



Parish Clerk
28 Glenmoor Road
West Parley
Ferndown
Dorset
BH22 8QF

28th October 2020

Dear Sir,

Re: Planning For the Future – White Paper response

Thank you for encouraging local authorities and individuals to offer a response. We, as a Parish Council, note the wide-ranging changes proposed to the current system. The one proposed change that directly may affect Parish Councils, is that concerning the current method by which 25% allocation of CIL / S106 monies is altered within the revamped Infrastructure Levy. Rather than the current narrower definition of such monies being spent on infrastructure measures, it is proposed to widen this. Giving individual councils more power in this regard is welcomed.

We are however concerned that changes appear to weaken the current powers and abilities of professional Local Authority Town Planning Officers and elected members, to influence submitted plans. It is felt this is a retrograde step. Whilst the notion that in each authority there should be a designated ‘design officer’ in reality this does not appear to be matched by commensurate powers to promote ‘green environmental planning’.

In addition, the Officers will be remote and are unlikely to have a detailed knowledge of the character and quality of life of the area that they are making decisions on. Whilst also adopting the proposed ‘one size fits all’ recommended approach referenced in para Para 12 stating that decisions will be on a case by case basis rather than be determined clear rules. While Para 21/22 referencing to make developments ‘beautiful’ this is completely subjective as beauty is in the eye of the beholder. One person’s view of beauty does not match everyone, nor does it match the surround setting.

We would urge Government to carefully consider the detailed responses of the Royal Town Planning Institute which appear well researched and balanced, to the White Paper.

It is felt incumbent for elected members to take careful note of recommendations made by its professional officers whose remit is to take a wider perspective overview, than developers concerned only with one site. Given that currently 90% of planning applications are granted, the system may be said to be working well. Likewise, the MHLG should be seen to promote quality professional standards and listen to people with a wider remit than merely generating as much profit from development.

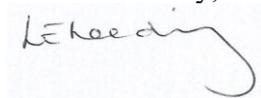
The Campaign for Protect of Rural England (CPRE) make a number of valid points for consideration, particularly that the government housing targets are way in excess of any sensible forecast of local housing need. Along with their reference to Local authorities should encourage the development of suitable affordable housing for younger families and we would add to this that affordable housing should be restricted for only those who need it rather than as an investment opportunity for others to use as a rental opportunity.

CPRE always campaign to protect Greenbelt, as this should not be seen a cheaper alternative to redevelopment as protection of the environment and natural green spaces should be of paramount importance. Development on the underutilized brown field sites, which have seen industries relocate, would be far more environmentally friendly rather than taking further greenbelt land. It is also imperative that the conservation areas are protected ... but who determines the criteria? Whilst formal conservation areas are detailed, it is the public who perhaps have a better knowledge of an area and would view additional informal areas requiring conservation protection.

It is disappointing that there is not more emphasis on Localism in the detail of the White Paper which was very much the focus in previous Planning Policies. Is this still to be considered or now superseded?

Finally, the absence of detail as to how the proposed reforms will generate more social and affordable housing, is regretted. Likewise, there are no specific proposals to ensure the needs of the physically and mentally disadvantaged people within our communities are met, under current proposed changes.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L Leeding', written over a light grey rectangular background.

Mrs Linda Leeding
CiLCA, BA (hons)

Clerk to West Parley Parish Council