

MHCLG confirms 'automatic' extensions for planning permissions due to expire since lockdown

22 June 2020 by Michael Donnelly – PlanningResource

The Government has confirmed plans to automatically extend all planning permissions that are due to lapse during the coronavirus pandemic, or have already done so, between late March and the end of this year.

In a statement issued today, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) confirmed measures to "enable development which has already received the grant of planning permission or listed building consent and would lapse between 23 March and 31 December 2020 to be extended until 1 April 2021".

Planning permissions expire after three years unless work begins on the project within that time. Following the Covid-19 lockdown in mid-March, many in the development sector lobbied for extensions to planning permissions that were due to expire, arguing that many builders were unable to start on site.

MHCLG said that it estimates that "by the end of this month alone, more than 400 residential permissions providing more than 24,000 new homes would have expired" if the measure had not been introduced.

The statement said that planning permissions which have already lapsed before the provisions come into force "will be subject to an Additional Environmental Approval process before the automatic extension can take effect".

It added that today's measures would "prevent work that has been temporarily disrupted by the pandemic from stopping altogether".

When asked by *Planning* for details on when and how the measures announced in the statement would come into effect, an MHCLG spokeswoman said that further details "will be set out in due course".

A report in the Times said the measures would "form part of the coronavirus recovery bill, which ministers hope to fast-track through parliament".

[Figures published by the MHCLG](#), produced by construction analysts Glenigan, show there are 430 residential projects for which permission is estimated to be lapsing between 23 March and 30 June 2020.

Among these projects are a total of 24,800 homes. The figures only include projects of 10 units or more with detailed or reserved matters permission granted where construction has not started, according to the MHCLG.

MHCLG statement also announced measures to help developers "quickly agree" more flexible construction [site working hours with councils](#)