

NOTES ON THE

GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER: PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

This paper dated 6th Aug 20 is a consultation document and the following are notes to give Cllrs an indication of contents. The notes are brief and it is suggested that full information will only be understood by reading the complete document which can easily be accessed on line.

You will also see by reading the paper that there are a series of questions inviting completion when responding to the consultation. A council response will be completed once any Cllr comments have been received in response to these notes.

The notes follow the exact format of the original often by copying the text.

Introduction

Identifying land under three categories as follows:

GROWTH : Areas suitable for substantial development.

RENEWAL : Areas suitable for some development such as gentle densification.

PROTECTED : Areas where development will be restricted . (Pewsey should fall within this category).

Local Plans to take 30 months rather than the current average of 7 years to complete.

Planning obligations ie 106 agreements and Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL) to be amalgamated leading to more affordable housing through planning gain with communities having more control on expenditure.

You will find further explanation on the above in the following text.

PILLAR ONE

This sets out new principles for Local Plans, their size, how long they should take to prepare and their clarity.

PROPOSAL 1 This describes the three growth areas mentioned above and confirms Protected Areas cover AONBs and Conservation Areas. Any new Local Plans will include colour coded areas showing the three designated areas.

PROPOSAL 2 Quote ' 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 appearances of development. '

PROPOSAL 3 To abolish the current long winded Sustainability Appraisal system and to develop a simplified system for assessing the environmental impact of plans. (Not before time).

PROPOSAL 4 To evolve a standard method to establish the housing requirement and therefore the amount of land required in the most appropriate area for at least a period of ten years. (For example

to avoid underdevelopment as in the case when Gleasons did just that to ensure no affordable houses .)

PROPOSAL 5

In **GROWTH** areas to be automatically granted outline planning permission, in principle, for development. This to be confirmed by the adoption of Local Plans and full planning permission achieved through streamlined faster consent routes.

In **RENEWAL** areas consent for development would be granted in one of three ways :

Redevelopment of certain building types.

A faster planning application process.

A Local or Neighbourhood Development Order.

In **PROTECTED** areas consent would be given through planning application as now. Like Pewsey as we are in an AONB.

PROPOSAL 6 Decision making should be faster and more certain with firm deadlines and with greater use of technology. (See paper for much more detail)

PROPOSAL 7 Local Plans to be more visual, map based and use more IT technology.

PROPOSAL 8 Local Authorities and the Planning Inspectorate will be required to meet a statutory timetable. That is Local Plans will take 30 months, split into 5 stages. (See paper for exact details)

PROPOSAL 9 Neighbourhood Plans (NPs) should be retained as an important means of community input and communities will be encouraged to make use of more digital tools. (A lot of good this will be if they don't last longer than two years)

PROPOSAL 10 Faster building out through the planning process will be encouraged. (Penalties for not responding to approval within a reasonable time ?)

PILLAR TWO

This covers design and the area being developed.

PROPOSAL 11 Design guidance and codes will be prepared locally with community involvement and with neighbourhood planning groups. (It would be good to think that WC would take note of what we said in our NDP!)

PROPOSAL 12 Set up a body to support the delivery of locally popular design codes and for each authority to have a chief officer responsible for design and place making.

PROPOSAL 13 To consider; how Homes England strategic objectives will be given greater emphasis to deliver beautiful places. (The words 'beautiful and beauty' are often used in Proposal 13 and 14. We think that it would be helpful to accurately define them when used in this context)

PROPOSAL 14 The introduction of a fast track for beauty through changes to national policy by updating the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and intervention in Growth and Renewal area planning.

The reformed system will continue to protect places of environmental and cultural value such as National Parks, SSI, AONBs , Conservation Areas and Local Wildlife Sites.

PROPOSAL 15 The NPPF will be amended accordingly to allow for the new planning system to enable it to play a full role in mitigation, adapting to climate change and maximising environmental benefits.

PROPOSAL 16 The design of a quicker simpler framework to assess environmental sustainability.

PROPOSAL 17 The conservation and enhancing of heritage buildings. There is a suggestion that Listed Buildings should be sympathetic to change to support their continued use and address climate change.

PROPOSAL 18 Planning reforms to facilitate ambitious improvements in energy standards and the delivery of climate change standards.

PILLAR THREE

Planning for infrastructure and connected plans and to look at new ways to use development obligations.

PROPOSAL 19 The reform of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) to be charged as a fixed proportion of the development cost at a national rate. And to consolidate 106 contributions under the reformed Infrastructure Levy (See paper for details)

PROPOSAL 20 The scope of a new Infrastructure Levy could be expanded to include change of use through permitted development rights.

PROPOSAL 21 The reformed Infrastructure Levy should deliver affordable housing provision and to ensure developers are incentivised to deliver high quality affordable homes, which is currently not the case.

PROPOSAL 22 More freedom given to local authorities on how the Infrastructure Levy is spent.

DELIVERY CHANGE

Government wishes to make rapid progress and have published another consultation on four short term measures to improve the effectiveness of the current system :

1. Changes to the current method of assessing housing need.
2. Securing First Homes at a discounted price
3. Temporary lifting small site thresholds below which developers do not have to contribute Affordable Housing to up to 40-50 units. (This would adversely affect areas like Pewsey where developments are often smaller than this and would mean they would get no Affordable House)
4. Extend permission in principle for large developments.

(I have now read this interim consultation and will brief you on how it affects Pewsey and make suggestions on how we should reply to the consultation. Certainly we should vote against item 3 above unless it is amended.)

PROPOSALS 22 and 23 To develop the new system by giving the planning sector resources and skill strategy plus stronger planning enforcement capabilities.