

Government Announces Long-term Plan For Housing

Briefing Note

03/08/2023

Ref No : 388

Introduction

On 24 July 2023, the Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published a Long Term Plan for Housing, which sets out commitments to a new era of regeneration, inner city densification and housing delivery across England, with the aim of supplying beautiful, safe, decent homes within high growth potential areas in partnership with local communities, ahead of the proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework.

The proposals stem from the Government's aspirations, as set out in the Levelling Up White Paper in February 2022, to regenerate 20 towns and cities, and also as a means to bolster housing land supply in the face of criticism of its changes to housing control figures, and their impact. The proposed Long-term Plan now focuses on regeneration and renaissance to within three key locations; Cambridge, central London, and central Leeds.

The proposed changes appear to be a recommitment of the Prime Minister's promise to boost homebuilding to tackle the acknowledged shortfall in the housing stock by the next election.

Both the Prime Minister and the Sec of State, Michael Gove are committing to concentrating new house building in urban areas, while continuing to protect the countryside. The proposed strategy also seeks to confirm that the Government will meet its manifesto commitment to build 1 million homes over this parliament.

The following are the key components of the new proposed 'Long-term Plan for Housing.'

A new vision for Cambridge

The 'plan' would see Cambridge receiving large scale support from the Government to further promote its role as Europe's Science Capital and create 'Europe's Silicon Valley'. The proposals would also seek to address the existing constraints. The Cambridge subarea faces, including very high property prices (most expensive property outside of London) and companies/investors competing over limited

lab space and commercial property, and prices rivalling London, Paris and Amsterdam.

The Government, in reflection of recent embargoes on development, also propose the creation of a Water Scarcity Group, to accelerate the proposed new 'Fens Reservoir' so as to respond to concerns about the impact of new development on water resources in the area.

The 'plan' includes a vision for a new quarter in the City of well designed, sustainable and beautiful, mixed neighbourhoods, including laboratories/commercial developments adapted to meet future climate goals encircled by parkland and woodland accessible to all who live in Cambridge.

The proposed new development will require very substantial infrastructure investment, which the Government aims to deliver through land value capture created via the compulsory acquisition of farmland.

Overseeing this will be a new Cambridge Delivery Group chaired by Peter Freeman (Chair, Homes England), backed by £5 million funding. The new Group will take the lead on identifying key space required for housing, infrastructure, services and green space. According to the Government, the new Group will take definitive action to restart development where it has halted by providing a £500,000 fund to assist with planning capacity. How this will occur is not detailed at this stage.

Additional regeneration sites

East London would see a 'Dockland 2.0' vision delivering up to 65,000 homes across multiple sites including Thamesmead, Beckton and Silvertown. The Affordable Homes Programme will be directed towards regeneration with up to £1 billion being provided for London with an additional £1 million funding for the Mayor to consider innovative new ways to release industrial land for housing.

The Plan also includes commitments in Central Leeds to collaborate with local partners on regenerating the city centre by identifying the remaining barriers to delivery for key housing growth sites. These include the South Bank,

Contact us:

18 Regent Place, Rugby, CV21 2PN

t 01788 562 233 e rugby.enquiries@dlpconsultants.co.uk

www.dlpconsultants.co.uk



Innovation Arc, this potentially delivering up to 20,000 new homes on identified land in the next decade.

The government will also seek to adapt existing HS2 land in Leeds City Centre with the help of local authorities where appropriate for supporting economic growth and housing delivery.

The Government has also outlined an intention to invest £800 million from the £1.5 billion Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land fund to fund up to 56,000 new homes across England, turning once disused sites into new communities, and this suggests it will reduce rural land take. Homes England will receive funding of £550 million with reinvestments of the receipts back into the fund potentially totalling up to £1 billion overall.

Changes to Permitted Development Regime

In tandem with the announcement on new development zones, a consultation on Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) has been launched. The changes outlined seek to provide greater certainty over some types of developments, including how design codes may apply to certain schemes to protect local character and give developers greater certainty.

The new PDRs will make it easier to convert, for example, larger department stores, spaces above shops and office spaces into residential properties. The changes also include more support for farm diversification and development to allow rural businesses to extend.

The Government will hold consultations on further alterations in the Autumn, including better support for existing homeowners to extend their homes. In parallel the changes also advise that Article 4 Directions (which remove PDRs for certain areas) will only be agreed where there is evidence of wholly unacceptable impacts.

Removing Planning 'Bottleneck'

The Government is launching a £24 million *Planning and Skills Delivery Fund* to clear 'planning backlog'. A new 'super-squad' of leading planners will work on unblocking major housing developments, backed by £13.5 million fund. It is proposed that this will first work within the Cambridge area to assist with the Government's proposals for the city and sub area and will also look at sites across the eight identified Investment Zones.

A further consultation will be launched on reforming local

plans to make them simpler, shorter and including more visual material to clearly depict what is planned in local areas as part of a drive to create further local community engagement.

There will be an increase in the amount applicants will pay in planning fees, to cover the costs of providing planning departments with additional resources.

Building beautiful

Local communities are to be supported by the new 'Office of Place' which is a new body to lead a 'design revolution', to ensure new homes follow a simple design code that reflects an area's individual character and beauty and is supported by local residents.

What does this mean going forward?

The measures outlined are a repackaging for the most part of intentions already expressed, with a new emphasis on urban-based development, the driver for this being the new style development corporations. There is a parallel reiteration of protective measures for the countryside and 'valued landscapes' and green belt, and a loose commitment to meeting the housing targets previously set by the end of the Parliament.

The consultation on the measures is proposed to start in the autumn, and this needs to be viewed in the context of the limited time available in the remainder of the parliamentary period to carry through what may also require changes in primary legislation.

DLP are providing separate Briefing Notes on a number of the specific changes, and we are happy to discuss any aspect of the contents of this and the other Notes.

The Government has reiterated its commitment to building beautiful and the use of Design Codes to deliver high quality places. For further analysis of the proposed changes to the PD regulations, changes to planning fees and the Local Plan Making process please refer to separate DLP Client Briefing Notes.

If you wish to find out more about the Long-term plan for housing or how DLP can assist with any other planning queries, please get in touch: enquiries@dlpconsultants.co.uk