planning

2.59. To address this, we propose to make it clear in the revised National Planning Policy Framework that the masterplans and design codes for sites prepared for substantial development (discussed under Pillar Two) should seek to include a variety of development types by different builders which allow more phases to come forward together. We will explore further options to support faster build out as we develop our proposals for the new planning system.

Question

14. Do you agree there should be a stronger emphasis on the build out of developments? And if so, what further measures would you support?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Pillar Two – Planning for beautiful and sustainable places

Overview

- 3.1. We have set out how a simpler planning process could improve certainty about what can be built where, as well as offering greater flexibility in the use of land to meet our changing economic and social needs. But improving the process of planning is only the starting point – we want to ensure that we have a system in place that enables the creation of beautiful places that will stand the test of time, protects and enhances our precious environment, and supports our efforts to combat climate change and bring greenhouse gas emissions to net-zero by 2050. Recent research from the Royal Town Planning Institute has set out the vital contribution that planning can make to a sustainable and inclusive recovery.¹³
- 3.2. To do this, planning should be a powerful tool for creating visions of how places can be, engaging communities in that process and fostering high quality development: not just beautiful buildings, but the gardens, parks and other green spaces in between, as well as the facilities which are essential for building a real sense of community. It should generate net gains for the quality of our built and natural environments - not just ‘no net harm’.
- 3.3. As the report of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission has shown, all too often that potential has fallen short. Too many places built during recent decades fail to reflect what is special about their local area or create a high quality environment of which local people can be proud. The Commission has played an invaluable role not just in highlighting the deficiencies, but in setting out a wide range of recommendations for addressing them. We will respond fully to the Commission’s report in the autumn, but there are important aspects that we want to highlight now, as being integral to our proposals for what a revised planning system can achieve.

Questions

15. What do you think about the design of new development that has happened recently in your area?

[Not sure or indifferent / Beautiful and/or well-designed / Ugly and/or poorly-designed / There hasn't been any / Other – please specify]

16. Sustainability is at the heart of our proposals. What is your priority for sustainability in your area?

[Less reliance on cars / More green and open spaces / Energy efficiency of new buildings / More trees / Other – please specify]

¹³ RTPI (2020) “Plan the world we need: The contribution of planning to a sustainable, resilient and inclusive recovery”, available at: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/research/2020/june/plan-the-world-we-need/>.

Proposals

CREATING FRAMEWORKS FOR QUALITY

- 3.4. To deliver our vision, it is important for the planning system to set clear expectations for the form of development which we expect to see in different locations. It should do so in ways which reflect local character and community preferences, and the types of buildings and places that have stood the test of time; but it should also address modern lifestyles, facilitate modern methods of construction (and its associated benefits for efficiency, build quality and the environment) and the need to create places that are both durable and sustainable. History provides many examples of how we can do this well – including Georgian terraces and Victorian mansion blocks – and we should learn from what has worked in the past.
- 3.5. Our National Design Guide, published in October last year, illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. It is a vital starting point, defining ten characteristics of successful places and the ingredients which can deliver these. However, to provide as much clarity as possible for applicants and communities and provide the basis for ‘fast-tracking’ decisions on design, broad principles need to be turned into more specific standards.
- 3.6. To address this challenge, this autumn we will publish a National Model Design Code to supplement the guide, setting out more detailed parameters for development in different types of location: issues such as the arrangement and proportions of streets and urban blocks, positioning and hierarchy of public spaces, successful parking arrangements, placement of street trees, and high quality cycling and walking provision, in line with our wider vision for cycling and walking in England.¹⁴ It will be accompanied by worked examples, and complement a revised and consolidated Manual for Streets.

Proposal 11: To make design expectations more visual and predictable, we will expect design guidance and codes to be prepared locally with community involvement, and ensure that codes are more binding on decisions about development.

- 3.7. As national guidance, we will expect the National Design Guide, National Model Design Code and the revised Manual for Streets to have a direct bearing on the design of new communities. But to ensure that schemes reflect the diverse character of our country, as well as what is provably popular locally, it is important that local guides and codes are prepared wherever possible. These play the vital role of translating the basic characteristics of good places into what works locally, and can already be brought forward in a number of ways: by local planning authorities to supplement and add a visual dimension to their Local Plans; through the work of neighbourhood planning groups; or by applicants in bringing forward proposals for significant new areas of development.

¹⁴ Our plan for cycling and walking is available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england>.

- 3.8. We propose that these different routes for bringing forward design guides and codes should remain, although in all cases it will be essential that they are prepared with effective inputs from the local community, considering empirical evidence of what is popular and characteristic in the local area. To underpin the importance of this, we intend to make clear that designs and codes should only be given weight in the planning process if they can demonstrate that this input has been secured. And, where this is the case, we will also make clear that decisions on design should be made in line with these documents. Where locally-produced guides and codes are not in place, we also propose to make clear in policy that the National Design Guide, National Model Design Code and Manual for Streets should guide decisions on the form of development.

Question

17. Do you agree with our proposals for improving the production and use of design guides and codes?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

- 3.9. The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission recommended several other changes to the National Planning Policy Framework that can support the planning system's role in fostering better buildings, places and settlements, and we will consult on changes which reflect these recommendations in the autumn.

Proposal 12: To support the transition to a planning system which is more visual and rooted in local preferences and character, we will set up a body to support the delivery of provably locally-popular design codes, and propose that each authority should have a chief officer for design and place-making.

- 3.10. The vision which we have set out will require a step-change in the design skills available to many local planning authorities, as well as the right prioritisation and leadership across the sector. We recognise that this will not happen overnight, and that authorities will need support.
- 3.11. We will explore the options for establishing a new expert body which can help authorities make effective use of design guidance and codes, as well as performing a wider monitoring and challenge role for the sector in building better places. Different models exist for how this could be taken forward - such as a new arms-length body reporting to Government, a new centre of expertise within Homes England, or reinforcing the existing network of architecture and design centres. Whatever model is adopted, we envisage that it would be able to draw on the expertise of recognised experts with a range of skills, drawn from across the built environment sector. Should the final proposals lead to the creation of new central government arm's-length body, then the usual, separate government approval process would apply for such entities.
- 3.12. We will also bring forward proposals later this year for improving the resourcing of planning departments more broadly; and our suggestions in this paper for streamlining plan-making will allow some re-focusing of professional skills. However, effective leadership within authorities will also be crucial. To drive a strong vision for what each place aspires to, and ensure this is integrated across council functions, we believe that each authority should appoint a chief officer for

design and place-making, as recommended by the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission.

Question

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?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 13: To further embed national leadership on delivering better places, we will consider how Homes England’s strategic objectives can give greater emphasis to delivering beautiful places.

- 3.13. We are committed to taking a leadership role in the delivery of beautiful and well-designed homes and places, which embed high environmental standards. The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission recommended that Homes England should attach sufficient value to design as well as price, and give greater weight to design quality in its work.
- 3.14. The Government supports this recommendation and recognises that the work of Homes England is an important route through which we can lead by example. Homes England have already taken steps to champion design quality in their land disposals programme, through implementation of a design quality assessment approach, with a minimum standard which must be achieved for a proposal to progress.
- 3.15. However, we recognise that there is an opportunity to go further, and we will engage Homes England, as part of the forthcoming Spending Review process, to consider how its objectives might be strengthened to give greater weight to design quality, and assess how design quality and environmental standards can be more deeply embedded in all Homes England’s activities and programmes of work.

Question

19. Do you agree with our proposal to consider how design might be given greater emphasis in the strategic objectives for Homes England?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

A FAST-TRACK FOR BEAUTY

- 3.16. One of the important propositions of the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission is that there should be a ‘fast-track for beauty’. Where proposals come forward which comply with pre-established principles of what good design looks like (informed by community preferences), then it should be possible to expedite development through the planning process. This should incentivise attractive and popular development, as well as helping to relieve pressure on planning authorities when assessing proposals.

Proposal 14: We intend to introduce a fast-track for beauty through changes to national policy and legislation, to incentivise and accelerate high quality development which reflects local character and preferences.

- 3.17. We propose to do this in three ways. In the first instance, through updating the National Planning Policy Framework, we will make clear that schemes which comply with local design guides and codes have a positive advantage and greater certainty about their prospects of swift approval.
- 3.18. Second, where plans identify areas for significant development (*Growth* areas), we will legislate to require that a masterplan and site-specific code are agreed as a condition of the permission in principle which is granted through the plan. This should be in place prior to detailed proposals coming forward, to direct and expedite those detailed matters. These masterplans and codes could be prepared by the local planning authority alongside or subsequent to preparing its plan, at a level of detail commensurate with the size of site and key principles to be established. For example, a set of simple 'co-ordinating codes' of the sort endorsed by the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission could set some initial key parameters for the site layout. Where sites are expected to come forward in the near future, more developed masterplans or codes, prepared by the local planning authority or site promoter, will provide greater certainty.
- 3.19. Third, we also propose to legislate to widen and change the nature of permitted development, so that it enables popular and replicable forms of development to be approved easily and quickly, helping to support 'gentle intensification' of our towns and cities, but in accordance with important design principles. There is a long history – in this country and elsewhere – of 'pattern books' being used to articulate standard building types, options and associated rules (such as heights and set-backs). They have helped to deliver some of our most popular and successful places, and in a way which makes it relatively easy for smaller development companies to enter the market. We want to revive this tradition, in areas suitable for development (*Renewal* areas), by allowing the pre-approval of popular and replicable designs through permitted development. The benefits are much more than fast delivery of proven popular designs – it will foster innovation and support industrialisation of housebuilding, enabling modern methods of construction to be developed and deployed at scale.
- 3.20. To take this approach forward, we intend to develop a limited set of form-based development types that allow the redevelopment of existing residential buildings where the relevant conditions are satisfied – enabling increased densities while maintaining visual harmony in a range of common development settings (such as semi-detached suburban development). These would benefit from permitted development rights relating to the settings in which they apply. Prior approval from the local planning authority would still be needed for aspects of the design to ensure the development is right for its context (such as materials), as well as for other important planning considerations such as avoidance of flood risk and securing safe access. To enable further tailoring of these patterns to local character and preferences, we also propose that local planning authorities or neighbourhood planning groups would be able to use local orders to modify how the standard types apply in their areas, based on local evidence of what options are most popular with the wider public.

- 3.21. This proposal will require some technical development and testing, so we will develop a pilot programme to test the concept. Where we are taking forward existing schemes to expand the scope of permitted development through upwards extensions and demolition/rebuilding, we also intend to legislate so that prior approval for exercising such rights takes into account design codes which are in place locally (or, in the absence of these, the National Model Design Code).

Question

20. Do you agree with our proposals for implementing a fast-track for beauty?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

EFFECTIVE STEWARDSHIP AND ENHANCEMENT OF OUR NATURAL AND HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT

- 3.22. The reformed planning system will continue to protect the places of environmental and cultural value which matter to us. Plans will still play a vital role in identifying not just areas of defined national and international importance (such as National Parks and Sites of Special Scientific Interest), but also those which are valued and defined locally (such as Conservation Areas and Local Wildlife Sites).
- 3.23. However, the planning system can and should do much more than this. In line with the ambitions in our 25 Year Environment Plan, we want the reformed system to play a proactive role in promoting environmental recovery and long-term sustainability. In doing so, it needs to play a strong part in our efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change and reduce pollution as well as making our towns and cities more liveable through enabling more and better green spaces and tree cover. Several initiatives are already laying the foundations for this. Nationally, the Environment Bill currently before Parliament will legislate for mandatory net gains for biodiversity as a condition of most new development. And the Local Nature Recovery Strategies which it will also introduce will identify opportunities to secure enhancements through development schemes and contributions. We will also deliver our commitment to make all new streets tree-lined, by setting clear expectations through the changes to the National Planning Policy Framework which will be consulted on in the autumn, and informed by the outcome of this summer's consultation on the England Tree Strategy.¹⁵ And we are also assessing the extent to which our planning policies and processes for managing flood risk may need to be strengthened along with developing a national framework of green infrastructure standards.
- 3.24. Once the proposals in this paper for reformed Local Plans begin to be implemented, it will be important for authorities to consider how the identification of different categories of land, and any sub-areas within them, can most effectively support climate change mitigation and adaptation. For example, in identifying land for inclusion within the *Growth* area, or the densities of development appropriate in different locations, the ability to maximise walking, cycling and public transport opportunities will be an important consideration.

¹⁵ To give your views on the England Tree Strategy, please visit <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/forestry/england-tree-strategy/>.

Proposal 15: We intend to amend the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that it targets those areas where a reformed planning system can most effectively play a role in mitigating and adapting to climate change and maximising environmental benefits.

- 3.25. These measures, and reform of our policy framework, provide important opportunities to strengthen the way that environmental issues are considered through the planning system. However, we also think there is scope to marry these changes with a simpler, effective approach to assessing environmental impacts.
- 3.26. In doing so, we will want to be clear about the role that local, spatially-specific policies can continue to play, such as in identifying important views, opportunities to improve public access or places where renewable energy or woodland and forestry creation could be accommodated. In reviewing the Framework, we will also want to ensure that it provides a clear and robust basis for development management decisions more generally, so that reliance no longer needs to be placed on generic policies contained in Local Plans.

Proposal 16: We intend to design a quicker, simpler framework for assessing environmental impacts and enhancement opportunities, that speeds up the process while protecting and enhancing the most valuable and important habitats and species in England.

- 3.27. It is vital that environmental considerations are considered properly as part of the planning and development process. However, the current frameworks for doing so – which include Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal, and Environmental Impact Assessment – can lead to duplication of effort and overly-long reports which inhibit transparency and add unnecessary delays. Outside of the European Union, it is also important that we take the opportunity to strengthen protections that make the biggest difference to species, habitats and ecosystems of national importance, and that matter the most to local communities.
- 3.28. To succeed, a new system will need to meet several objectives:
- Processes for environmental assessment and mitigation need to be quicker and speed up decision-making and the delivery of development projects. The environmental aspects of a plan or project should be considered early in the process, and to clear timescales. National and local level data, made available to authorities, communities and applicants in digital form, should make it easier to re-use and update information and reduce the need for site-specific surveys.
 - Requirements for environmental assessment and mitigation need to be simpler to understand and consolidated in one place so far as possible, so that the same impacts and opportunities do not need to be considered twice.
 - Any new system will need to ensure that we take advantage of opportunities for environmental improvements while also meeting our domestic and international obligations for environmental protection. This will be the subject of a separate and more detailed consultation in the autumn.

Proposal 17: Conserving and enhancing our historic buildings and areas in the 21st century

- 3.29. The planning system has played a critical role ensuring the historic buildings and areas we cherish are conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced by development. The additional statutory protections of listed building consent and conservation area status have worked well, and the National Planning Policy Framework already sets out strong protections for heritage assets where planning permission or listed building consent is needed. We want to build on this framework as we develop the new planning system. We envisage that Local Plans will clearly identify the location of internationally, nationally and locally designated heritage assets, such as World Heritage Sites and conservation areas, as well locally important features such as protected views.
- 3.30. We also want to ensure our historic buildings play a central part in the renewal of our cities, towns and villages. Many will need to be adapted to changing uses and to respond to new challenges, such as mitigating and adapting to climate change. We particularly want to see more historical buildings have the right energy efficiency measures to support our zero carbon objectives. Key to this will be ensuring the planning consent framework is sufficiently responsive to sympathetic changes, and timely and informed decisions are made.
- 3.31. We will, therefore, review and update the planning framework for listed buildings and conservation areas, to ensure their significance is conserved while allowing, where appropriate, sympathetic changes to support their continued use and address climate change. In doing so, we want to explore whether there are new and better ways of securing consent for routine works, to enable local planning authorities to concentrate on conserving and enhancing the most important historic buildings. This includes exploring whether suitably experienced architectural specialists can have earned autonomy from routine listed building consents.

Proposal 18: To complement our planning reforms, we will facilitate ambitious improvements in the energy efficiency standards for buildings to help deliver our world-leading commitment to net-zero by 2050.

- 3.32. The planning system is only one of the tools that we need to use to mitigate and adapt to climate change. Last year we consulted on our proposals to move towards a Future Homes Standard, which was a first step towards net zero homes. From 2025, we expect new homes to produce 75-80 per cent lower CO₂ emissions compared to current levels. These homes will be 'zero carbon ready', with the ability to become fully zero carbon homes over time as the electricity grid decarbonises, without the need for further costly retrofitting work.
- 3.33. We welcome the Committee on Climate Change's response to the consultation and we have considered the points they raised. We will respond to the Future Homes Standard consultation in full in the autumn. As part of this, we intend to review the roadmap to the Future Homes Standard to ensure that implementation takes place to the shortest possible timeline. Our ambition is that homes built under our new planning system will not need retrofitting in the future. To work towards ensuring that all new homes are fit for a zero carbon future we will also explore options for the future of energy efficiency standards, beyond 2025.

- 3.34. All levels of Government have a role to play in meeting our net zero goal, and Local Authorities are rising to this challenge. Local Planning Authorities, as well as central Government, should be accountable for the actions that they are taking, and the consultation response will look to clarify the role that they can play in setting energy efficiency standards for new build developments.
- 3.35. We will also want to ensure that high standards for the design, environmental performance and safety of new and refurbished buildings are monitored and enforced. As local authorities are freed from many planning obligations through our reforms, they will be able to reassign resources and focus more fully on enforcement. Ensuring that planning standards and building regulations are met, whether for new homes or for retrofitting old homes, will help to ensure that we deliver homes that are fit for the future and cheaper to run.

Pillar Three – Planning for infrastructure and connected places

Overview

- 4.1. New development brings with it new demand for public services and infrastructure. Mitigating these impacts – by securing contributions from developers and capturing more land value uplift generated by planning decisions to deliver new infrastructure provision – is key for both new and existing communities. It is also central to our vision for renewal of the planning system.
- 4.2. At present, there are two broad routes for local planning authorities to secure developer contributions, both of which are discretionary for authorities: planning obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy. Planning obligations – through Section 106 agreements – are negotiated with developers, and in 2018/19 were worth a total of £7bn, of which £4.7bn was in the form of affordable housing contributions – supporting delivery of 30,000 affordable homes. In contrast, the Community Infrastructure Levy is a fixed charge, levied on the area (floorspace) of new development, and secures infrastructure that addresses the cumulative impact of development in an area. The Community Infrastructure Levy is not mandatory for local planning authorities, and around half of authorities currently charge it. Levy rates are discretionary, established by assessments of infrastructure need and viability.
- 4.3. There are several problems with this system. Planning obligations are broadly considered to be uncertain and opaque, as they are subject to negotiation and renegotiation based in part on the developer's assessment of viability. This creates uncertainty for communities about the level of affordable housing and infrastructure that development will bring. In turn, this brings cost, delay and inconsistency into the process. Over 80 per cent of local authorities agree that such negotiations create delay, despite the planning application being acceptable in principle.¹⁶ This acts as a barrier to entry to the market, and major developers are better placed to devote the legal and valuation resource needed to negotiate successfully. This unevenness is a problem too for local authorities, with significant variation in skill and negotiation in negotiating viability across authorities.
- 4.4. The Community Infrastructure Levy addresses many of these problems as it is a flat-rate and non-negotiable tariff, and developers and local authorities have, in general, welcomed the certainty it brings. However, as payment is set at the point planning permission is granted, and payment due once development commences, it is inflexible in the face of changing market conditions. Payment before a single home has been built increases the developer's risk and cost of finance, creating cashflow challenges which are more acute for smaller developers. And despite early payment, many local authorities have been slow to spend Community Infrastructure Levy revenue on early infrastructure delivery, reflecting factors

¹⁶ MHCLG (2019) *The Value and Incidence of Developer Contributions in England 2018/19*

including indecision, competing spending priorities, and uncertainty over other infrastructure funding streams.

- 4.5. Securing necessary infrastructure and affordable housing alongside new development is central to our vision for the planning system. We want to bring forward reforms to make sure that developer contributions are:
- responsive to local needs, to ensure a fairer contribution from developers for local communities so that the right infrastructure and affordable housing is delivered;
 - transparent, so it is clear to existing and new residents what new infrastructure will accompany development;
 - consistent and simplified, to remove unnecessary delay and support competition in the housebuilding industry;
 - buoyant, so that when prices go up the benefits are shared fairly between developers and the local community, and when prices go down there is no need to re-negotiate agreements.
- 4.6. The Government could also seek to use developer contributions to capture a greater proportion of the land value uplift that occurs through the grant of planning permission, and use this to enhance infrastructure delivery. There are a range of estimates for the amount of land value uplift currently captured, from 25 to 50 per cent¹⁷. The value captured will depend on a range of factors including the development value, the existing use value of the land, and the relevant tax structure – for instance, whether capital gains tax applies to the land sale. Increasing value capture could be an important source of infrastructure funding but would need to be balanced against risks to development viability.

Question

21. When new development happens in your area, what is your priority for what comes with it?

[More affordable housing / More or better infrastructure (such as transport, schools, health provision) / Design of new buildings / More shops and/or employment space / Green space / Don't know / Other – please specify]

Proposals

A CONSOLIDATED INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY

- 4.7. We propose that the existing parallel regimes for securing developer contributions are replaced with a new, consolidated 'Infrastructure Levy'.

Proposal 19: The Community Infrastructure Levy should be reformed to be charged as a fixed proportion of the development value above a threshold, with a mandatory nationally-set rate or rates and the current system of planning obligations abolished.

¹⁷ Estimates provided to the Housing, Communities and Local Government Select Committee Inquiry into Land Value Capture: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcomloc/766/766.pdf>

- 4.8. We believe that the current system of planning obligations under Section 106 should be consolidated under a reformed, extended 'Infrastructure Levy'.
- 4.9. This would be based upon a flat-rate, valued-based charge, set nationally, at either a single rate, or at area-specific rates. This would address issues in the current system as it would:
- be charged on the final value of a development (or to an assessment of the sales value where the development is not sold, e.g. for homes built for the rental market), based on the applicable rate at the point planning permission is granted;
 - be levied at point of occupation, with prevention of occupation being a potential sanction for non-payment;
 - include a value-based minimum threshold below which the levy is not charged, to prevent low viability development becoming unviable, reflecting average build costs per square metre, with a small, fixed allowance for land costs. Where the value of development is below the threshold, no Levy would be charged. Where the value of development is above the threshold, the Levy would only be charged on the proportion of the value that exceeded the threshold ; and
 - provide greater certainty for communities and developers about what the level of developer contributions are expected alongside new development.
- 4.10. The single rate, or area-specific rates, would be set nationally. It would aim to increase revenue levels nationally when compared to the current system. Revenues would continue to be collected and spent locally.
- 4.11. As a value-based charge across all use classes, we believe it would be both more effective at capturing increases in value and would be more sensitive to economic downturns. It would reduce risk for developers, and would reduce cashflow difficulties, particularly for SME developers.
- 4.12. In areas where land value uplift is insufficient to support significant levels of land value capture, some or all of the value generated by the development would be below the threshold, and so not subject to the levy. In higher value areas, a much greater proportion of the development value would be above the exempt amount, and subject to the levy.
- 4.13. To better support the timely delivery of infrastructure, we would also allow local authorities to borrow against Infrastructure Levy revenues so that they could forward fund infrastructure. Enabling borrowing combined with a shift to levying developer contributions on completion, would incentivise local authorities to deliver enabling infrastructure, in turn helping to ensure development can be completed faster. As with all volatile borrowing streams, local authorities should assure themselves that this borrowing is affordable and suitable.
- 4.14. Under this approach the London Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy, and similar strategic Community Infrastructure Levies in combined authorities, could be retained as part of the Infrastructure Levy to support the funding of strategic infrastructure.

- 4.15. In bringing forward the reformed Infrastructure Levy, we will need to consider its scope. We will also consider the impact of this change on areas with lower land values.
- 4.16. **Alternative option:** The Infrastructure Levy could remain optional and would be set by individual local authorities. However, as planning obligations would be consolidated into the single Infrastructure Levy, we anticipate that there would be a significantly greater uptake. The aim of the *de minimis* threshold would be to remove the viability risk, simplifying the rate setting process, as this would remove the need for multiple charging zones within an authority. It would be possible to simplify further – for instance, for the Government to set parameters. There would be a stronger incentive for local authorities to introduce the new Levy, as they would not be able to use Section 106 planning obligations to secure infrastructure or affordable housing. In addition, some local authorities have chosen not to introduce the Community Infrastructure Levy out of concern for the impact on viability of development. Because the new Infrastructure Levy would only be charged above a set threshold, these impacts would be mitigated.
- 4.17. This option would address issues around transparency, responsiveness to local needs and consistency. However, the Government’s levers over levels of land value capture would be less strong, with decisions about levy rates being taken at the local level.
- 4.18. Alternatively, the national rate approach could be taken, but with the aim of capturing more land value than currently, to better support the delivery of infrastructure. While developers would be liable for paying the levy, the cost of this would be capitalised into land value. This would ensure that the landowners who benefit from increases in value as a result of the grant of planning permission contribute to the infrastructure and affordable housing that makes development acceptable.

Questions

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?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

22(b). Should the Infrastructure Levy rates be set nationally at a single rate, set nationally at an area-specific rate, or set locally?

[Nationally at a single rate / Nationally at an area-specific rate / Locally]

22(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?

[Same amount overall / More value / Less value / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

22(d). Should we allow local authorities to borrow against the Infrastructure Levy, to support infrastructure delivery in their area?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 20: The scope of the Infrastructure Levy could be extended to capture changes of use through permitted development rights

- 4.19. In making this change to developer contributions for new development, the scope of the Infrastructure Levy would be extended to better capture changes of use which require planning permission, even where there is no additional floorspace, and for some permitted development rights including office to residential conversions and new demolition and rebuild permitted development rights. This approach would increase the levy base, and would allow these developments to better contribute to infrastructure delivery and making development acceptable to the community. However, we will maintain the exemption of self and custom-build development from the Infrastructure Levy.

Question

23. Do you agree that the scope of the reformed Infrastructure Levy should capture changes of use through permitted development rights?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 21: The reformed Infrastructure Levy should deliver affordable housing provision

- 4.20. Developer contributions currently deliver around half of all affordable housing, most of which is delivered on-site. It is important that the reformed approach will continue to deliver on-site affordable housing at least at present levels.
- 4.21. Affordable housing provision is currently secured by local authorities via Section 106, but the Community Infrastructure Levy cannot be spent on it. With Section 106 planning obligations removed, we propose that under the Infrastructure Levy, authorities would be able to use funds raised through the levy to secure affordable housing.
- 4.22. This could be secured through in-kind delivery on-site, which could be made mandatory where an authority has a requirement, capability and wishes to do so. Local authorities would have a means to specify the forms and tenures of the on-site provision, working with a nominated affordable housing provider. Under this approach, a provider of affordable housing could purchase the dwelling at a discount from market rate, as now. However, rather than the discount being secured through Section 106 planning obligations, it would instead be considered as in-kind delivery of the Infrastructure Levy. In effect, the difference between the price at which the unit was sold to the provider and the market price would be offset from the final cash liability to the Levy. This would create an incentive for the developer to build on-site affordable housing where appropriate.¹⁸ First Homes,

¹⁸ As above, a Section 106 planning obligation could still be used to secure a covenant on the land, where necessary. However, the value would be captured through the Infrastructure Levy, rather than Section 106.

which are sold by the developer direct to the customer at a discount to market price, would offset the discount against the cash liability.

- 4.23. Under this approach we recognise that some risk is transferring to the local planning authority, and that we would need to mitigate that risk in order to maintain existing levels of on-site affordable housing delivery. We believe that this risk can be fully addressed through policy design. In particular, in the event of a market fall, we could allow local planning authorities to ‘flip’ a proportion of units back to market units which the developer can sell, if Levy liabilities are insufficient to cover the value secured through in-kind contributions. Alternatively, we could require that if the value secured through in-kind units is greater than the final levy liability, then the developer has no right to reclaim overpayments. Government could provide standardised agreements, to codify how risk sharing would work in this way.
- 4.24. We would also need to ensure the developer was incentivised to deliver high build and design quality for their in-kind affordable homes. Currently, if Section 106 homes are not of sufficient quality, developers may be unable to sell it to a provider, or have to reduce the price. To ensure developers are not rewarded for low-standard homes under the Levy, local authorities could have an option to revert back to cash contributions if no provider was willing to buy the homes due to their poor quality. It is important that any approach taken maintains the quality of affordable housing provision as well as overarching volumes, and incentivises early engagement between providers of affordable housing and developers. Local authorities could also accept Infrastructure Levy payments in the form of land within or adjacent to a site. Through borrowing against further Infrastructure Levy receipts, other sources of funding, or in partnership with affordable housing providers, they could then build affordable homes, enabling delivery at pace.
- 4.25. **Alternative option:** We could seek to introduce further requirements around the delivery of affordable housing. To do this we would create a ‘first refusal’ right for local authorities or any affordable housing provider acting on their behalf to buy up to a set proportion of on-site units (on a square metre basis) at a discounted price, broadly equivalent to build costs. The proportion would be set nationally, and the developer would have discretion over which units were sold in this way. A threshold would be set for smaller sites, below which on-site delivery was not required, and cash payment could be made in lieu. Where on-site units were purchased, these could be used for affordable housing, or sold on (or back to the developer) to raise money to purchase affordable housing elsewhere. The local authority could use Infrastructure Levy funds, or other funds, in order to purchase units.

Questions

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?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

24(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?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

24(c). If an in-kind delivery approach is taken, should we mitigate against local authority overpayment risk?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

24(d). If an in-kind delivery approach is taken, are there additional steps that would need to be taken to support affordable housing quality?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Proposal 22: More freedom could be given to local authorities over how they spend the Infrastructure Levy

4.26. It is important that there is a strong link between where development occurs and where funding is spent. Currently, the Neighbourhood Share of the Community Infrastructure Levy ensures that up to 25 per cent of the levy is spent on priorities in the area that development occurred, with funding transferred to parish councils in parished areas. There are fewer restrictions on how this funding is spent, and we believe it provides an important incentive to local communities to allow development in their area. We therefore propose that under this approach the Neighbourhood Share would be kept, and we would be interested in ways to enhance community engagement around how these funds are used, with scope for digital innovation to promote engagement.

4.27. There is scope for even more flexibility around spending. We could also increase local authority flexibility, allowing them to spend receipts on their policy priorities, once core infrastructure obligations have been met. In addition to the provision of local infrastructure, including parks, open spaces, street trees and delivery or enhancement of community facilities, this could include improving services or reducing council tax. The balance of affordable housing and infrastructure may vary depending on a local authority's circumstances, but under this approach it may be necessary to consider ring-fencing a certain amount of Levy funding for affordable housing to ensure that affordable housing continues to be delivered on-site at current levels (or higher). There would also be opportunities to enhance digital engagement with communities as part of decision making around spending priorities. Alternatively, the permitted uses of the Levy could remain focused on infrastructure and affordable housing, as they are broadly are at present. Local authorities would continue to identify the right balance between these to meet local needs, as they do at present.

Question

25. Should local authorities have fewer restrictions over how they spend the Infrastructure Levy?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

25(a). If yes, should an affordable housing 'ring-fence' be developed?

[Yes / No / Not sure. Please provide supporting statement.]

Delivering change

How we move into the new system

- 5.1. It is important that in bringing forward reform to improve the operation of the planning system, we do not cause delays to development that is currently planned.
- 5.2. Subject to responses to this consultation, we will consider the arrangements for implementing these changes to minimise disruption to existing plans and development proposals and ensure a smooth transition. This includes making sure that recently approved plans, existing permissions and any associated planning obligations can continue to be implemented as intended; and that there are clear transitional arrangements for bringing forward new plans and development proposals as the new system begins to be implemented.
- 5.3. Nevertheless, we do want to make rapid progress toward this new planning system. We are already introducing a new Use Class Order, with associated permitted development rights, to make easier for businesses to change use without the need for planning permission to support our high streets and town centres bounce back following the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also created new permitted development rights to enable more new homes to be built on top of buildings and the demolition and rebuild of vacant buildings for housing, without the need for usual planning permission.
- 5.4. Today, we are also publishing a consultation on four shorter-term measures which will improve the immediate effectiveness of the current system:
 - changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need, which as well as being a proposal to change guidance in the short term has relevance to proposals for land supply reforms set out in this paper;
 - securing of First Homes, sold at a discount to market price for first time buyers, including key workers, through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system;
 - temporarily lifting the small sites threshold, below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing, to up to 40 or 50 units;
 - extending the current Permission in Principle to major development so landowners and developers now have a fast route to secure the principle of development for housing on sites without having to work up detailed plans first;
- 5.5. This consultation document can be found at:
www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system
- 5.6. To provide better information to local communities, to promote competition amongst developers, and to assist SMEs and new entrants to the sector, we will consult on options for improving the data held on contractual arrangements used to control land. This can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transparency-and-competition-a-call-for-evidence-on-data-on-land-control

Public assets and investment

5.7. As we fix our planning system, we also want to make better use of surplus land owned by the public sector, and to level up public investment in development to support renewal of towns and cities across the country, giving power to communities to shape its future use and bringing investment to places across the country. We will do this by:

-
- **Ensuring investment in new public buildings supports renewal and regeneration of town and city centres across the country.** The Government Estate Strategy (GES), which was published in 2018, sets out how we will use the estate as an enabler to deliver better outcomes for the public, across all four nations of the UK. As part of this, the Government Hubs programme aims to transform the Government's office estate by accommodating departmental workforces in shared regional hubs and supporting office estate – creating strategic hubs across the UK in major city centre conurbations and in secondary towns and cities. We will continue to look at how the Government can ensure investment in its estate delivers wider benefits for places across the country.
- **Exploring how disposal of publicly-owned land can support the SME and self-build sectors.** As announced by the Prime Minister last month in 'A New Deal for Britain', the Government will produce a new cross-government strategy on how land owned by the Government can be managed and released more effectively and put to better use. As part of this review, we will explore how we can support SME housebuilders, community land trusts and self-builders to identify public land opportunities.

Supporting innovation in delivery

5.8. As we bring forward planning reform, we also want to ensure we have in place the right delivery mechanisms, including development corporations. A good example that we are already progressing is development at Toton in the East Midlands, where we have announced our intention to support the establishment of a development corporation to maximise the area's international links and create tens of thousands of new homes and jobs. We want to see more schemes of this kind, backed by modern delivery models, around the country.

5.9. That is why we consulted at the end of last year on changes to the legislative framework for development corporations. This includes exploring whether we need to make changes to enable more flexible development corporation models that can drive housing, regeneration and employment. We are currently considering responses to the consultation and will respond to it shortly.

Making sure the system has the right people and skills

5.10. Local planning authorities remain at the heart of our ambitious reforms. We want to free up planners to focus on what they were trained for – creating great communities through world-class civic engagement and proactive plan-making, rather than reactive development management.

5.11. We recognise that local planning departments need to have the right people with the right skills, as well as the necessary resources, to implement these reforms

successfully. Many local authorities are delivering great services, and through the COVID-19 pandemic have been able to transform the way they work to a more digital and modern service. We look forward to seeing evaluations and lessons learned so that we can use this as a catalyst for modernisation of our planning services.

- 5.12. But we know that local authority planning departments are under great pressure – with spending per person on planning and development down 60 per cent and shortages of specialist skills such as design and ecology.¹⁹ And the technology in local planning authorities to support modern services is not there – whilst PropTech firms are developing new apps and other digital services that enable communities to engage with development in new ways, in few places can this be captured by the local authority. Instead, documents are submitted electronically, but not in the way of modern digital services such as those now supporting tax services.
- 5.13. The preparation of reformed Local Plans, development of new design codes, a major overhaul of development contributions, and a new streamlined approach to decision-making will have profound implications for how local planning authorities operate in future. They will need to have sufficient leadership, a strong cadre of professional planners and good access to technical expertise, as well as transformed systems which utilise the latest digital technology. But equally importantly, there must be a fundamental cultural change on how planning departments operate. They need to be more outward looking, proactively engaging with developers, businesses, architects and designers, as well as a wider cross-section of their local communities.
- 5.14. In particular, we envisage the focus of local planning authorities shifting towards the development of clear Local Plans and high-quality design codes which set the parameters for development – rather than making discretionary decisions based on vague policies. In doing so, there is a real opportunity for planners to redesign their individual roles and change perceptions of their profession. We will consider how best to support the planning profession in making this adjustment, in a way which supports culture change, improves recruitment and changes perceptions of planning.
- 5.15. In addition, other key players, including the Planning Inspectorate and statutory consultees, will have to transform the way they operate in response to these reforms, given their critical role supporting the preparation of Local Plans and decision-making. They too will need to be more responsive and outward looking, and have the necessary skills and resources to undertake their new roles.
- 5.16. We understand why many participants – not just local authorities, but statutory consultees and the Planning Inspectorate – are risk averse. Judicial review is expensive, and to lose a judicial review in the courts is bad for the reputation of either. And judicial reviews can be precedent setting, establishing a new interpretation of the law. We think the proposals set out in the document should remove the risk of judicial review substantially. Most judicial reviews are about imprecise and unclearly worded policies or law. Our plans for an overhaul of

¹⁹ Institute for Fiscal Studies (2019) “English local government funding: trends and challenges in 2019 and beyond”, <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/English-local-government-funding-trends-and-challenges-in-2019-and-beyond-IFS-Report-166.pdf>

planning law to create simple and clear processes and for plans that set out clear requirements and standards will substantially remove the scope for ambiguity and therefore challenge.

Proposal 23: As we develop our final proposals for this new planning system, we will develop a comprehensive resources and skills strategy for the planning sector to support the implementation of our reforms. In doing so, we propose this strategy will be developed including the following key elements:

- 5.17. The cost of operating the new planning system should be principally funded by the beneficiaries of planning gain – landowners and developers – rather than the national or local taxpayer. Currently, the cost of development management activities by local planning authorities is to a large extent covered by planning fees, although the current fee structure means the cost of processing some applications can be significantly greater than their individual fee. However, the cost of preparing Local Plans and enforcement activities is now largely funded from the local planning authority's own resources.
- 5.18. Planning fees should continue to be set on a national basis and cover at least the full cost of processing the application type based on clear national benchmarking. This should involve the greater regulation of discretionary pre-application charging to ensure it is fair and proportionate.
- 5.19. If a new approach to development contributions is implemented, a small proportion of the income should be earmarked to local planning authorities to cover their overall planning costs, including the preparation and review of Local Plans and design codes and enforcement activities.
- 5.20. Reform should be accompanied by a deep dive regulatory review to identify and eliminate outdated regulations which increase costs for local planning authorities, especially to the decision-making process.
- 5.21. Some local planning activities should still be funded through general taxation given the public benefits from good planning, and time limited funding will be made available by the Government in line with the new burdens principle to support local planning authorities to transition to the new planning system as part of the next Spending Review.
- 5.22. Local planning authorities should be subject to a new performance framework which ensures continuous improvement across all planning functions from Local Plans to decision-making and enforcement – and enables early intervention if problems emerge with individual authorities.
- 5.23. The Planning Inspectorate and statutory consultees should become more self-financing through new charging mechanisms and be subject to new performance targets to improve their performance.
- 5.24. Workforce planning and skills development, including training, should be principally for the local government sector to lead on, working closely with Government, statutory consultees, planning consultancies and universities.
- 5.25. Reform should be accompanied by a significant enhancement in digital and geospatial capability and capacity across the planning sector to support high-quality new digital Local Plans and digitally enabled decision-making. We think the English

planning profession has the potential to become an international world-leader in digital planning, capable of exporting world class planning services around the world.

- 5.26. In developing this strategy, we recognise different local planning authorities face different pressures and issues, and it will be important to develop a resourcing and skills framework which works for all authorities across the country. We will work with local planning authorities, professional bodies and the wider planning sector to ensure views about implementation are considered. We would particularly want to see innovative solutions which can transform practice.
- 5.27. At the same time, we also want to enable a thriving PropTech sector. By unlocking the data that underpins the planning system so that it is open, we want to enable the PropTech sector to transform housing, land, and planning industries with innovative products that are interoperable with others. This will make use of process improvement insights and data to offer services for many different clients, including for improved public consultation opportunities for citizens and developers to identify sites on which to build, helping to reduce investment risks. We will continue to engage with the innovators and the UK PropTech sector through a Minister-led PropTech Innovation Council (announced in November 2019) to make the most of innovative new approaches to meet public policy objectives, help this emerging sector to boost productivity in the wider planning and housing sectors, and ensure government data and decisions support the sector's growth in the UK and internationally.

Stronger enforcement

- 5.28. As part of the implementation of our planning reforms, we want to see local planning authorities place more emphasis on the enforcement of planning standards and decisions. Planning enforcement activity is too often seen as the 'Cinderella' function of local planning services. But local communities want new development to meet required design and environmental standards, and robust enforcement action to be taken if planning rules are broken. As local planning authorities are freed from many planning requirements through our reforms, they will be able to focus more on enforcement across the planning system.

Proposal 24: We will seek to strengthen enforcement powers and sanctions

- 5.29. We will review and strengthen the existing planning enforcement powers and sanctions available to local planning authorities to ensure they support the new planning system. We will introduce more powers to address intentional unauthorised development, consider higher fines, and look to ways of supporting more enforcement activity.
- 5.30. This will include implementing our commitments from the Government's response to the consultation on unauthorised development and encampments, to strengthen national planning policy against intentional unauthorised development and ensure temporary stop notices are more effective. And will also consider what more can be done in cases where the Environment Agency's flood risk advice on planning applications is not followed.

What happens next

Implementing reform

- 6.1. The proposals in this paper apply to England only. Planning is devolved in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.
- 6.2. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, we will seek to bring forward legislation and policy changes to implement our reforms. This consultation sets out our vision for the basis of a reformed planning system. We have not comprehensively covered every aspect of the system, and the detail of the proposals will need further development pending the outcome of this consultation. We will continue to develop the proposals as we gather feedback and views on them.
- 6.3. Our proposals for Local Plan reform, changes to developer contributions and development management would require primary legislation followed by secondary legislation. The proposals allow 30 months for new Local Plans to be in place so a new planning framework, so we would expect new Local Plans to be in place by the end of the Parliament.
- 6.4. We would implement any policy changes, including to set a new housing requirement, by updating the National Planning Policy Framework in line with the new legislation.

Responding to this consultation

EQUALITIES IMPACTS

- 6.5. We want all communities, families, groups and individuals to have a say in the future of the places where they live. For too long, planning and planning decisions have felt out of reach from too many people. The Government has heard how the combination of technical jargon and traditional models of community engagement discourages people from having their say on decisions. At the same time, it disproportionately encourages engagement from people from a narrow set of demographic groups – typically older, better off and white. We believe that the voices of those who may benefit most from new development are therefore often the quietest in the planning process.
- 6.6. We are committed to delivering wider engagement in planning, increasing the supply of land for development, and supporting inclusive and mixed communities. Some authorities and developers are pioneering new models of engagement that broaden this to different groups. We hope that the reforms set out in this consultation – to make the system more accessible, accountable, digital and transparent – will increase access and engagement for all groups up and down the country.
- 6.7. We would welcome views on the potential impact on the proposals raised in this consultation on people with protected characteristics and whether further reforms could broaden access to planning for people in diverse groups.

Question

26. Do you have any views on the potential impact of the proposals raised in this consultation on people with protected characteristics as defined in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010?

About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](#).

Annex A

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are be entitled to under the data protection legislation.

These rights apply to your personal data (your name, address, and anything that could be used to identify you personally) not the content of your response to the consultation.

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@communities.gov.uk

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

Article 6(1)(e) of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR) provides that processing shall be lawful if processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller. Section 8(d) of the Data Protection Act 2018 further provides that this shall include processing of personal data that is necessary for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department.

The processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The task is consulting on departmental policies or proposals or obtaining opinion data in order to develop good effective government policies in relation to planning.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

We will not share your personal data with organisations outside of MHCLG without contacting you for your permission first.

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for two years from the closure of the consultation.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data, we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected
- d. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> , or telephone 0303 123 1113.

7. Storage of your personal data

The Data you provide directly will be stored by MHCLG's appointed third-party on their servers. We have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that your rights in terms of data protection will not be compromised by this.

If you submit information to this consultation using our third-party survey provider, it will be moved to our secure government IT systems at a date following the consultation publication date.

8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Changes to the current planning system

Consultation on changes to planning policy and regulations



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This document/publication is also available on our website at www.gov.uk/mhclg

If you have any enquiries regarding this document/publication, complete the form at <http://forms.communities.gov.uk/> or write to us at:

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Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF
Telephone: 030 3444 0000

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August 2020

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Scope of the consultation

Topic of this consultation:	This consultation seeks views on a range of proposed changes to the current planning system including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need • securing of First Homes through developer contributions • temporarily lifting the small sites threshold • extending the current Permission in Principle to major development
Scope of this consultation:	The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government is consulting on changes to planning policy and legislation.
Geographical scope:	These proposals relate to England only.
Impact Assessment:	N/A

Basic Information

To:	This consultation is open to everyone. We are keen to hear from a wide range of interested parties from across the public and private sectors, as well as from the general public.
Body/bodies responsible for the consultation:	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Duration:	This consultation will last for 8 weeks from 06 August 2020 and will close at 23.45 on Thursday 1 st October 2020.
Enquiries:	For any enquiries about the consultation please contact: TechnicalPlanningConsultation@communities.gov.uk
How to respond:	You may respond by going to our website: www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-the-current-planning-system Alternatively you can email your response to the questions in this consultation to: TechnicalPlanningConsultation@communities.gov.uk If you are responding in writing, please make it clear which questions you are responding to.

Written responses should be sent to:
Changes to the current planning system consultation
Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government,
3rd Floor, South East Fry Building
2 Marsham Street
LONDON
SW1P 4DF

When you reply it would be very useful if you confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:

- your name,
- your position (if applicable), and
- the name of organisation (if applicable).

Introduction

1. Since 2010 the Government has introduced planning reforms to improve the current system. In 2010 only 17% of local authorities had local plans in place and now 91% of local authorities have plans. Over 2,700 groups have started the neighbourhood planning process since 2012. We've delivered over 1.5 million new homes since 2010 including over 241,000 last year alone – that's the highest level for over 30 years. And planning permissions for new homes have more than doubled since 2010. But this isn't enough – we want to deliver the housing people need because happier, more rooted communities bring our country together.
2. *Planning for the Future*¹ sets out plans to undertake a fundamental reform of the planning system and explains that this would be accompanied by shorter-term measures. This consultation sets out proposals for measures to improve the effectiveness of the current system. The four main proposals are:
 - changes to the standard method for assessing local housing need, which as well as being a proposal to change guidance in the short term has relevance to proposals for land supply reforms set out in *Planning for the Future*;
 - securing of First Homes, sold at a discount to market price for first time buyers, including key workers, through developer contributions in the short term until the transition to a new system;
 - temporarily lifting the small sites threshold below which developers do not need to contribute to affordable housing, to up to 40 or 50 units to support SME builders as the economy recovers from the impact of Covid-19;
 - extending the current Permission in Principle to major development so landowners and developers now have a fast route to secure the principle of development for housing on sites without having to work up detailed plans first.

¹ See *Planning for the Future* <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>

The standard method for assessing housing numbers in strategic plans

3. This consultation is seeking views on changes to planning practice guidance on the standard method for assessing local housing need (“the standard method”). The standard method provides the starting point for planning for housing and does not establish the housing requirement.
4. The standard method was first implemented in 2018 through the revised National Planning Policy Framework² to make assessing the minimum number of homes needed in an area easier, cheaper and more transparent. In February 2019, following the technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance, a short-term change was made to the standard method. At the same time, a commitment was made to review the formula to balance the need for clarity, simplicity and transparency for local communities with the Government’s aspirations for the housing market.
5. This part of the consultation is about the standard method for assessing local housing need. There are wider policy proposals for introducing a standard method for setting binding housing requirements, set out in the separate consultation *Planning for the Future*³. It is the Government’s intention that the method set out in this document would form part of the process for setting any binding housing requirement. However, this consultation does not set out how this binding requirement would be calculated, which will be determined following the *Planning for the Future* consultation. Instead, it proposes a revised standard method for calculating local housing need which will be used as the basis for plans created prior to any changes outlined in *Planning for the Future* being introduced.

Boosting Supply

6. This consultation should be read in the context of the wider government reforms *Planning for the Future* in relation to the planning system and in particular the reforms to ensure sufficient land is released for homes. As this sets out, our aspirations are to create a housing market that is capable of delivering 300,000 homes annually and one million homes over this Parliament. Adopted local plans, where they are in place, provide for 187,000 homes per year across England – not just significantly below our ambition for 300,000 new homes annually, but also lower than the number of homes delivered last year (241,000).

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

³ See the wider reform policy paper Proposal 4 within *Planning for the Future*.

The role of the standard method in strategic plans

7. Plans are a key vehicle for ensuring that the community gets its chance to shape the development that takes place in its area. The standard method identifies the minimum number of homes that a local authority should plan for in an area. The National Planning Policy Framework is clear that this number should be considered in making sure enough land is identified to accommodate the new homes our communities need. Once the quantity of homes has been identified by the standard method, the supporting policy encourages local authorities to then consider how these can best be accommodated – through a combination of intensification and densification of brownfield land, regeneration of former commercial sites and under-used sites such as car parks, through well-planned new settlements and urban expansions.

8. The National Planning Policy Framework and associated planning practice guidance⁴ set out that local areas should identify enough land by using the housing need reflected by the standard method to:
 - a. identify the minimum number of homes that their communities need;
 - b. consider whether local circumstances mean that actual need is higher than that minimum (because, for example, strategic infrastructure is expected or growth beyond past trends is anticipated);
 - c. seek as a minimum to meet those needs by ensuring that sufficient land can be released over at least the next 15 years.

9. By directing that sufficient land should be released as above, the amount of need identified by the standard method has a direct influence on how many homes will be built in the future. It does not ensure that the homes are actually built - that is reliant on wider market conditions and targeted government interventions to support the market. However, identifying sufficient land so that the market is not prevented from delivering the homes that are needed is vitally important to prevent the under-delivery of the past from continuing to happen.

10. The overall level of need identified by the standard method therefore needs to be sufficient to ensure that land supply does not become a limiter in achieving national supply aspirations.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

The current standard method for assessing local housing need

11. The Government introduced the standard method to make the process of identifying the level of need in an area simple, quick and transparent. Previously, local authorities spent time and money estimating need and these numbers were heavily contested at examination. The standard method is designed to cut this time and ensure that the plan-making process focuses on how and where the homes can best be built, how they can be best designed and how the infrastructure can be aligned rather than time-consuming debates about the number of homes. The Government is clear that the standard method has an important role in achieving these ends and that it should continue to be: an easy and transparent process for people to understand; based on publicly available data; and reflect the need for homes in an area by taking in account the affordability of homes locally.
12. Currently, the method comprises a baseline of household projections which are then adjusted to take account of affordability and capped to limit the increase for areas. Step 1 of the current method sets the baseline using a 10-year average of the 2014-based national household growth projections. Step 2 goes on to adjust the Step 1 outcome based on the affordability of the area, using the most recent median workplace-based affordability ratios so that for each 1% the ratio is above 4, the average household growth is increased by a quarter of a percent (with a ratio of 8 representing a 100% increase). Step 3 then applies a 40% cap to limit the increases an individual local authority can face. The way this cap is applied depends on the current status of an area's strategic policies for housing.
13. Household projections, used in the current method, have attracted criticism for their volatility and the way in which they can result in artificially low projections in some places, where overcrowding and concealed households suppress the numbers. Crucially, they cannot in isolation forecast housing need – they project past trends forward. Despite this, we have seen many progress arguments that recent reductions in projected growth should lead to less homes being built. This should not be the logical conclusion, as the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has clarified^{5& 6}.
14. Improvements on the standard method are designed in order to:
 - a. Ensure it is more agile in using up-to-date data. We announced in the February 2019 Government response to the technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance⁷, that the standard method would remain based on the 2014-based household projections. While this

⁵ <https://blog.ons.gov.uk/2018/10/19/what-our-household-projections-really-show/>

⁶

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/article/s/variant-household-projections-for-england/2016-based#things-you-need-to-know-about-this-release>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-planning-policy-and-guidance-including-the-standard-method-for-assessing-local-housing-need>

was an appropriate solution in the short-term, a new standard method is intended to be more agile in using the most recent data.

- b. Achieve a better distribution of homes where homes are identified in more high-demand areas and in emerging demand areas across the country (such as the Northern Powerhouse). This will help avoid issues where unaffordable areas in high demand are planning for low numbers of homes due to past trends of suppressed household formation. In addition, the Government has heard powerful representations that the current formula underestimates demand for housing in the growing cities in the Northern Powerhouse by being based on historic trends.
- c. Provide stability to the method by smoothing out areas of potential volatility so that the basis on which local authorities are expected to plan for is more predictable.
- d. Be consistent with the Government's ambition for a housing market that supports 300,000 homes by creating a method with a suitable overall national number that enables achievement of this aim.

15. The Government has welcomed contributions from experts, including Savills⁸ and Lichfields⁹, on helpful proposals on how to adjust the methodology to address better these issues of alignment with real demand, stability, and consistency with the overall 300,000 target. There is general support for incorporating housing stock into the methodology, as a way of balancing out some of the issues identified with relying on household projections in isolation. We have taken into consideration the varied and useful feedback, both on the individual data inputs and also on how these might be applied in informing options for consideration.

16. In line with our commitments¹⁰, we are now proposing a revised standard method which aligns with the Government's aspirations for the housing market. This should provide stability and certainty for all stakeholders and seek to address the issues with the current approach and use of household projections identified above.

The Government's proposed approach

17. The Government has based the proposed new approach on a number of principles for reform. These include ensuring that the new standard method delivers a number nationally that is consistent with the commitment to plan for the delivery of 300,000 new homes a year, a focus on achieving a more appropriate distribution of homes, and on targeting more homes into areas where they are least affordable.

18. The standard method results in a local authority-wide number that needs to be planned for. The local area then decides how and where in their authority that need is best met in accordance with national policy. The supporting policy is not the

⁸ <https://pdf.euro.savills.co.uk/uk/spotlight-on/housing-need-and-the-standard-method-may-2020.pdf>

⁹ <https://lichfields.uk/blog/2020/may/21/setting-the-standard-towards-a-new-method-for-housing-need/>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-the-future>

subject of this consultation, but wider reforms proposed in the *Planning for the Future* consultation are focusing on how land supply policies would operate going forward. As such, this standard method provides the starting point and not the final housing requirement.

19. The new standard method should ensure that all areas of the country are encouraged to build the homes their communities need. The reasons for which homes are needed varies in different areas of the country. In some areas, new homes can play a vital role in schemes to regenerate deprived areas. In others the existing stock doesn't meet the needs of the existing communities in terms of providing the right size, type and tenure for different groups within the community and new homes are required to address this.
20. We therefore propose to introduce a new element into the standard method, a percentage of existing housing stock levels, which takes into account the number of homes that are already in an area. This should ensure that diverse housing needs in all parts of the country are taken into account. It should also offer the stability and predictability which has been absent when solely relying on household projections.
21. However, household projections, which are based on freely and publicly accessible data available at a local authority level, are still the most robust estimates of future growth trends. Projections have been used for decades in the planning system as a basis for future housing land requirements due to their simple and relatable concept of linking housing growth to the population. Therefore, we propose to retain a role for them as part of the new blended approach which takes account of stock. This helps achieve the stability and distributional benefits offered by stock whilst not losing the benefits of using projections. Further details of the exact approach are set out below.
22. The Government also proposes to introduce an affordability adjustment that takes into account changes over time, in addition to the existing approach of considering absolute affordability. This will increase the overall emphasis on affordability in the formula and ensure that the revised standard method is more responsive to changing local circumstances, so that homes are planned for where they are least affordable. For example, where affordability improves, this will be reflected by lower need for housing being identified. The Government also proposes to remove the cap which artificially suppresses the level of housing identified.

Step 1

Setting the baseline – providing stability and certainty by incorporating a blend of household projections and stock

23. We consider that the **baseline for the standard method should be *whichever is the higher of 0.5% of existing housing stock in each local authority OR the latest projected average annual household growth over a 10-year period.***

24. Recognising the limitations of household projections for the purposes of identifying housing need, the Government considers that they continue to remain the best way of projecting forward likely trends in household formation. Household projections therefore continue to form a part of the baseline, but will act as a “top-up” to a basic percentage of existing stock in each area. This allows areas that experience significant increases in projections compared to existing stock to plan for the homes they may need as a result of recent trends. This results in a “higher of” approach.
25. Focusing the new standard method baseline on stock with a household projections “top-up” helps bring stability to the method. This is because stock is stable and does not vary significantly, unlike a household projections-only approach. It is based on current data, and is also a tangible and easily understandable concept. Using stock will ensure that all areas, as a minimum, are contributing a share of the national total, proportionate to the size of their current housing market. Basing the approach on stock also helps to reinforce development in existing urban areas, thereby ensuring that new homes can maximise existing infrastructure such as public transport, schools, medical facilities and shops.
26. We propose a simple 0.5% of existing stock as a starting point for the baseline. The most robust data source of stock levels is the annually published **Dwelling stock estimates by local authority districts¹¹ and the most recent data published at the time should be used**. The number of net additional dwellings delivered in 2018-19 represents an increase of approximately 1% on the previous dwelling stock estimate of 24.2 million dwellings in England as at March 2018. 0.5% represents a basic level of increase in all areas without putting a disproportionate emphasis on existing stock levels.
27. The **household projections element of the baseline will use the latest ONS national household growth projections¹²** for the local authority area (Principal projection, table 406). The projected **average annual household growth over a 10-year period** (10 consecutive years, with the current year being used as the starting point from which to calculate growth over that period) will be used.
28. **Whichever is higher of 0.5% of existing stock or the projected average annual household growth over a 10-year period will be used as the baseline**. Note the overall outcome of the baseline should not be considered in isolation, as it forms proportionately less of the overall need number than the current standard method does. This is because the revised formula puts a greater weighting on market signals in Step 2.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/dwelling-stock-including-vacants> (Table 125)

¹²

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/datasets/householdprojectionsforengland>

Q1: Do you agree that planning practice guidance should be amended to specify that the appropriate baseline for the standard method is *whichever is the higher of the level of 0.5% of housing stock in each local authority area OR the latest household projections averaged over a 10-year period?*

Q2: In the stock element of the baseline, do you agree that 0.5% of existing stock for the standard method is appropriate? If not, please explain why.

Step 2

Adjusting for market signals – maintaining price signals using the current affordability ratio and the change in affordability over the last 10 years

29. We propose the standard method will include two adjustments to the baseline using **the workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio¹³**. Initially it is proposed that the **ratio for the most recent year for which data is available** in order to address current affordability of homes would be used. Then **how affordability has changed over the last 10 years of published data** would be incorporated, using that same statistic.

30. The precise formula is as follows:

Adjustment Factor

$$= \left[\left(\left(\frac{\text{Local affordability ratio}_{t=0} - 4}{4} \right) \times 0.25 \right) + \left((\text{Local affordability ratio}_{t=0} - \text{Local affordability ratio}_{t=-10}) \times 0.25 \right) \right] + 1$$

Where $t = 0$ is current year and $t = -10$ is 10 years back.

31. The Government considers that price signals, in the form of an affordability adjustment, are an integral part of the standard method. High house prices indicate a relative imbalance between the supply and demand for new homes, making homes less affordable. The affordability of homes is the best evidence that supply is not keeping up with demand.

32. The workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio is a nationally recognised and robust publicly available national statistic. It reflects the relationship between local house prices and earnings and is relatively stable over time. Using a ratio based on house price aligns with Government aspirations about home ownership and importantly it ensures that the standard method is responsive and

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/housing/datasets/ratioofhousepricetoworkplacebasedearningslowerquartileandmedian>

targeted to where affordability issues are most acute. Consideration has been given to the relative merits of the house price to workplace-based earnings ratio against the house price to residence-based earnings ratio. The workplace-based ratio (used in the current standard method) is felt to be most appropriate.

33. Using the most recent ratio enables an assessment of current affordability in an area. This ensures the formula responds to the most recent data. Incorporating an affordability trend over a 10-year period enables an assessment of the direction of travel in an authority area. Where affordability improves, a proportionately lower need level will be established. However, if an area's affordability worsens, then the housing need identified will be proportionately higher.
34. The affordability adjustment is a two part method aimed to deliver greater overall emphasis on affordability than in the current standard method. It is also designed to factor affordability changes over a 10-year period.
35. Part one of the affordability adjustment follows a similar method to that used in the current standard method. For each 1% the ratio is above 4, the baseline is increased by a quarter of a percent. Current guidance states that no adjustment is applied where the ratio is 4 or below. However, now that stock helps to stabilise the baseline, the affordability element of the new standard method can be responsive in areas where affordability is below 4 and we propose to amend guidance to this effect.
36. The formula now allows for downwards adjustments, where for each 1% the ratio is below 4, the baseline is decreased by a quarter of a percent. This means that these areas would not experience an uplift on the baseline as a result of this element of the formula. Four is the threshold as four times a person's earnings¹⁴ is the maximum amount that can typically be borrowed for a mortgage - if an average worker cannot get a mortgage for an average home in the area without additional help then there are not enough homes in the area.
37. Part two of the affordability adjustment focuses on the absolute difference between the latest affordability ratio and the affordability ratio 10 years ago. The difference calculated is multiplied by a factor of 0.25. This emphasis puts more pressure on local authorities whose affordability ratio has increased over the 10-year time frame, but likewise allows for local authorities whose ratio has improved to benefit from reductions in their affordability adjustment.
38. The affordability adjustment in part one and part two are added together (with a constant of 1), to reach a total affordability factor which is subsequently applied to the baseline. The combined effect is an increased responsiveness to affordability, reflecting the importance that the Government attaches to this.

¹⁴ The Council Mortgage Lenders found that in 2015 the average first time buyer loan to income ratio in England was 3.61.

39. Unlike the previous method, the new standard method does not have a cap applied to limit the level of increase for individual authorities. The Government is clear that in order to significantly boost the supply of homes and address the past under-supply as quickly as possible, a step change is needed. Capping the level of need is not compatible with this aim. In no longer applying a cap, the resultant housing need is the level of need that authorities should be planning to release land for, according to their specific circumstances.

Q3: Do you agree that using the workplace-based median house price to median earnings ratio from the most recent year for which data is available to adjust the standard method's baseline is appropriate? If not, please explain why.

Q4: Do you agree that incorporating an adjustment for the change of affordability over 10 years is a positive way to look at whether affordability has improved? If not, please explain why.

Q5: Do you agree that affordability is given an appropriate weighting within the standard method? If not, please explain why.

Result of the revised standard method

40. The new standard method results in a national housing need of 337,000 on the basis of currently available data. This is the starting point for planning and not the final housing requirement. Not all homes that are planned for are built, therefore the new standard method total is designed to provide enough land to account for the drop-off rate between permissions and completions.

41. The revised method identifies 76% of local housing need nationally focused in local authorities classified as urban (10,000 people or more in a built-up area – i.e. major and minor conurbations, cities and towns and towns in a sparse setting) by the 2011 ONS classification¹⁵. This will make the most of our transport hubs, support the objectives of brownfield-first and gently densifying urban areas, including building upwards where appropriate.

42. At a local authority level, the revised method will affect individual authorities differently. 141 authorities (excluding London boroughs) have a change of over 25% when compared to the higher of what areas have most recently planned for or the number produced by the current standard method.

Transition

43. The Government is aware that any change in the standard method will have an impact for plans that are currently under development, as authorities expend

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/methodology/geography/geographicalproducts/ruralurbanclassifications/2011ruralurbanclassification>

considerable resources in developing new plans. To enable an orderly transition to the revised standard method, and achieve as much short-term supply as possible while setting the right expectations for early stage plan-making, **we propose that from the publication date of the revised guidance, authorities which are already at the second stage of the strategic plan consultation process (Regulation 19)¹⁶ are given 6 months to submit¹⁷ their plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. Authorities close to publishing their second stage consultation (Regulation 19)¹⁸, should be given 3 months from the publication date of the revised guidance to publish their Regulation 19 plan and a further 6 months to submit their plan to the Planning Inspectorate.** This is to strike a balance between allowing an appropriate transition period for plans that are nearly through the process, but without causing a significant delay in planning for a higher level of need.

Do you agree that authorities should be planning having regard to their revised standard method need figure, from the publication date of the revised guidance, with the exception of:

Q6: Authorities which are already at the second stage of the strategic plan consultation process (Regulation 19), which should be given 6 months to submit their plan to the Planning Inspectorate for examination?

Q7: Authorities close to publishing their second stage consultation (Regulation 19), which should be given 3 months from the publication date of the revised guidance to publish their Regulation 19 plan, and a further 6 months to submit their plan to the Planning Inspectorate?

If not, please explain why. Are there particular circumstances which need to be catered for?

Please see question 35 for any comments relating to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the standard method.

¹⁶ For Spatial Development Strategies this would refer to consultation under s335(2) of the Greater London Authority Act 1999

¹⁷ For spatial development strategies, 'submission' in this context means the point at which the Mayor sends to the Panel copies of all representations made in accordance with regulation 8(1) of the Town and Country Planning (London Spatial Development Strategy) Regulations 2000, or equivalent.

¹⁸ See footnote 17 above

Next steps

44. Following the outcome of this consultation, the Government will update the planning practice guidance with the revised standard method for assessing local housing need.

Delivering First Homes

45. This Government is committed to supporting people to make the dream of home ownership a reality. Over 644,000 households have now been helped by Government schemes, including Help to Buy and Right to Buy, and we are taking steps to ramp up the supply of new housing. We are undertaking the most radical reforms to our planning system since the Second World War, making it easier to build homes where they are most needed. Our £400m Brownfield Land Fund and Home Builders Fund will support the levelling up of home building across the country and our stamp duty holiday, applying to the first £500,000 of property sales, will give a much-needed boost to the economy, helping even more people to own homes of their own.
46. However, ensuring access to home ownership remains one of the greatest challenges for this Government. Although polling shows that 87% of people would prefer to own a home given a free choice, high prices, high deposits and difficulty accessing mortgage finance still mean that far too many people are denied this opportunity. This is why we are determined to ensure that First Homes are built in all parts of the country.
47. The Government consulted on its First Homes proposals in February 2020¹⁹. This included consultation around both the design of the First Homes scheme and changes to the planning system to support its delivery. The Government has published a response to this consultation²⁰ and is now seeking views on the detail of the proposed changes to the current planning system.

The Government's proposed approach

Setting developer contributions for First Homes

Percentage of affordable housing secured through developer contributions

48. The Government intends to set out in policy that a minimum of 25 per cent of all affordable housing units secured through developer contributions should be First Homes. This will be a national threshold, set out in planning policy. Initially these will be secured through section 106 planning obligations but, under proposed reforms, these would subsequently be secured through the Infrastructure Levy (see Pillar Three of *Planning for the Future*).
49. In accordance with paragraph 62 of the National Planning Policy Framework, affordable housing is expected to be delivered onsite unless offsite provision or a financial contribution in lieu can be justified. Currently, around four per cent of

¹⁹ First Homes: Consultation on the design and delivery of First Homes.
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/864265/First_Homes_consultation_document.pdf

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/first-homes>

affordable housing contributions are secured as cash or land contributions, rather than as onsite affordable housing. Therefore, in the majority of cases we would expect this policy to be delivered onsite. However, where cash contributions to affordable housing are secured instead of onsite contributions, a minimum of 25 per cent of these should be used to secure First Homes. This could be achieved, for instance, by acquiring additional First Homes from market development, paying the developer a sum to offset the discount from market price, and securing the tenure through section 106 planning obligations. Where a mixture of cash and onsite contributions are secured, 25% of the overall value of contributions should be applied to First Homes.

50. Local authorities should already have affordable housing policies set out in their local plan, which will include the amounts of affordable housing to be sought, and the tenure mix of this housing. The National Planning Policy Framework currently states that where up-to-date policies have set out the contributions expected from development, planning applications that comply with them should be assumed to be viable. Under our intended approach, therefore, it is necessary to define the criteria for policy compliance, under which a development is assumed to be viable.
51. The Government proposes that, under the new system, a policy compliant planning application should seek to capture the same amount of value as would be captured under the local authority's up-to-date published policy. For instance, a local policy may require 20% affordable housing on site, half of which is shared ownership, and half of which is social rent. The plan viability assessment will set out assumptions on the amount of value captured – for example, a social rent home may be discounted by 50% from market price, and a shared ownership home may be discounted by 20%. This allows the total value captured under the policy to be calculated. This value can then be reallocated to a different affordable housing mix under the new policy.
52. In addition to capturing the same amount of value towards affordable housing as the existing policy, where onsite affordable housing is required, a policy compliant application will have a minimum of 25% of affordable housing units onsite as First Homes. For the remaining 75% of affordable housing secured through developer contributions, there are two broad options:
 - **Option 1:** Where a local authority has a policy on affordable housing tenure mix, that policy should be followed, but with First Homes delivering a minimum of 25% of the affordable housing products. First Homes should replace as a priority other affordable home-ownership products, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, prioritising the replacement of those tenures which secure the smallest discount from market price.
 - i. Where this replaces all home ownership products, any rental products are then delivered in the same ratio as set out in the local plan policy. For instance, if a local plan policy requires an affordable housing mix of 20% shared ownership units, 40% affordable rent units and 40% social rent units, a compliant application would deliver an affordable

housing tenure mix of 25% First Homes; 37.5% affordable rent and 37.5% social rent.²¹

- ii. Where this does not replace all home ownership products, the remainder of the home ownership tenures are delivered, and the rental tenure mix is delivered in line with the proportions set out in the local authority plan policy. For instance, if a local plan policy requires 80% of units to be shared ownership and 20% to be social rent, a policy compliant application would deliver 25% First Homes units, 55% shared ownership and 20% social rent.

- **Option 2:** A local authority and developer can negotiate the tenure mix for the remaining 75% of units.

53. If a local authority has an up-to-date policy on cash contributions in lieu of onsite contributions, then a policy compliant application will align with this approach.

54. Option 1 would provide more early clarity for developers as to what constituted a policy compliant development, and would reduce negotiation, which can slow the development process. Option 2 would give local authorities more flexibility but would increase delay. For that reason, the Government prefers Option 1.

55. Currently, sites or proposed developments such as those that provide solely for Build to Rent homes are exempt from requirements to deliver affordable home ownership products. This is set out in paragraph 64 in the National Planning Policy Framework. In line with existing policy, we are considering how to implement these exemptions with regards to First Homes.

Q8: The Government is proposing policy compliant planning applications will deliver a minimum of 25% of onsite affordable housing as First Homes, and a minimum of 25% of offsite contributions towards First Homes where appropriate. Which do you think is the most appropriate option for the remaining 75% of affordable housing secured through developer contributions? Please provide reasons and / or evidence for your views (if possible):

- i) **Prioritising the replacement of affordable home ownership tenures, and delivering rental tenures in the ratio set out in the local plan policy.**
- ii) **Negotiation between a local authority and developer.**
- iii) **Other (please specify)**

²¹ The actual number of homes of any tenure type should be rounded to whole numbers, where the ratio would deliver, for instance, half an affordable home.

With regards to current exemptions from delivery of affordable home ownership products:

Q9: Should the existing exemptions from the requirement for affordable home ownership products (e.g. for build to rent) also apply to this First Homes requirement?

Q10: Are any existing exemptions not required? If not, please set out which exemptions and why.

Q11: Are any other exemptions needed? If so, please provide reasons and /or evidence for your views.

Local plans and transitional arrangements

56. We recognise that local authorities may need to review the tenure mix for the remainder of the affordable housing that they are seeking to secure. Where local authorities choose to update their tenure mix to reflect this policy, they can do this through a local plan review, although we believe that prioritising the replacement of home-ownership tenures by First Homes will reduce the need for this.

57. We also recognise that there will be a number of local plans and neighbourhood plans that have been prepared based on the existing National Planning Policy Framework and that have reached more advanced stages of the plan-making process. Therefore, local plans and neighbourhood plans that are submitted for Examination within 6 months of this new policy being enacted will not need to reflect the First Homes policy requirements.

58. We also recognise that many developers will have been preparing planning applications under different assumptions. Where significant work has already been undertaken to progress a planning application, including where there has been significant pre-engagement with a local authority on the basis of a different tenure mix of affordable housing, the local authority should have flexibility to accept alternative tenure mixes, although they should consider whether First Homes could be easily substituted for another tenure, either at 25% or a lower proportion.

Q12: Do you agree with the proposed approach to transitional arrangements set out above?

Level of discount

59. The minimum discount for First Homes should be 30% from market price which will be set by an independent registered valuer. The valuation should assume the home is sold as an open market dwelling without restrictions. Local authorities will have discretion to increase the discount to 40% or 50%. This would need to be evidenced in the local plan making process.

60. Where discounts of more than 30% are applied to First Homes, the requirement for a minimum of 25% of units onsite to be First Homes will remain in place.

Q13: Do you agree with the proposed approach to different levels of discount?

Community Infrastructure Levy

61. In line with other affordable housing tenures, we intend to introduce an exemption from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for First Homes. We intend to introduce this national exemption through regulations.
62. Prior to regulations being laid, we encourage CIL charging authorities to make use of discretionary affordable housing relief in order to support immediate delivery of First Homes.
63. Further proposals are being developed for an Infrastructure Levy, which would replace CIL and Section 106 planning obligations. First Homes will remain integral to this approach, as will the delivery of affordable housing more generally. We will consider the balance of infrastructure and affordable housing as part of this approach.

Exception sites

Exception sites and rural exception sites

64. We intend to introduce a First Homes exception sites policy, to replace the existing entry-level exception sites policy. Exception sites are small sites brought forward outside the local plan to deliver affordable housing. Under the amended policy, we will specify that the affordable homes delivered should be First Homes for local, first-time buyers. There will be the flexibility in the policy to allow a small proportion of other affordable homes to be delivered on these sites where there is significant identified local need as well as a small proportion of market homes where this would be necessary to ensure the viability of the site overall. This policy will not apply in designated rural areas, where delivery will be through the rural exception sites policy.
65. We intend to remove the National Planning Policy Framework threshold on site size that currently applies for entry-level exception sites in footnote 33, but retain the requirement that First Homes exception sites should be proportionate in size to the existing settlement.
66. We intend to protect the important role that rural exception sites play in delivering affordable homes in rural areas, with rural exception sites being retained as a vehicle for delivering affordable housing in designated rural areas. However, we recognise that this delivery mechanism is currently underused in many cases, and we will update planning guidance in due course.

Q14: Do you agree with the approach of allowing a small proportion of market housing on First Homes exception sites, in order to ensure site viability?

Q15: Do you agree with the removal of the site size threshold set out in the National Planning Policy Framework?

Q16: Do you agree that the First Homes exception sites policy should not apply in designated rural areas?

Please see question 35 for any comments relating to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the delivery of First Homes.

Next steps

67. We intend to begin by making planning policy changes, to ensure that clear expectations are set. However, to ensure that First Homes are delivered, nationwide, on a consistent basis, we are keeping under consideration the option to strengthen the policy through primary legislation at a future date. We also intend to introduce an exemption from the Community Infrastructure Levy for First Homes, to enable delivery prior to wider developer contribution reform. This would require changes to regulations. Lastly, we are also considering significant reforms to the system of developer contributions. We will ensure that First Homes will continue to be delivered under a reformed approach.

Supporting small and medium-sized developers

68. Small and medium-sized builders (SMEs) make an important contribution to overall housing supply. Small sites typically build out more quickly than larger sites, as they are less constrained by the market absorption rate. SMEs build the majority of smaller sites. In addition, the majority of apartments across the country are built by SME builders.²² As well as having national importance, SMEs play a significant role in local areas – providing people with increased choice in type and design of housing. A range of builders, using different designs, across different site sizes in different locations increases build out rates and overall supply.
69. SME builders have been declining in the long term and were hit hard by the last recession. There were 16% more builder and developer insolvencies in 2019 than in 2018²³, the vast majority of which were SMEs. They are now under further pressure due to Covid-19. We are committed to supporting SMEs and measures taken that support the sector include the Home Building Fund, Help to Buy programme and the ENABLE Build guarantee scheme. We are also providing a package of measures to help the sector grow and develop, including the Housing Growth Partnership, Housing Delivery Fund, as well as our ongoing reforms to the planning system.
70. Contributions from developers play an important role in delivering the infrastructure and affordable housing to support communities and local economies. Local authorities can obtain these contributions by negotiating section 106 planning obligations with a developer and charging a Community Infrastructure Levy on new development.
71. We have introduced legislation to give local authorities more flexibility to support SMEs, by allowing them to defer Community Infrastructure Levy payments. This will enable local planning authorities to support SMEs who are struggling with cashflow, while ensuring that local communities still receive contributions towards infrastructure from developers in the longer term.
72. To support SMEs in the medium term during economic recovery from Covid-19, we are also proposing to reduce the burden of contributions on SMEs for more sites for a time-limited period.

²² Source: MHCLG analysis of Glenigan data.

²³ Source: MHCLG analysis of [Insolvency Service statistics](#) on firms involved in the Construction of Buildings (SIC 41).

Small sites planning policy

Developer contributions

73. Research into developer contributions²⁴ has found that Section 106 planning obligations remain a core aspect of planning practice and recent reform of the system in 2019 has been largely welcomed. However, there are still inconsistencies in local planning authority practice and delay remains a hallmark of the system.
74. National policy is clear that affordable housing contributions should not be sought for developments of fewer than 10 units (small sites). This is to ensure that a disproportionate burden of developer contributions is not placed on SMEs. In designated rural areas policies may set out a lower threshold of five units or fewer. This approach was introduced through a Written Ministerial Statement in November 2014 and taken forward in the revised National Planning Policy Framework in 2018.
75. We are aware that the majority of local planning authorities have taken this approach forward. Only 8% of authorities have policies in up-to-date plans (less than five years old) that do not comply with national policy and are currently seeking affordable housing contributions for small sites.

Economic recovery

Extending the small sites policy

76. To stimulate economic recovery with a particular focus on SMEs, the threshold for affordable housing contributions could be raised. This would reduce the burden of developer contributions, as smaller sites are more likely to be built out by SMEs.
77. We understand the trade-off between introducing measures to increase the number of developable small sites and the importance of securing section 106 planning obligations to deliver affordable housing including First Homes. For example, for a threshold of up to 40 units we would expect to see a reduction of between 7% and 14% of section 106 affordable housing delivery over a single year, assuming overall housing delivery remained constant. For a threshold of up to 50 units, this would be between 10% and 20%. However, we anticipate that raising the threshold would make more sites viable for SME developers and would increase the pace of their delivery as the need for negotiation would be removed. On balance, the proposed approach would allow more small sites to come forward and help minimise the economic pressure that SMEs are under.

²⁴ The Incidence, Value and Delivery of Planning Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy in England in 2018-19. Joint research from the University of Liverpool, the University of Cambridge, the University of Sheffield and the London School of Economics <https://gov.uk/government/publications/section-106-planning-obligations-and-the-community-infrastructure-levy-in-england-2018-to-2019-report-of-study>

78. To ensure that this measure is targeted at the economic recovery phase and does not inflate land prices in the longer term, we are proposing that the higher threshold is implemented for a time-limited period and lifted as the economy recovers from the impact of Covid-19. This should also minimise any constraints on the introduction of First Homes. We are keen to hear views on the benefits and impacts of this proposal on the delivery of new homes.

The Government's proposed approach

79. We are proposing to raise the small sites threshold to up to either 40 or 50 new homes through changes to national planning policy and are seeking views on the most appropriate level. These thresholds balance the aim of supporting SMEs with the need to deliver new affordable homes. This will be for an initial period of 18 months in which we will monitor the impact of the raised threshold on the sector before reviewing the approach.

80. National policy currently sets out a site size threshold for residential development in addition to number of homes. It makes clear that affordable housing contributions should not be sought for developments that have a site area of less than 0.5 hectares. We propose to scale up the site size threshold at the same proportion as the increase in number of homes threshold and we are seeking views on whether this is the most appropriate approach.

81. There could be adverse threshold effects whereby developers attempt to bring forward larger sites in phasings of up to 40 or 50 homes (depending on which threshold is taken forward in legislation) to avoid contributions. To minimise the impact of this potential threshold effect, we propose to set out in planning guidance how local planning authorities can secure contributions for affordable housing where it is apparent that a larger site is being brought forward.

For each of these questions, please provide reasons and / or evidence for your views (if possible):

Q17: Do you agree with the proposed approach to raise the small sites threshold for a time-limited period?

(see question 18 for comments on level of threshold)

Q18: What is the appropriate level of small sites threshold?

- i) Up to 40 homes**
- ii) Up to 50 homes**
- iii) Other (please specify)**

Q19: Do you agree with the proposed approach to the site size threshold?

Q20: Do you agree with linking the time-limited period to economic recovery and raising the threshold for an initial period of 18 months?

Q21: Do you agree with the proposed approach to minimising threshold effects?

Affordable housing in rural areas

82. In designated rural areas, local planning authorities can set a lower threshold of five units or fewer in their plans. We are aware that rural local authorities secure greater proportions of their housing supply as affordable on average when compared to urban local authorities. In designated rural areas, we therefore propose to maintain the current threshold.

Q22: Do you agree with the Government's proposed approach to setting thresholds in rural areas?

Supporting SMEs

83. The Government recognises that in addition to planning contributions, there may be many reasons why SME builders are unable to access and progress developable sites during this time. We are keen to hear whether there are any other ways in which the Government can support SME builders to deliver new homes.

Q23: Are there any other ways in which the Government can support SME builders to deliver new homes during the economic recovery period?

Please see question 35 for any comments relating to the Public Sector Equality Duty and the small sites proposals.

Next steps

84. Following the consultation, a decision will be taken on whether to proceed with this approach. If it is taken forward, this could be through the introduction of a Written Ministerial Statement in the Autumn.

Extension of the Permission in Principle consent regime

Introduction of applications process for major developments

85. Permission in Principle was introduced in 2017 as a new faster way of obtaining planning permission for housing-led development, which reduced the need for landowners and developers to incur significant costs to establish the principle of development for housing. This was done by giving authorities the power to grant Permission in Principle to suitable sites allocated on registers of brownfield land. Subsequently, Permission in Principle by application was introduced in 2018, for minor development (i.e. small sites that support fewer than 10 dwellings).
86. Permission in Principle is designed to separate decision making on 'in principle' issues addressing land use, location, and scale of development from matters of technical detail, such as the design of buildings, tenure mix, transport and environmental matters. The aim is to give up-front certainty that the fundamental principles of development are acceptable before developers need to work up detailed plans and commission technical studies. It also ensures that the principle of development only needs to be established once.
87. The Permission in Principle consent route has two stages:
- the first stage ("Permission in Principle") establishes whether a site is suitable in-principle for development. This grant of Permission in Principle is for five years and no planning conditions can be attached to it
 - the second ('technical details consent') stage is when the detailed development proposals are assessed, and conditions can be attached
88. A grant of Permission in Principle plus a grant of technical details consent together equates to full planning permission.

Securing the principle of development for housing on more sites

89. As part of our plans to support economic recovery, the Government wants to make it easier for landowners and developers to have certainty that the principle of development for housing only needs to be established once in the process before developers need to get into more costly, technical matters. This is particularly important for smaller sites which have not been allocated in local plans and where there is now, due to the rapidly changing economic circumstances, a desire by landowners to release the land for housing.
90. *Planning for the Future* proposes that land allocated for substantive development in local plans should be automatically granted a form of permission of principle so that

the principle of development is established, and subsequent consents only focus on detailed technical matters. As this new framework will take time to implement, the Government is keen to expand the current Permission in Principle framework for housing-led development as an early opportunity to move towards this new approach.

91. As part of this consultation, we are interested in your views on:

- extending the scope of the current Permission in Principle by application route to major development (not subject to EIA or habitats assessments);
- enhancing the information requirements and publicity arrangements for these applications;
- introducing a revised fee structure, at lower cost, to incentivise their use;
- including automatically any Permission in Principle granted onto Part 2 of the local brownfield land register; and
- strengthening guidance to support implementation.

Extending Permission in Principle to cover major development

92. Since 2018, applications for Permission in Principle have gradually increased as more developers have become more aware of it. However, the restriction limiting the scope of the principle to minor development limits its potential. In particular, in town centres and other high-density urban areas, relatively small sites are capable of supporting apartment developments of over 10 units, making these sites ineligible for Permission in Principle applications.

93. For these sites, if they are brownfield, a landowner could approach the local planning authority to add the site to its brownfield land register where Permission in Principle status can be granted after consultation. However, this takes time and requires proactive local planning authority engagement. Or the landowner could submit a full or outline planning permission to secure the principle of development before they sell the land interests on to a developer; but given the level of detail required, these can be costly to prepare, take time to determine, and often the subsequent developer will submit a new outline or full application to reflect their own plans.

94. To address this current anomaly, we propose **to remove the restriction in the current Permission in Principle regulations on major development**²⁵. This will enable applications for Permission in Principle to be made for a far wider range of sites, enabling more landowners and developers to use this route to secure permission for housing development. Currently, 84% of planning applications for residential development are for schemes of 10-150 homes, which deliver 46% of new housing development each year.

²⁵ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1309/made>

95. We envisage that a change of this kind will particularly benefit small and medium-sized developers who tend to focus on building smaller major developments. It will reduce their upfront planning costs and provide certainty quickly about the principle of development. In doing so, it will complement the Government's wider initiatives to support small and medium developers, including through the Home Builders Fund which provides loan funding to meet the development costs of building homes for sale or rent and where a loan offer is conditional on applicants having a clear route to achieving planning consent.
96. The existing restrictions in the Permission in Principle Regulations relating to EIA and Habitats requirements will remain, reflecting the fact that Permission in Principle is granted on the basis of limited technical information and there is not sufficient environmental information for these requirements to be accurately assessed at the point of decision.
97. This means Permission in Principle by application will not in practice be a route to permission for large sites capable of delivering more than 150 dwellings or more than 5 hectares – the EIA Regulations 2017 Schedule 2 threshold for urban development, save where a screening opinion has been obtained which concluded the proposal was not EIA development. Similarly, Permission in Principle will not be suitable for sites in areas where, applying the Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2017, there is a probability or risk that the project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, unless the application was accompanied by an appropriate assessment demonstrating there was unlikely to be significant impact on the site.

Q24: Do you agree that the new Permission in Principle should remove the restriction on major development?

98. Permission in Principle by application may include other uses as retail, offices, or community spaces. However, housing must occupy the majority of the overall scheme. Additionally, non-housing development should be compatible with the proposed residential development.
99. The current regulations for Permission in Principle by application for minor development sets a limit of commercial development to 1,000 sqm, with a maximum size capped at 1 hectare. For the expanded Permission in Principle route extending to major development, **we do not propose to set a limit for commercial development space**. We do not believe it is necessary to limit the amount of commercial floorspace as it will still be the case that Permission in Principle should only be granted for development that is housing-led. Non-housing development that is compatible and well-integrated into residential development can help to create sustainable neighbourhoods.

Q25: Should the new Permission in Principle for major development set any limit on the amount of commercial development (providing housing still occupies the majority of the floorspace of the overall scheme)? Please provide any comments in support of your views.

Process for making a Permission in Principle application for major development

100. We anticipate it will not be necessary to make any significant changes to the current process set out in regulations for granting Permission in Principle by application. We believe they will largely work for major developments too. This includes the 5-week determination period and the 14-day period for consultation with the public and statutory consultees, which is critical to ensuring an early decision on the principle of development. However, views are sought on maintaining the existing information requirements and publicity arrangements as these may need to be amended.

Information requirements

101. The primary decisions about when to grant Permission in Principle will be locally driven, taking account of national and local policy. Permission in Principle must be followed by an application for technical details consent to agree the details of the scheme before the applicant obtains full planning permission and can start work on site.
102. We anticipate that the process for making a Permission in Principle application for a major development would follow these same procedures, where the relevant matters for consideration are location, land use and the amount of development.
103. A Permission in Principle application must be made in writing on a form published by the Secretary of State (or a form to substantially the same effect) and include the particulars specified or referred to in the form which include:
- a description of the proposed development,
 - the proposed minimum and maximum number of dwellings,
 - the amount of any non-residential development,
 - the size of the site in hectares, and
 - a brief description of any supporting information that is accompanying the application.
104. The local planning authority may not require the submission of any other information, including that specified on its local list.
105. For the Permission in Principle stage, we intend to apply broadly the same information requirements as for minor development applications²⁶ – that is, the developer would only have to provide information as to: the minimum and maximum net number of dwellings, and a map or plan of the site (drawn to an identified scale). Technical details consent requirements would provide the necessary supplementary information for the local planning authority to determine the application.

²⁶ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1309/article/4/made> - Article 5D

106. However, we would be interested in whether, given the larger scale of development, there should be an additional maximum height threshold parameter, in terms of number of storeys, as part of the Permission in Principle. This would provide greater clarity to the applicant and local planning authority about the scale of housing development that is acceptable for the site, particularly in high density urban areas. Conversely, the inclusion of a maximum height parameter would add further complexity to the determination of Permission in Principle as it starts to bring in design considerations, and may in practice lead to greater confusion - for instance, a high height threshold may only be acceptable for part of the site given the impact on neighbouring dwellings.

Q26: Do you agree with our proposal that information requirements for Permission in Principle by application for major development should broadly remain unchanged? If you disagree, what changes would you suggest and why?

Q27: Should there be an additional height parameter for Permission in Principle? Please provide comments in support of your views.

Publicity arrangements

107. Publicity requirements for Permission in Principle by application, as set out in regulations,²⁷ require local planning authorities to publicise consultations by site notice and by including the application on their website. By contrast, applications for planning permission²⁸ require a site notice, publication on the website and placing a notice in a local newspaper.

108. We consider that local communities should have the opportunity to make representation on major development that might affect them. We propose to amend the publicity requirements for Permission in Principle by application so applications for Permission in Principle on large sites are subject to publicity beyond just a site notice and website publication.

109. Given the shorter timescales for determining Permission in Principle applications we want to ensure that local communities are notified quickly about an application. In May 2020 we introduced temporary regulations to provide flexibility to how local planning authorities can publicise applications if they cannot meet existing statutory requirements, including through the use of social media. We would like to understand whether there would be benefits in amending the publicity requirements for Permission in Principle to enable similar flexibility or whether they should be subject to more traditional publicity requirements such as notices in newspapers.

110. We plan to retain the current publicity requirements for statutory consultees and parish councils.

Q28: Do you agree that publicity arrangements for Permission in Principle by application should be extended for large developments? If so, should local planning authorities be:

²⁷ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1309/made>

²⁸ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/595/article/15/made>

- i) required to publish a notice in a local newspaper?
- ii) subject to a general requirement to publicise the application or
- iii) both?
- iv) disagree

If you disagree, please state your reasons.

Revised fee structure to incentive Permission in Principle by application

111. The current fee for Permission in Principle by application for minor development is £402 per 0.1 hectare (capped at a maximum of 1 hectare), which is to cover the costs incurred in processing the application, as well as the costs of undertaking consultation and assessment against local and national policy.
112. Under this fee structure, a Permission in Principle application for a 1-hectare development would cost approximately £4000, which is only slightly less than the cost of an outline planning application (£4600). We are keen to promote Permission in Principle by application as a more streamlined and cheaper alternative to outline permission and have considered a number of options to facilitate this. Options considered include: a) retaining the current fee structure based on a flat fee per 0.1 hectare but with a lower fee; b) adopting a site-size criterion, with a charging scheme based on the actual number of dwellings (NB. this is not considered practical because the exact number of housing units in the proposed scheme will not be known until the applicant submits the technical details consent application); and c) our **preferred option of a simplified banded fee structure, with a fixed fee per 0.1 hectare in each band**, and maximum fee cap based on the following site sizes:
- less than 1 hectare (= £x fee per 0.1 hectare)
 - between 1 to 2.5 hectares (= £y fee per 0.1 hectare)
 - more than 2.5 hectares, capped at a maximum (= £z fee per 0.1 hectare, capped)
113. We think lower fees are reasonable because a local planning authority only needs to make a decision on the principle of the development, not on the technical details of the development like a normal planning application.

Q29: Do you agree with our proposal for a banded fee structure based on a flat fee per hectare, with a maximum fee cap?

Q30: What level of flat fee do you consider appropriate, and why?

Brownfield Land Registers and Permission in Principle

114. Every local authority is required to publish and maintain a Brownfield Land Register, which provides up-to-date, digitally and publicly available information on brownfield land that is suitable for housing. Brownfield Land Registers are divided into two

parts. Part 1 contains a list of brownfield sites that are considered appropriate for residential development; and Part 2 consists of sites which have been taken forward from Part 1 of the register and granted automatic Permission in Principle by the local planning authority (following consultation). Individual Permission in Principle applications granted by local planning authorities from sites that were contained in Part 1 of the Brownfield Land Register must also be included in Part 2 of the Register.

115. Brownfield Land Registers can improve the quality and consistency of data held by local planning authorities and help to provide certainty for developers and communities, encouraging investment in local areas. Having sufficient and accurate data is integral to providing greater transparency about where brownfield sites are available across the country. We are soon to publish a national brownfield map which will bring together all sites identified in local Brownfield Land Registers so there is a clear national picture of brownfield sites suitable for housing.
116. To ensure that Brownfield Land Registers continue to be a single source of information for developers and to inform the national brownfield map in the short term, we propose that all Permission in Principle by application “consents” that are on brownfield land should also be automatically recorded in Part 2 of the Brownfield Land Register. In the longer term, under the *Planning for the Future* proposals, as the new local plans are produced, we intend to review the role of Brownfield Land Registers.

Q31: Do you agree that any brownfield site that is granted Permission in Principle through the application process should be included in Part 2 of the Brownfield Land Register? If you disagree, please state why.

Additional guidance to support implementation

117. As Permission in Principle by application is still a new consent route, we are aware from anecdotal evidence that understanding of this consent route among landowners, developers and local planning authorities is often limited.
118. In particular, it seems some local planning authorities continue to make decisions on Permission in Principle based on detailed matters, such as transport access, when these should only be taken into consideration at the technical details consent stage. It is also not certain that developers and landowners appreciate the gains they can make in terms of savings on costs and assessments when ascertaining, up front, the suitability of a particular site for development. Providing further clarity in guidance on the purpose, process and benefits of Permission in Principle should help mitigate this, particularly where consultation responses highlight areas of confusion.

Q32: What guidance would help support applicants and local planning authorities to make decisions about Permission in Principle? Where possible, please set out any areas of guidance you consider are currently lacking and would assist stakeholders.

Regulatory Impact Assessment

119. Our preliminary assessment is that these regulation changes to Permission in Principle will not increase the regulatory burden on business, charities or voluntary bodies. The measure should enable applicants to establish upfront, and at minimal cost, whether sites are suitable for residential development. Under the existing system, applicants typically will pay the much higher cost of preparing and submitting a full planning application in order to determine the suitability of a site for housing-led development²⁹.
120. After obtaining a grant of Permission in Principle, medium-sized developers should find it easier to secure the finance needed to fund a technical detail consent application rather than having to fund the cost of a full planning application without the certainty afforded by a grant of Permission in Principle.
121. Feedback from consultees will help inform our understanding of the practicalities of the proposed measure, as well as to undertake a 'costs and benefit' analysis as part of a Full Regulatory Impact Assessment, including estimating take-up trajectories.

Q33: What costs and benefits do you envisage the proposed scheme would cause? Where you have identified drawbacks, how might these be overcome?

Q34: To what extent do you consider landowners and developers are likely to use the proposed measure? Please provide evidence where possible.

Next steps

122. Following this consultation, if we introduce Permission in Principle by application for major development, we aim to introduce amending regulations this Autumn, with the regulations expected to come into force by the end of the calendar year. Changes to the fee structure would require separate changes to the Planning Fees Regulations.

²⁹ Estimates from the Impact Assessment prepared for the Town and Country (Permission in Principle) (as amended) Order 2017 show that the typical cost of preparing and submitting a full planning application at approximately £25,000 for a minor site, including fee costs. The cost for full planning permission for a major site (based on 100 dwellings) is approximately £40-£50,000.

Public Sector Equality Duty

123. The Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. It relates specifically to groups with protected characteristics including age, disability, sex, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, and maternity.

Q35: In light of the proposals set out in this consultation, are there any direct or indirect impacts in terms of eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations on people who share characteristics protected under the Public Sector Equality Duty?

If so, please specify the proposal and explain the impact. If there is an impact – are there any actions which the department could take to mitigate that impact?

About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal data, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 2018 (DPA), the General Data Protection Regulation, and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, as a public authority, the Department is bound by the Freedom of Information Act and may therefore be obliged to disclose all or some of the information you provide. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with the law and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties. A full privacy notice is included at Annex A.

Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact us via the [complaints procedure](#).

Annex A

The following is to explain your rights and give you the information you are be entitled to under data protection legislation.

These rights apply to your personal data (your name, direct contact details such as an email address, and any other information that could be used to identify you personally).

1. The identity of the data controller and contact details of our Data Protection Officer

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) is the data controller. The Data Protection Officer can be contacted at dataprotection@communities.gov.uk.

2. Why we are collecting your personal data

Your personal data is being collected as an essential part of the consultation process, so that we can contact you regarding your response and for statistical purposes. We may also use it to contact you about related matters.

3. Our legal basis for processing your personal data

Article 6(1)(e) of the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 (GDPR) provides that processing shall be lawful if processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the controller. Section 8(d) of the Data Protection Act 2018 further provides that this shall include processing of personal data that is necessary for the exercise of a function of the Crown, a Minister of the Crown or a government department.

The processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest or in the exercise of official authority vested in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. The task is consulting on departmental policies or proposals or obtaining opinion data in order to develop good effective government policies in relation to planning.

4. With whom we will be sharing your personal data

We will not share your personal data with organisations outside of MHCLG without contacting you for your permission first.

5. For how long we will keep your personal data, or criteria used to determine the retention period.

Your personal data will be held for two years from the closure of the consultation.

6. Your rights, e.g. access, rectification, erasure

The data we are collecting is your personal data, and you have considerable say over what happens to it. You have the right:

- a. to see what data, we have about you
- b. to ask us to stop using your data, but keep it on record
- c. to ask to have all or some of your data deleted or corrected

d. to lodge a complaint with the independent Information Commissioner (ICO) if you think we are not handling your data fairly or in accordance with the law. You can contact the ICO at <https://ico.org.uk/> , or telephone 0303 123 1113.

7. Storage of your personal data

The Data you provide directly will be stored by MHCLG's appointed third-party on their servers. We have taken all necessary precautions to ensure that your rights in terms of data protection will not be compromised by this.

If you submit information to this consultation using our third-party survey provider, it will be moved to our secure government IT systems at a date following the consultation publication date.

8. Your personal data will not be used for any automated decision making.

Some websites on the planning white paper gleaned from YLCA and some of our subscriptions:

<https://www.rtpi.org.uk/policy/2020/august/government-planning-reform-proposals-in-england/>

<https://www.shoosmiths.co.uk/insights/comment/the-planning-white-paper-august-2020>

<https://youtu.be/lxglevH0UIY> (YouTube video of Cornwall council's webinar on the consultations)

<https://lichfields.uk/grow-renew-protect-planning-for-the-future/the-white-paper/> (infographic)

https://www.cpre.org.uk/news/major-planning-reforms-criticism/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=engagingnetworks&utm_campaign=CU_August_members_notGAFraction&utm_content=Campaigns+Update+August+2020+-+members,+not+yet+seen+GAFR+action

https://locality.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Planning-reform-summary.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Neighbourhood%20Planning%20-%20Marketing%20List%20-%20Write%20to%20your%20MP&utm_content=Neighbourhood%20Planning%20-%20Marketing%20List%20-%20Write%20to%20your%20MP+CID_2025670b94bda017c4981bcb41dfbf90&utm_source=Email%20CM&utm_term=read%20our%20full%20summary