

**Ministerial
Statement and
Neighborhood
Plans**

DLP BRIEFING NOTE 170

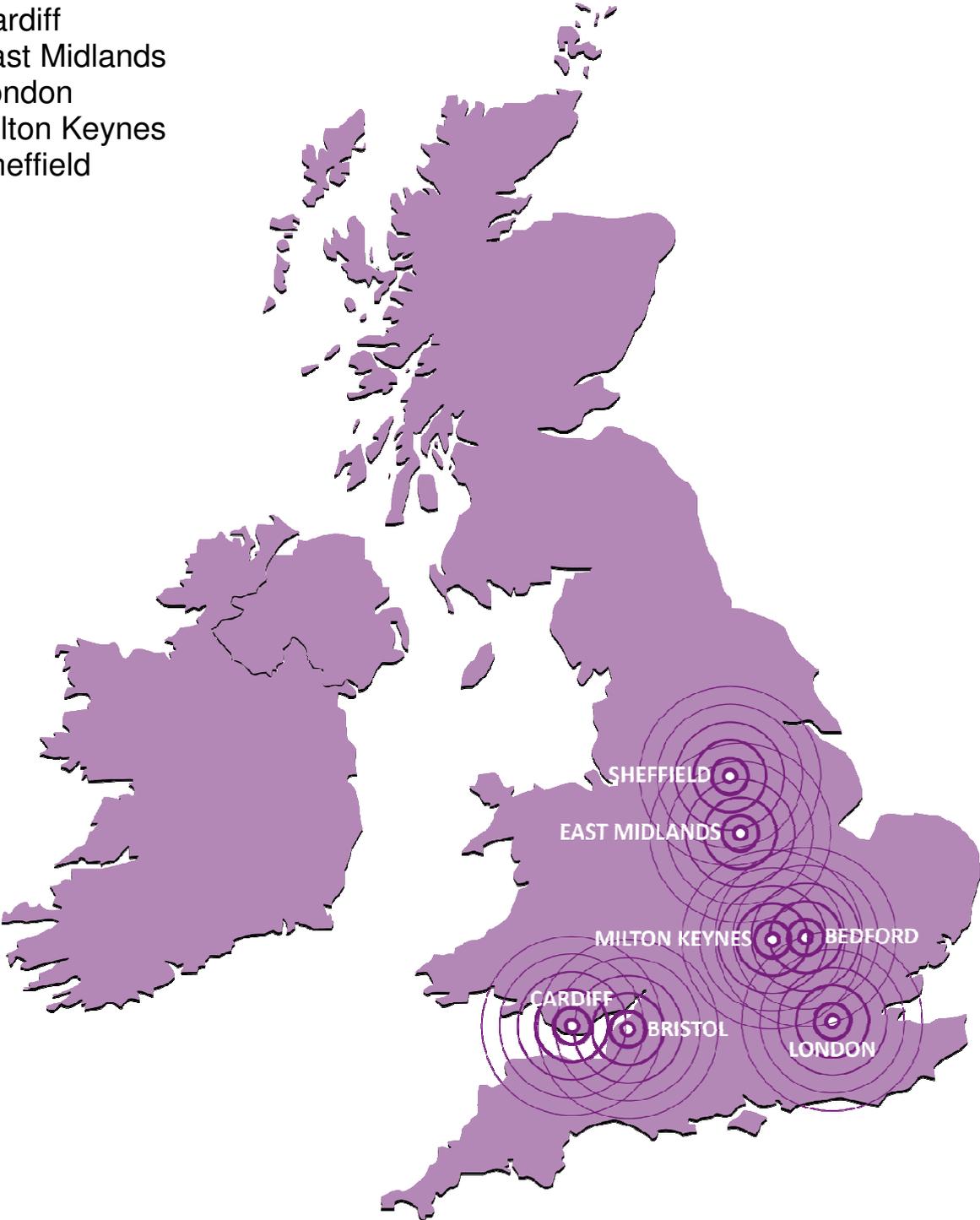
Prepared by
DLP Planning Consultants

July 2014



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Neighbourhood plans and the changing structure of power in planning.

The coalition government's stance on power in planning has been geared towards allocating authority to the local community – a stance reflected by the NPPF of 2012, where the government strongly encouraged neighbourhood planning as a means to allow local people to decide the right type of development for their communities – allowing more influence in decision making.

Neighbourhood planning aims to give communities complete power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Local communities can, for example, choose to set planning policies through a neighbourhood plan that is then used in determining planning applications.

Striking a balance between community needs and strategic planning.

Though most communities are embracing this new role, the need to strike a balance between the needs of the community and larger scale strategic needs of the relevant areas is proving to be challenging. Winslow, in Buckinghamshire, has allocated 5 sites to house 455 new residential units by 2031, with a referendum called to take place on the 24th of July. Gladman Developments, however, have been granted a High Court hearing where they are to seek an injunction to prevent the referendum.

The argument stands that the neighbourhood plan in that area would be against the objectives of the NPPF, as it seeks to restrict development whilst there is no local evidence justifying this. The Town Council has replied with a statement refuting this argument and stating that the referendum will still take place.

New condition applied in the latest ministerial statement

The ministerial statement published on the 10th of July 2014 set out the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG)'s intentions for developments of residential dwellings of more than 10 units, specifically in areas with neighbourhood plans, where the Secretary of Communities (Eric Pickles) has issued an amendment of the recovery policy set out in the Official Report of the 30th of June 2008 (Column 43WS).

The amendment requires that from the 11th of July 2014, for 12 months, there will be a trial period where applications for development which meet the threshold criteria will be sent into 'recovery', thereby allowing the minister to make decisions where originally the Planning Inspectorate would. This is different from a 'call-in', which is where applications are taken out of the hands of local governments and handed to ministers. The statement makes it very clear that this is a recovery of applications that would already be out of the hands of local governments.

Current Referendum statistics

The Anslow Neighbourhood Plan, in East Staffordshire, was approved by 94 per cent of voters on 3 July.

The Barnham and Eastergate Neighbourhood Plan in Arun district, Sussex, was approved by 95 per cent of voters on 2 July.

The Felpham neighbourhood plan, also in Arun, was approved by 90 per cent of voters on the same day, on an 18 per cent turnout.

DLP's involvement in development and representations

Our work is based on understanding and awareness of the political, economic and social dimensions of any project undertaken. DLP Planning Consultants has considerable knowledge of the national planning system and have experience and a proven track record in the promotion of sites for development through both forward planning and application protocols, as well as providing expert guidance to landowners, developers, community groups and stakeholders. If you wish to utilise DLP's considerable planning expertise to maximise your opportunity, please contact us. Senior staff within the practice would be very happy explain its potential implications for you.

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

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