

Very interesting article from Jacqui Jones Greenstuff Middlesbrough and Beyond in response to Guardian article posted on Facebook 28th July 2018 by Wade Tovey -

Prime Minister launches new planning rules to get England delivering homes for everyone

A major overhaul to the National Planning Policy Framework has been launched to deliver the homes the country needs.

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From:

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, Prime Minister's Office, 10 Downing Street, and The Rt Hon Sajid Javid MP

Maximising the use of land, strengthened protections for the Green Belt and a greater emphasis on converting planning permissions into homes are at the heart of new planning reforms, launched by the Prime Minister today (5 March 2018) to deliver the homes the country needs.

The government has already delivered more than a million homes since 2010, and last year saw the biggest increase in housing supply in England – over 217,000 new homes – for almost a decade.

Although significant progress has been made, we must do more to deliver 300,000 homes a year by the mid-2020s. More planning permissions need to be fast tracked into homes for a generation of first time buyers locked out of the housing market and our increasing older generation need the right homes designed to their needs. A major overhaul to the National Planning Policy Framework, the first in 6 years, has been launched today providing a comprehensive approach for planners, developers and councils to build more homes, more quickly, in the places people want to live. Councils and developers will now be required to work with community groups to ensure those affected by new developments will have a say on how they look and feel. It will focus on the following areas:

Greater responsibility

Local authorities will have a new housing delivery test focused on driving up the numbers of homes actually delivered in their area, rather than numbers planned for. Developers will also be held to account for delivering the commitments, including affordable housing and the infrastructure needed to support communities.

Maximising the use of land

More freedom will be given to local authorities to make the most of existing brownfield land to build homes that maximise density. Redundant land will be encouraged such as under utilised retail or industrial space for homes, with more flexibilities given to extend upwards on existing blocks of flats and houses as well as shops and offices. This will mean we can build the homes the country needs while maintaining strong protection for the Green Belt.

Maintaining strong protections for the environment

Ensuring developments result in a net gain to the environment where possible and increases the protection given to ancient woodland so they are not lost for future generations.

Ensuring the right homes are built

Delivering more affordable homes that meet the housing needs of everyone wherever they are in their life, including sites dedicated for first time buyers, build to rent homes with family friendly tenancies, guaranteed affordable homes for key workers and adapted homes for older people.

Higher quality and design

Introducing new quality standards so well designed new homes are built in places people are proud to live in and live next door to.

More transparent planning process

Local authorities will be encouraged to work together and continue to close the gap between planning permissions granted and homes built. A new standardised approach to assessing housing need will be introduced with new measures to make the system of developer contributions clearer, simpler and more robust, so developers understand what's expected of them and will be in no doubt that councils will hold them to their commitments.

Housing Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

An entire generation is being locked out of a broken housing market as prices and rents race ahead of supply. Reforming the planning system is the crucial next step to building the homes the country needs.

This government is determined to fix the broken housing market and restore the dream of home ownership for a new generation. There is no silver bullet to this problem but we're re-writing the rules on planning so we can take action on all fronts.

In moving to a more integrated society, the focus for everyone, whether a developer or a neighbourhood group, must be to come together to build the homes our communities deserve.

John Acres, MRTPI, President, The Royal Town Planning Institute, said:

We are delighted to be co-launching the consultation on the new National Planning Policy Framework today and we encourage the planning profession and others who care about planning and what it can do, to feed back to government.

The RTPI will be holding a series of round table sessions for our members around the country to discuss its contents.

Planners are critical to and passionate about building vibrant and connected neighbourhoods, towns, cities and wider areas; at the heart of which we need to ensure we build enough good quality homes that fit the needs of all.

A clear, concise and consistent policy context can help to deliver this. We applaud the government's focus on homes and planning and in revising the framework.

In a move to ensure that swift and fair planning decisions are made at appeal an end to end review of planning inquiries is also planned.

The planning reform package is part of a wider package of housing reforms; building on the recent £5 billion Housing Infrastructure Fund announced to help unlock new homes in areas with the greatest housing need.

The government has already allocated £866 million to 133 council led projects to fund key local infrastructure including new roads, cycle paths, flood defences and land remediation work, all essential ahead of building the homes.