

White Paper: Planning for the Future

Monday 5 October 2020; Attendees: Cllrs Coker, Collett, Dilliway and the Clerk

Questions

1. What three words do you associate most with the planning system in England?

No comment

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 – by email bulletin]

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]

NB Infrastructure in its widest sense – placemaking (community shop, centre, pub, “heart”)

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

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

NB Supportive of the Automatic permission in principle to land identified for substantial development in Local Plans (Growth Areas) within a maximum no of units/density suitable to the site (as per para 2.12); not in agreement with automatic permission in principle for Renewal or Protected Zones.

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.]

NB this should lead to greater consistence across Local Planning Authority boundaries; this also should ensure being able to incorporate local need, eg design aesthetics, open space requirements etc

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.]

Whilst in support of simplifying the process, it must be possible to look at net gain in Environmental benefits as well as infrastructure gains that benefit the wider community.

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

No comment.

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.]

Social, geographical and environmental factors MUST be taken into account as well as affordability.

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.]

As long as any “Growth” development builds communities and not simply housing (community shops, pubs, centres, “heart”)

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.]

There should be a presumption against development in a protected area unless an application can prove there would be a) no harm to the area (ie to local heritage assets) and b) net environmental gain and affordable housing included

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.]

Simply not enough information about what would meet the criteria for an "NSIP"

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

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

Agree with the aspiration but it is not clearly demonstrated that the proposals, as outlined, would achieve the end goal.

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

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

Consideration must be given to the early phase when this is new, it will be more difficult for local residents to engage with a new digital infrastructure when in its infancy. This may not be possible for the first round of local planning.

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.]

Consideration must be given to the early phase when this is new, it will be more difficult for local residents to engage with a new digital infrastructure when in its infancy. This may not be possible for the first round of local planning.

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?

There needs to be support, nationally, for community groups to learn how to use these digital tools – templates, technical support etc at reasonable cost. Quality of plans MUST not be determined by local affluence.

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.]

Strongly agree and support the splitting of larger sites amongst a number of developers - large and small - and allocating a proportion to self build - to ensure build out happens faster.

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]
in the experience of Binfield, the better developments have been smaller and by smaller building firms.

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]

ALL of the above, plus reducing carbon footprints, increasing biodiversity and improving access to green space.

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.]

But these should be guides only and allow leeway for trading up.

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.]

Not clear how this will be funded

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.]

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

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

Difficult to define, local views must be incorporated

Where are the questions related to proposals 15 – 18?

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]

All of the above should be priorities.

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.] Net of contributions on affordable housing

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.]

To a degree, limited to a percentage (to be determined) over a certain period of time

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.]

At present agricultural outbuildings are being offset against residential development with a vastly different value and infrastructure impact.

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.]

On site provision should produce inclusive communities

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.]

Dwellings should be of similar specification with a lottery to determine which should be classified as affordable.

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

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

agree with fewer restrictions but should not be able to use the infrastructure levy to reduce council tax.

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

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

See answer to 22(c)

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?

A planning system that is only digital will exclude a cross section of the community. Whilst dated, planning notifications on lamp posts do serve a purpose.