

Planning White Paper

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PT04

ITEM 25

Key points from Secretary of State's announcement to Parliament

- This year is the 60th anniversary of Town & Country Planning Act
- Barker & Eddington reviews in 2006 highlighted shortcomings of the planning system
- Present system favours well resourced people who have more influence over outcomes than the less well off.
- Decision making very slow causing costs and prolonged uncertainty, in no one's interest.
- Where there is delay in good & necessary development it can deny society access to improved infrastructure
- Proposals in White Paper designed to improve decisions on major infrastructure applications at one extreme and
- Introduce new approach to householder minor applications whilst protecting interests of neighbours
- White Paper consultation period 21st May – 17th August

Major infrastructure proposals

- Govt. will issue national policy statements about infrastructure required for next 10 – 25 years. These will be subject to close parliamentary scrutiny and intense public debate.
- Overlapping ‘consent regimes’ will be replaced by a single system
- New independent infrastructure planning commission will be created comprising lawyers, planners, environmentalists and communities. Commission will oversee the Inquiry process and take final decision on go ahead.

Householder minor applications

- Makes it easier to carry out minor improvements to domestic dwellings e.g. conservatories or extensions while continuing to protect the interests of neighbours
- Will allow householders to install small scale renewable technologies such as solar panels to reduce fuel bills and carbon footprint, without going through a rigorous application process

Strengthened role of Local Govt.

- Wish to enable local authorities to use planning as an effective tool to achieve their vision for an area.
- Work with Local Govt Assoc and planning profession to improve performance.
- Aim to devolve further decision making to LAs and reduce the number of applications called in by the Secretary of State.
- Reduction in householder applications will enable councils to focus resources on difficult cases
- Govt. will speed up the appeals process