

**A Housing Strategy for
England**

DLP BRIEFING NOTE 78

Prepared by
DLP Planning Ltd

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A HOUSING STRATEGY FOR ENGLAND

On 21st November 2011, the Government published a new strategy entitled '*Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England*', which has been designed to get developers building again and kick-start the housing market. The strategy introduces new measures as well as pulling together a number of existing measures into one document. It includes sections on increasing housing supply, social housing, the private rented sector, empty homes, housing quality, sustainability and design. The Government hopes that if the strategy is successful it will lead to economic growth and jobs.

Measures included in the strategy focus on offering incentives to those in the building trade, giving help to those already in the housing market or hoping to buy their first home and reforming the social rented sector for those who need it most. The main proposals are outlined below.

New Build Indemnity Scheme

This measure is intended to increase the numbers of first time buyers by allowing a house to be purchased with only a 5% deposit. The house builder will then deposit 3.5% of the sale price for each home sold through the scheme. The Government will also contribute by providing additional security for the loan in the form of a guarantee.

FirstBuy

£400 million is to be set aside by the Government and around 100 housebuilders for the FirstBuy equity loan scheme, which will see first time buyers being able to purchase a new build home with an equity loan of up to 20%.

Growing Places Fund

£500 million is to be set aside for a Growing Places Fund to be spent on areas where lack of infrastructure is a barrier to development. This will allow Local Economic Partnerships and local authorities to boost their local economies and encourage developers to start building.

Reconsideration of s106 Agreements

This proposal, which is to be consulted on at a later date, would require local authorities to reconsider the s106 agreements that were concluded prior to April 2010.

Get Britain Building Investment Fund

£400 million is to be set aside to support housebuilders who have been unable to continue with their schemes due to lack of finance and to help stalled, 'shovel-ready' sites. A prospectus detailing the scheme, which will also give housebuilders the opportunity to submit bids, is to be produced before the end of the year. It is thought that the fund will allow 16,000 homes to be built, of which 3,200 will be affordable housing.

Freeing Up Public Sector Land

The Government intends to release enough public sector land with the capacity to build up to 100,000 homes over the Spending Review period. The *Build Now, Pay Later* model will be used to ensure that developers can begin building on public land sites without the upfront cost of paying for the land.

The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework

The Localism Act and National Planning Policy Framework introduced powers for Neighbourhood Planning and the Community Right to Build and the new housing strategy further supports these ideas.

Locally Planned Large Scale Development

The Strategy also mentions the need for strategic reform on the way housing is planned citing support for *locally planned large scale development* as one way of pursuing this albeit with no detailed explanation as to how that might be achieved in practice. There is, however, a commitment from the Government to set out its proposals for achieving this shortly, including the running of a competition to promote the development of a wave of larger-scale projects where there is clear local support and private sector appetite. Further detail will also be provided on *streamlined and collaborative planning* and *infrastructure support and prioritisation*.

DLP Planning has considerable experience of all aspects of planning for housing development and would be pleased to assist you if you have any further questions.

If you require more information or would like to discuss the issues mentioned in further detail please contact:

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