

Planning Bulletin: February 2017

This monthly note highlights some of the recent and forthcoming developments in the world of planning from a heritage perspective. For further information about any of the items, please follow the links provided or use the contact information on the last page. Please note that this is not necessarily a complete review of matters and is not intended to provide any legal advice on the issues raised. Unless otherwise stated, it does not comprise the formal position of Historic England on these matters.

Housing White Paper

- The [Housing White Paper](#) was issued by Government on 7 February. It is presented as a four-step plan:
 - Step 1: Planning for the right homes in the right places (Chapter 1)
 - Step 2: Building homes faster (Chapter 2)
 - Step 3: Diversifying the market (Chapter 3)
 - Step 4: Helping people now (Chapter 4)
- As previously announced, the White Paper reflects the Government's response to the review of the Community Infrastructure Levy, and to the Local Plans Expert Group's recommendations, and also addresses local planning authority resourcing and changes to planning application fees. It also proposes new legislation (e.g. regulations requiring local plans to be reviewed every five years, and legislation to allow locally accountable New Towns Development Corporations to be set up), a number of changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (including proposals in respect of brownfield land, housing density, a housing delivery test, and amendments to the presumption in favour of sustainable development), and further changes in various areas, such as a standardised approach to assessing housing requirements, and a fee for making a planning appeal. An Annex to the White Paper provides further detail on the proposals in Chapters 1 and 2, and sets out [consultation questions](#) where new proposals are being made. The White Paper's summary of all the proposals in the White Paper is reproduced at Appendix I to this Bulletin to provide an overview.
- A number of responses to previous consultations were published alongside the Housing White Paper, as well as some technical documents:
 - [Proposed Changes to NPPF](#) (discussed further below, under 'NPPF')
 - [Government Response to the Technical Consultation on Starter Homes Regulations](#)
 - A [threefold summary of responses](#) (discussed further below, under 'Consultation Update'):
 - Technical Consultation on Implementation of Planning Changes
 - Consultation on Upward Extensions
 - Rural Planning Review Call for Evidence
 - [Government Response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee Inquiry into the Report of the Local Plans Expert Group](#) (discussed further below, under 'Consultation Update')

- [Community Infrastructure Levy Review and Three Dragons and University of Reading Research Report.](#)
- In addition to the consultation on the White Paper itself, referred to above, further consultations have been launched:
 - [Planning and Affordable Housing for Build to Rent](#): The consultation seeks views on planning measures to support an increase in Build to Rent schemes across England, including changes to the NPPF (closing date 1 May).
 - [Rural Planning Review: Call for Evidence](#): The Government’s response to the February 2016 call for evidence includes a consultation on rural permitted development rights (discussed further below, under ‘Consultation Update’), for which the closing date is 2 May.

Legislation and Matters Arising

Housing and Planning Act

- The *Housing and Planning Act* is available [here](#). Much of the detail regarding the interpretation and implementation of these provisions (and their likely impact) is still to be determined. Whilst the many recent consultations provide some indication of the direction of travel, emerging pilot schemes, regulations and guidance will require close scrutiny: further updates will be provided as more detail emerges.

Neighbourhood Planning Bill

- The *Neighbourhood Planning Bill*, as amended in Committee, is available [here](#); a version showing the changes made in Committee is available [here](#) (the Explanatory Notes from the Bill’s introduction in the Lords are available [here](#), and a House of Lords Library Note on the Bill [here](#)).
- The Bill addresses neighbourhood planning (largely procedural changes), planning conditions, compulsory purchase, and, further to amendments in the Commons, local plans (Historic England gave both [oral](#) and [written evidence](#) to the Public Bill Committee during the Bill’s passage through the Commons). Second reading in the Lords took place on 17 January; Committee Stage concluded on 8 February: the debates may be read [here](#). The changes made at Committee included further neighbourhood planning changes (including notification of applications to neighbourhood planning bodies), a requirement for the Secretary of State to issue guidance for local planning authorities on how their local development documents should address housing needs that result from old age or disability, provision for the Secretary of State to prescribe the matters to be addressed by Statements of Community Involvement, and minor changes to Clause 13 (Restrictions on power to impose planning conditions), which still restricts the use of pre-commencement conditions. Report stage is scheduled to begin on 23 February.
- DCLG has issued [further information on how the Government intends to exercise the Bill’s delegated powers](#), including draft regulations to implement the provisions on planning conditions. DCLG issued a [Delegated Powers Memorandum](#) on 14 December, and a [Supplementary Delegated Powers Memorandum](#) on 24 January, which further set out the ‘relevant background and justification’ for the delegated powers. A [letter](#) from Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth responded to requests from Peers for evidence of examples of pre-commencement conditions delaying development.
- In September 2016, DCLG undertook two consultations on elements of the Bill:

- *Improving the Use of Planning Conditions*: the consultation looked primarily at the issue of pre-commencement conditions (Historic England’s response is available [here](#)). The Government has since issued its [response](#) to the consultation.
- *Technical Consultation on Implementation of Neighbourhood Planning Provisions in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill*: the consultation looked primarily at proposals for regulations covering various procedural issues (Historic England’s response is available [here](#)). The Government has since issued its [response](#) to the consultation.

Other Emerging Legislation

- *Cultural Property (Armed Conflicts) Bill*: Intended to ‘enable the UK to accede to the Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols’, through the introduction of a number of measures. The Bill has completed its Public Bill Committee stage; Report stage and third reading are scheduled for 20 February.
- *Digital Economy Bill*: The Bill makes provision in respect of – amongst other things – electronic communications infrastructure and services, including ‘fast broadband’ (power to introduce a new Broadband Universal Service Obligation; new Electronic Communications Code; new and simpler planning rules for building broadband infrastructure). Committee stage concluded on 8 February, and Report stage is scheduled to begin on 22 February. The Bill (as amended in Committee) is available [here](#), and a pre-Second Reading overview of the provisions of the Bill is available [here](#).
- *Use of Property (Protection) Bill*: A Private Member’s Bill, introduced in July, intended to make provision about protecting existing and established use of property. The Bill has now been committed to a Public Bill Committee (date to be confirmed).
- *UK Environmental Protection (Maintenance of EU Standards) Bill*: A Private Member’s Bill, introduced in July, intended to make provision about the safeguarding of standards of environmental protection derived from European Union legislation, including for water, air, soil, flood protection, and climate change, after the withdrawal of the UK from the EU. Second reading is currently scheduled for 24 February.
- *New Southgate Cemetery Bill*: A Bill to confer powers upon New Southgate Cemetery and Crematorium Limited and the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá’is of the United Kingdom to extinguish rights of burial and disturb human remains in respect of New Southgate Cemetery, for the purpose of increasing the space for interments.
- *Protection of Family Homes (Enforcement and Permitted Development) Bill*: A Private Member’s Bill, introduced in July, to make provision about guidance to local authorities on when to take enforcement action for breaches of planning law; to clarify guidance on the scope of permitted development rights; to make provision about rights and entitlements, including of appeal, for people whose homes are affected by such breaches; to make provision for the inspection and regulation of building under the permitted development regime; and to establish financial penalties for developers who breach planning law in certain circumstances. The Bill’s second reading debate started on Friday 28 October, and has subsequently been adjourned on a number of occasions; the debate is currently expected to resume on 24 February.
- *Modern Slavery (Transparency in Supply Chains) Bill*: A Private Member’s Bill to require commercial organisations and public bodies to include a statement on slavery and human trafficking in their annual report and accounts; and to require contracting authorities to

exclude from procurement procedures economic operators who have not provided such a statement. The Bill is expected to have its second reading debate on 24 March.

- Other Bills of potential interest include the *Local Growth and Jobs Bill* (retention of business rates and local tax flexibilities), the *Modern Transport Bill* (encouraging investment in autonomous vehicles, spaceplane operations and spaceports), and the *Prison and Courts Reform Bill* (old and inefficient prisons to be closed, and new institutions built). The background briefing notes for these Bills are available [here](#).

Committees

Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee: Productivity Plan

- In February 2016, the Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy Committee published the [report](#) of its inquiry into the Government's Productivity Plan. The Government has now published its [response](#).

House of Lords 'National Policy for the Built Environment' Committee

- The Select Committee on National Policy for the Built Environment was appointed by the House of Lords in June 2015 to consider the development and implementation of national policy for the built environment. The Committee took evidence in November 2015 (Historic England's evidence is available [here](#)), and published its report, *Building Better Places*, in February 2016. The Government issued its [response](#) to that report in November 2016. The House of Lords has since [debated](#) the report, with much coverage of planning and heritage issues.

Communities and Local Government Committee: Public Parks

- The Communities and Local Government Committee launched an [inquiry](#) into public parks in July 2016, to examine the impact of reduced local authority budgets on these open spaces and consider concerns that their existence is under threat (Historic England's written evidence is available [here](#)). The Committee has now published its [report](#), warning that 'parks are at a tipping point and face a period of decline with potentially severe consequences unless their vital contribution to areas such as public health, community integration and climate change mitigation is recognised'. Recommendations include the preparation of park policies and strategies; retention of public parks under local authority ownership; the issue of Ministerial guidance setting out key principles for appropriate governance and accountability arrangements; and the proper recognition of parks and green infrastructure in the Government's forthcoming Environment Plan. The Committee welcomed the Minister's intention to establish a cross-departmental group to consider the Committee's report and recommendations, and announced its own intention to return to the topic before the end of the Parliament, to assess progress.

Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- The [DCLG consultation](#) on 'proposed changes to national planning policy' closed in February 2016 (Historic England's response may be found [here](#)); DCLG has now published a [summary of consultation responses and the Government's response](#). This includes confirmation that:
 - The definition of affordable housing is to be extended to include starter homes and other products.

- Residential density is to be increased in ‘urban locations that are well served by public transport’ (rather than ‘commuter hubs’).
 - National policy will be strengthened to give support for new settlements.
 - Great weight is to be attached to the value of using suitable brownfield land within existing settlements.
 - The proposals for extending the presumption in favour of sustainable development of small sites adjacent to existing settlements will not be taken forward.
 - The policy definition of a small site is to be aligned with the established legal definition.
 - Policy is to be introduced requiring local planning authorities to put in place a specific positive local policy for assessing applications for development on small unallocated sites.
 - An amended version of the Housing Delivery Test is to be introduced.
 - Proposals to allow communities to identify opportunities to allocate sites for small scale starter home developments in the Green Belt through neighbourhood plans are not to be taken forward.
 - Proposals for development on brownfield land in the Green Belt will be permitted if they contribute to the delivery of starter homes and do not lead to substantial harm to the openness of Green Belt.
- Building on this, the Housing White Paper proposes further changes to the NPPF, and confirms that the Government intends to publish a revised version of the NPPF later this year, ‘which will consolidate the outcome from the previous and current consultations’, as well as reflecting changes made to national policy through Written Ministerial Statements since 2012.

Draft Airports National Policy Statement

- The Department for Transport has issued a draft Airports National Policy Statement (NPS) for consultation (closing date 25 May). It sets out the need for additional airport capacity in the south-east of England, why the Government believes that need is best met by a north-west runway at Heathrow Airport, and the specific requirements that the applicant for a new north-west runway will need to meet to gain development consent. The draft Airports National Policy Statement is subject to both public consultation and Parliamentary scrutiny before being finalised.

Written Ministerial Statement on Neighbourhood Planning

- The Minister for Housing and Planning issued a Written Ministerial Statement on Neighbourhood Planning on 12 December, which effectively reduces the NPPF’s five-year housing supply requirement to three years for neighbourhood plans with housing allocations: ‘I am today making clear that where communities plan for housing in their area in a neighbourhood plan, those plans should not be deemed to be out-of-date unless there is a significant lack of land supply for housing in the wider local authority area’ (i.e., the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a three-year supply of deliverable housing sites).
- A legal challenge to the Statement by a consortium of developers has now been launched, on grounds including the alleged unlawful introduction of a major change of policy without any prior consultation.

Advice

Historic England Advice

- The draft *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (GPA3): Settings and Views of Heritage Assets* has been published for consultation, and will ultimately replace *Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (GPA3): The Setting of Heritage Assets*.
- Historic England Advice notes (HEANs) 1-8 have all now been published on the Historic England website:
 - *HEAN 1: Conservation Areas: Designation, Appraisal and Review* (February 2016)
 - *HEAN 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets* (February 2016)
 - *HEAN 3: Site Allocations* (October 2015)
 - *HEAN 4: Tall Buildings* (December 2015)
 - *HEAN 5: Setting up a Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement* (November 2015)
 - *HEAN 6: Drawing up a Local Listed Building Consent Order* (November 2015)
 - *HEAN 7: Local Heritage Listing* (May 2016)
 - *HEAN 8: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment* (December 2016).
- A further draft HEAN has been issued for consultation, relating to listed buildings and curtilage (closing date 24 March). It clarifies and expands the advice contained in a short note on the same topic issued by Historic England in 2016, and contains hypothetical examples to show how to assess the extent of the curtilage of a listed building.

Marine

- The Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is asking for feedback on the first outputs in the development of the next phase of marine plans in the South West, North West, North East, and South East:
 - A questionnaire is available here, and is open until 31 March; it seeks comments on the recently published Issues Database, supporting evidence, proposed draft policies, and a new format for marine plans which takes a shorter, more digital, interactive approach.
 - A programme of marine plan workshops has also been arranged:
 - North East: 15 February (Scarborough) and 16 February (Newcastle)
 - North West: 28 February (Blackpool) and 1 March (Carlisle)
 - South East: 7 March (London) and 8 March (Colchester)
 - South West: 21 March (Falmouth), 22 March (Plymouth), and 23 March (Taunton).

Infrastructure

National Infrastructure Commission Framework Document

- The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) launched a consultation in January 2016 seeking views on the proposed governance, structure and operation of the National

Infrastructure Commission (Historic England's response is available [here](#)). The NIC's subsequent response to the feedback received is available [here](#).

- The NIC has now been established as an executive agency of HM Treasury, and its [framework document](#) published. This sets out the NIC's purpose and objectives, and the methods by which it will be governed and held accountable for its activities. It confirms the status of NIC recommendations in terms of planning policy:
 - The NIC will make recommendations to the government and other relevant bodies through the NIA and its specific studies.
 - The Government will lay the NIC's reports before Parliament, and will respond to the NIC's national infrastructure assessment and specific studies.
 - The Government response will set out clearly any further work required to take forward the recommendations:
 - Recommendations the Government agrees should be taken forward will become known as 'endorsed recommendations'.
 - Where the Government does not agree with a Commission recommendation, it may put forward an alternative proposal.
 - Where the Government is responsible for delivering endorsed recommendations, the Government's endorsement will be a statement of Government policy. Where recommendations have wider implications for the planning regimes, the Government will highlight any further steps needed to confirm the endorsed recommendation as planning policy.

Stonehenge

- Highways England has launched a consultation on proposed options for the [A303 at Stonehenge](#) (closing date 5 March). The Department for Transport's announcement, including the dates and locations of public exhibitions, is available [here](#).

Other Initiatives

Building our Industrial Strategy: Green Paper

- The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy has published a green paper, [Building our Industrial Strategy](#), for consultation (closing date 17 April). It sets out an aspiration to build an industrial strategy that addresses long-term challenges to the UK economy, and retains the 2015 Productivity Plan's emphasis on increasing productivity. The green paper proposes policy based around ten pillars which are 'important to drive forward our industrial strategy across the entire economy' (science, research and innovation; developing skills; upgrading infrastructure; supporting businesses to start and grow; improving procurement; encouraging trade and inward investment; delivering affordable energy and clean growth; cultivating world-leading sectors; driving growth across the whole country; and creating the right institutions to bring together sectors and places).

Heritage Online Debate: The Northern Powerhouse

- Historic England's current edition of [Heritage Online Debate](#) looks at how the historic environment can help shape the Northern Powerhouse, including an article from the Northern Powerhouse Minister, Andrew Percy. The Northern Powerhouse covers the North-East, North-West and Yorkshire, and seeks to address issues around economic growth.

Consultation Update

Technical Consultation on Implementation of Planning Changes

- With the publication of the *Summary of Responses to the Technical Consultation on Implementation of Planning Changes, Consultation on Upward Extensions and Rural Planning Review Call for Evidence*, the Government has now responded to the majority of the February 2016 *Technical Consultation on Implementation of Planning Changes* (Historic England's response to that consultation is available [here](#)).
- The following list summarises the progress made, and the Government's response:
 - *Chapter 1: Changes to planning application fees (February 2017)*

The Housing White Paper includes a package of measures to address concerns about local authority resourcing, including a 20% increase in planning application fees by Summer 2017. The Government advises that, 'alongside these measures, we will continue to engage with areas interested in reforming their planning service and committing to performance improvements, in return for greater fee flexibility'.
 - *Chapter 2: Permission in principle*

Response to be published when the regulations are laid in Spring 2017.
 - *Chapter 3: Brownfield register*

Response to be published when the regulations are laid in Spring 2017.
 - *Chapter 4: Small sites register (February 2017)*

The Government's response states that its intention is first to explore with local planning authorities and the commercial sector the information they are currently making available on small sites and whether they are able to provide greater transparency. If necessary, the requirement for local planning authorities to hold a small sites register will then be looked at again. The Housing White Paper states, however, that 'we have decided not to introduce a requirement for local authorities to keep a small sites register at this time, following the consultation last year'.
 - *Chapter 5: Neighbourhood planning (September 2016)*

The Government announced its intention to proceed with the majority of the proposals set out in the consultation (reflected subsequently in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill).
 - *Chapter 6: Local plans (February 2017)*

The Government's response restates its commitment to ensuring that all areas have a plan in place, and highlights the commitment in the Housing White Paper to legislating to require the review of local plans every five years. It also refers to the local plan-related provisions in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill and the Housing White Paper, including proposals for plans which are based on a clear understanding of housing need in their area, make effective use of existing land and release sufficient new land (while safeguarding key environmental protections).
 - *Chapter 7: Expanding the approach to planning performance (November 2016; see also criteria for local authority designation and Written Statement)*

Revised thresholds for local authority designation have now been introduced, including thresholds for designation for applications for non-major development.

- *Chapter 8: Testing competition in the processing of planning applications (February 2017)*
The Government will use the detailed responses to inform the pilots which will test the benefits of introducing competition to the processing of planning applications, and 'will reflect on all of the views expressed by respondents and consult further as we move forward'.
- *Chapter 9: Information about financial benefits (February 2017)*
The Government intends 'to bring forward regulations at an appropriate opportunity to require local planning authorities to deliver the proposals set out in our consultation'.
- *Chapter 10: Section 106 dispute resolution (February 2017)*
The Government's response highlights the findings of the independent review of CIL and its relationship with Section 106 planning obligations, and states that the Government will examine the options for reforming the system of developer contributions, respond to the independent review, and make an announcement at Autumn Budget 2017. The Government will consider dispute resolution further, in the context of this reform.
- *Chapter 11: Permitted development rights for state-funded schools (February 2017)*
The Government is to bring forward a package of new and extended permitted development rights, as consulted on.
- *Chapter 12: Changes to statutory consultation on planning applications (February 2017)*
The Government does not propose to pursue a maximum extension period for consultation responses, but will continue to work with statutory consultees on this and on other non-regulatory measures to improve performance, without diminishing the quality of advice given on planning applications.

Upwards Extensions

- In February 2016, DCLG and the Mayor of London issued the Consultation on Upward Extensions in London (Historic England's response to that consultation is available [here](#)). DCLG has now issued its response to that consultation, concluding that 'there is potential to deliver more homes by increasing densities on brownfield land. It is clear that building up has a role to play in meeting the need for new homes across the country, not just in London, and the Housing White Paper proposes a package of measures to support building at higher densities and using land more efficiently for development': policy will be developed through the NPPF.
- The Housing White Paper confirms that the Government proposes to amend the NPPF to make it clear that plans and individual development proposals should make efficient use of land. The White Paper further states that the Government would welcome ideas on how planning policy can further encourage such development, including considering new permitted development rights and other tools first mentioned in the original consultation.

Rural Planning Review: Call for Evidence

- A further consultation in February 2016 was the Rural Planning Review: Call for Evidence. It sought evidence on the effectiveness of the current planning system for rural businesses, and asked what improvements could be made to the planning system to support them, with particular reference to the planning application process, the use of permitted development rights, and the current thresholds for agricultural buildings to convert to residential buildings.

- The Government's response includes a consultation on extending the thresholds for agricultural permitted development rights, a new agricultural to residential use permitted development right, and an amendment to the existing Class Q permitted development right to bring it into line with the current permitted development right threshold for agricultural development. Responses are requested via the online Housing White Paper consultation, in which the rural issues are identified as additional questions 39 and 40 (closing date 2 May).
- The response also proposes amended guidance in respect of farmshops, polytunnels and on-farm reservoirs, and guidance to clarify for applicants and local planning authorities what constitutes building operations reasonably necessary to convert the agricultural building to residential use within the existing permitted development right. Additionally, the response also refers to the relevant sections of the Housing White Paper, addressing housing supply in rural areas, and local authority resourcing.

Communities and Local Government Select Committee Inquiry into the Report of the Local Plans Expert Group

- The CLG Select Committee launched an inquiry into the recommendations put forward by the Government's Local Plans Expert Group (LPEG); Historic England submitted written evidence to the Committee. The inquiry followed the LPEG initial call for evidence (Historic England's evidence may be found here), the LPEG report, and the Government's consultation on that report (Historic England's response to that consultation may be found here).
- DCLG has now issued a summary of representations on the LPEG consultation, and a response to the questions asked of Government by the Committee. The response emphasises the degree to which the LPEG recommendations are reflected in the Neighbourhood Planning Bill and Housing White Paper proposals, and notes that the Government supports the central thrust of the LPEG recommendations.

Current Consultations

- Historic England's consultation on revisions to Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (GPA3): Settings and Views of Heritage Assets (closing date 28 February).
- Highways England's consultation on proposed options for the A303 at Stonehenge (closing date 5 March).
- High Speed Two (HS2) Limited's consultation on seven proposed changes to the HS2 route, from Crewe to Manchester and West Midlands to Leeds. This section of the route is referred to as 'Phase 2b' (closing date 9 March).
- HS2 Limited's consultation seeking views on the property compensation and assistance schemes the Government is proposing for people affected by the plans for the Phase 2b route, from Crewe to Manchester and West Midlands to Leeds (closing date 9 March).
- Historic England's consultation on updated advice relating to listed buildings and curtilage (closing date 24 March).
- The Marine Management Organisation's consultation on the next phase of marine plans in the South West, North West, North East, and South East (closing date 31 March).
- The Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy's green paper, Building our Industrial Strategy (closing date 17 April).

- The Department for Communities and Local Government's consultation on *Planning and Affordable Housing for Build to Rent* (closing date 1 May).
- The Department for Communities and Local Government's consultation on the *Housing White Paper* (closing date 2 May).
- The Department for Communities and Local Government's consultation on rural permitted development rights (closing date 2 May).
- The Department for Transport's consultation on the draft Airports National Policy Statement (closing date 25 May).

Historic England Responses to Consultations

- Historic England's response to DCLG's consultation on basement developments and the planning system is available here.
- Historic England's response to the National Infrastructure Commission's call for evidence to shape the development of the National Infrastructure Assessment will be available here shortly.

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APPENDIX I: LIST OF PROPOSALS IN THE HOUSING WHITE PAPER

Step 1: Planning for the right homes in the right places

- Making sure every part of the country has an up-to-date, sufficiently ambitious plan so that local communities decide where development should go;
- Simplifying plan-making and making it more transparent, so it's easier for communities to produce plans and easier for developers to follow them;
- Ensuring that plans start from an honest assessment of the need for new homes, and that local authorities work with their neighbours, so that difficult decisions are not ducked;
- Clarifying what land is available for new housing, through greater transparency over who owns land and the options held on it;
- Making more land available for homes in the right places, by maximising the contribution from brownfield and surplus public land, regenerating estates, releasing more small and medium-sized sites, allowing rural communities to grow and making it easier to build new settlements;
- Maintaining existing strong protections for the Green Belt, and clarifying that Green Belt boundaries should be amended only in exceptional circumstances when local authorities can demonstrate that they have fully examined all other reasonable options for meeting their identified housing requirements;
- Giving communities a stronger voice in the design of new housing to drive up the quality and character of new development, building on the success of neighbourhood planning; and
- Making better use of land for housing by encouraging higher densities, where appropriate, such as in urban locations where there is high housing demand; and by reviewing space standards.

Step 2: Building homes faster

- Providing greater certainty for authorities that have planned for new homes and reducing the scope for local and neighbourhood plans to be undermined by changing the way that land supply for housing is assessed;
- Boosting local authority capacity and capability to deliver, improving the speed and quality with which planning cases are handled, while deterring unnecessary appeals;
- Ensuring infrastructure is provided in the right place at the right time by coordinating Government investment and through the targeting of the £2.3bn Housing Infrastructure Fund;
- Securing timely connections to utilities so that this does not hold up getting homes built;
- Supporting developers to build out more quickly by tackling unnecessary delays caused by planning conditions, facilitating the strategic licensing of protected species and exploring a new approach to how developers contribute to infrastructure;
- Taking steps to address skills shortages by growing the construction workforce;
- Holding developers to account for the delivery of new homes through better and more transparent data and sharper tools to drive up delivery; and
- Holding local authorities to account through a new housing delivery test.

Step 3: Diversifying the market

- Backing small and medium-sized builders to grow, including through the Home Building Fund;
- Supporting custom-build homes with greater access to land and finance, giving more people more choice over the design of their home;
- Bringing in new contractors through our Accelerated Construction programme that can build homes more quickly than traditional builders;
- Encouraging more institutional investors into housing, including for building more homes for private rent, and encouraging family-friendly tenancies;
- Supporting housing associations and local authorities to build more homes; and
- Boosting productivity and innovation by encouraging modern methods of construction in house building.

Step 4: Helping people now

- Continuing to support people to buy their own home – through Help to Buy and Starter Homes;
- Helping households who are priced out of the market to afford a decent home that is right for them through our investment in the Affordable Homes Programme;
- Making renting fairer for tenants;
- Taking action to promote transparency and fairness for the growing number of leaseholders;
- Improving neighbourhoods by continuing to crack down on empty homes, and supporting areas most affected by second homes;
- Encouraging the development of housing that meets the needs of our future population;
- Helping the most vulnerable who need support with their housing, developing a sustainable and workable approach to funding supported housing in the future; and
- Doing more to prevent homelessness by supporting households at risk before they reach crisis point as well as reducing rough sleeping.