

Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places

Summary

The Department for Communities and Local Government has launched a consultation on proposed changes to planning policy design and legislation. The Consultation follows on from the housing White Paper and is seeking views on changes to national policy to help local planning authorities and communities plan and deliver for the homes they need.

The consultation paper can be found [here](#) .

Context

In the housing White Paper the Government set out proposals to tackle the housing challenge. This included building more houses of the type people want to live in, in the places they want to live. The Housing White Paper also set out four areas where action is needed. They were: planning for the right homes in the right places, building homes faster, diversifying the market and helping people now. The Housing White Paper contained proposals to reform planning to achieve these objectives. It reinforced the central role of local and Neighbourhood Plans in the planning system, so that local planning authorities and local communities retain control of where development should and should not go. It also reiterated strong protections for the Green Belt and other environmental designations, and set out proposals to make sure that high quality homes are built in which people want to live.

The Government stated in the Housing White Paper that they would consult further on specific issues and this paper carries forward that commitment. It is seeking views on the Government's proposed approach to a standard method for calculating local housing need, including transitional arrangements, improving how authorities work together in planning to meet housing and other requirements across boundaries, through the preparation of a statement of common ground, how the new approach to calculating housing need can help authorities plan for the needs of particular groups and support neighbourhood planning, proposals for improving the use of section 106 agreements, by making the use of viability assessments simpler, quicker and more transparent and seeking further views on how the Government can build homes more quickly.

Main Areas Of Interest-

The National Association is mainly interested in the sector's responses to the following questions as these were primarily the areas of interest we also responded to Government on regarding the Housing White Paper in May, 2017. We are primarily, though, interested in the sector's views regarding **Question 11 (emboldened below)**;

Question 1: a) do you agree with the proposed standard approach to assessing local housing need? If not, what alternative approach or other factors should be considered?

b) how can information on local housing need be made more transparent?

Question 2: do you agree with the proposal that an assessment of local housing need should be able to be relied upon for a period of two years from the date a plan is submitted?

Question 3: do you agree that we should amend national planning policy so that a sound plan should identify local housing need using a clear and justified method?

Question 5: b) do you consider that authorities that have an adopted joint local plan, or which are covered by an adopted spatial development strategy, should be able to assess their five year land supply and/or be measured for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test, across the area as a whole?

c) do you consider that authorities that are not able to use the new method for calculating local housing need should be able to use an existing or an emerging local plan figure for housing need for the purposes of calculating five year land supply and to be measured for the purposes of the Housing Delivery Test?

Question 7a) do you agree with the proposed administrative arrangements for preparing the statement of common ground?

b) how do you consider a statement of common ground should be implemented in areas where there is a Mayor with strategic plan-making powers?

c) do you consider there to be a role for directly elected Mayors without strategic plan-making powers, in the production of a statement of common ground?

Question 8: do you agree that the proposed content and timescales for publication of the statement of common ground are appropriate and will support more effective co-operation on strategic cross-boundary planning matters?

Question 9a) do you agree with the proposal to amend the tests of soundness to include that:

i) plans should be prepared based on a strategy informed by agreements over the wider area;
and

ii) plans should be based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities, which are evidenced in the statement of common ground?

b) do you agree to the proposed transitional arrangements for amending the tests of soundness to ensure effective co-operation?

Question 11: a) should a local plan set out the housing need for designated neighbourhood planning areas and parished areas within the area?

b) do you agree with the proposal for a formula-based approach to apportion housing need to neighbourhood plan bodies in circumstances where the local plan cannot be relied on as a basis for calculating housing need?

Question 12: do you agree that local plans should identify the infrastructure and affordable housing needed, how these will be funded and the contributions developers will be expected to make?

Question 17: a) do you agree that local planning authorities should set out in plans how they will monitor and report on planning agreements to help ensure that communities can easily understand what infrastructure and affordable housing has been secured and delivered through developer contributions?

c) how can local planning authorities and applicants work together to better publicise infrastructure and affordable housing secured through new development once development has commenced, or at other stages of the process?

Question 19: having regard to the measures we have already identified in the housing White Paper, are there any other actions that could increase build out rates?

Provisional Position of NALC

NALC is minded to support these measures. However the main NALC corporate positions on Neighbourhood Planning as adopted are as below – which we will be including in our response to consultation question 11;

- The mandatory provision of protection for parishes from speculative development during the creation of Neighbourhood Plans and greater certainty that ‘made’ plans will be upheld; &
- The Government to ensure that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) can only rely on accountable and transparent evidence of housing need which they are obliged to share with Local Councils progressing Neighbourhood Plans; ensuring that a failure to do so should result in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) being payable as if relevant councils had adopted a Neighbourhood Plan.

Your views

Please e-mail your responses to this consultation to Jessica.Lancod-frost@nalc.gov.uk by 17:00 on Friday 27 October, 2017.

Recommended Circulation:	County Associations
	All Member Councils

© NALC 2017