

# The Government's White Paper on Planning for the Future

## Introduction

This White Paper is currently out for public consultation. The deadline is 29 October 2020.

An implementation date of 2024 is envisaged for new legislation which may encapsulate some or all of the proposals in the White Paper plus any other ideas yet to emerge.

This White Paper is 60 pages long, plus appendices. There are 30 plus specified questions, each with multiple sub-questions.

We need to decide if the Parish Council should submit comments on some or all aspects of the White Paper.

We also need to agree who will do this task and submit it to the October Parish Council meeting. In my view, because of the nature of the White Paper, it is not practical for the task to be divided up.

## Main points in the White Paper

It starts from the premise that the current planning system is “a relic of the middle C20th” and that it is not delivering the houses needed by people, and needed to get the economy moving.

It includes a variety of proposals for making **more land available** and to **speed up the delivery of new houses**. It retains Local Planning Authorities (HDC). The Government will give them binding housing targets (likely to be much higher than current targets). It will require them to deliver in 30 months a Local Plan that identifies specific, named places where these houses can be built. These places must be categorised as:

- Land that suitable for **GROWTH**, defined as suitable for substantial development which would have automatic planning permission in principle and give developers certainty. This would remove powers from elected members (District Councillors) and the public to oppose and hold up individual planning permissions. Possibly, Buck Barn could come into this category?
- Land that is suitable for **RENEWAL**, defined as suitable for smaller scale development in and around villages and small towns with a presumption in favour of development (automatic permission in principle through site

allocations in the Local Plan or possibly in a Neighbourhood Plan). There may be concern about some land in and surrounding our villages?

- Land that is **PROTECTED**, such as Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Conservation areas, National Parks etc, where a full planning application is needed and development is restricted.

Local Planning Authorities' Plans, as well as zoning land in this way, will be required to have Design Codes (as part of the "build beautiful" drive) and to be digitalised (to modernise and make planning more efficient).

It is proposing to abolish the "**duty to co-operate**" with nearby authorities (such as Crawley, who says it can't build more houses) but does not say what will take its place.

It makes virtually no mention of **Neighbourhood Plans** (NPs) and when it does the future of NPs is not clear.

It proposes a **single infrastructure levy** on developers by amalgamating Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy but does not indicate if more or less money will be levied.

It removes the requirement for developers to build **social housing** if the site is for 10 or more houses. The base number has gone up from 10 to 50. This will reduce the amount of social housing and it is not clear how this deficiency will be made good.

It removes the need for **sustainability and environmental assessments** and says they will be replaced with a simpler sustainability test but, again, does not say what that test will be.

### **Latest Govt housing target for HDC**

The Govt is proposing to raise HDC's housing target from the current 920 houses to 1,715 houses per year for the next 10 years (almost double).

### **Conclusion**

I would suggest that the Parish Council does not attempt a comprehensive response to all questions, but is selective and responds to those that cause us most concern.

**Owen Hydes**

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