

DLP BRIEFING NOTE 152

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DLP Planning Consultants

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Budget 2014

On 19th March 2014 the Chancellor delivered the Budget for 2014, providing an update on the Government's plans for the economy and highlighting several significant matters for the Planning System in the UK, aimed at supporting economic growth and increases in the delivery of housing.

The changes proposed in the Budget include:-

- **Flood defence repairs and maintenance**
- **The pothole challenge**
- **Creation of UK Regulators' Network (UKRN)**
- **Mersey Gateway Project**
- **Help to Buy Scheme extension**
- **Builders Finance Fund**
- **Right to Build**
- **Regeneration of large housing estates**
- **'New garden city' at Ebbsfleet, Kent**
- **Changes to General Permitted Development Order**

Infrastructure

Flood Defences – The Government have set aside £140 Million to repair and restore flood defences as a consequence of the weather experienced across Britain at the beginning of the year. The Government will also be developing a long term plan for flood defences, which will likely be published later in the year.

Pothole Challenge – The Government have pledged £200 million in emergency funding to assist with the highway repairs.

Creation of UK Regulators' Network (UKRN) – The aim of the UKRN is to focus on facilitating efficient, multi-sector infrastructure investment projects. There will also be a focus on customer engagement and switching regulated markets. The Government plans to consult on whether further measures are required, however, no date for this consultation has been confirmed.

Mersey Gateway Bridge Project – The Government has committed £270 Million to support the regeneration and reduce traffic congestion across the Mersey, which is aimed at boosting the economy and assisting growth in the north of England and is tied to HR2.

Housing and Planning

Help to Buy Scheme – The Help to Buy Scheme is broken down into 2 options, Equity Loan and mortgage guarantee, previously the scheme was due to run until March 2016, however, the Government has announced that the Help to Buy: Equity Loan part of the scheme will be extended until March 2020.

It is estimated that a further 120,000 households will purchase through this scheme between 2016 and 2020.

Builders Finance Fund – The Builders Finance Fund will be created to support small and medium sized enterprises with £500 Million in funding from the Government.

Right to Build – The Government will be consulting on creating a new right to build scheme, where custom or self-builders have the right to a plot from Councils. This will if implemented have implications for how housing land is allocated.

There will be a £150 Million repayable fund created to help provide up to 10,000 serviced plots for custom build.

Regeneration of large housing estates – In the Autumn Statement 2013 the Chancellor indicated there would be a scheme brought forward to assist with the regeneration of large housing estates. There has already been interest made from several Greater London Authorities and regeneration projects including Aylesbury Estate, Blackwall Reach and Grahame Park. The Government has set up a **fund of £150 Million to kick start the regeneration** through a repayable loan. Bids will shortly be invited from private sector developers working with Local Authorities on estates that may benefit.

New Garden City at Ebbsfleet – Ebbsfleet is an ambitious project for the creation of 15,000 new homes on existing brownfield land in Kent proposed some years ago and based on the 'Garden City' approach. The Government has confirmed that there will be a dedicated Urban Development Corporation created and £200 Million provided in the short term for infrastructure funding.

Notably, from this project the Government is also planning to create a prospectus for other local authorities to develop their own, locally-led proposals for bringing forward new garden cities/villages. This is due to be published around Easter 2014.

Greater Cambridge infrastructure – The Government has pledged £100 Million to support the transport and infrastructure proposals brought forward to improve the local area and this again is seen as a test bed for other initiatives that may be brought forward in advance of the election or in the next parliament.

Planning Reform

General Permitted Development Order – There will be a review of the General Permitted Development Order by the Government, who are looking at introducing a three tier system to decide the appropriate levels of permission. There will also be consultation to improve changes of use, however, no date for this has been given.

Following the release of the Budget 2014 the chancellor has announced that there will be further alterations made to change of use rules. A wider use class is planned, which is aimed at allowing more commercial buildings i.e. warehouses to be converted into residential dwellings. This wider use class will also include betting shops and payday loan firms. This follows announcements that there will also be changes to car bays, loading bays and non-retail facilities, which are aimed at helping businesses expand.

Conclusion

The Budget speech also highlighted the Government's intention to introduce further changes to the planning system. These changes will aim to boost the economy and encourage house building and highlights several key changes to help improve the planning system and speed of decision making.

DLP Planning Consultants have considerable knowledge of planning matters. Senior staff of the Practice are well versed with the planning process and policy changes, this allows us to deliver the best result for our clients. We have excellent working relationships with Local Planning Authorities, making the process clearer and smoother for our clients. If you require any further advice regarding the above, please do not hesitate to contact one of the offices listed below. Senior staff within the practice would be very happy to assist you with regards to your enquiry.

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