



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL
Planning Committee

PLANNING COMMITTEE: 1st September 2020

DEPARTMENT: Planning Service

DIRECTOR: Peter Baguley

REPORT TITLE: Recent Changes to Planning Legislation, the Planning for the Future White Paper and consultation on Changes to the Current Planning System

1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Committee **NOTE** the recent changes to Planning Legislation below and the proposals contained in the Planning for the Future White Paper.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In response to the challenges posed by COVID-19 and to ensure that the planning system can continue to operate effectively and support the recovery, the Government has published a series of changes to planning legislation, including temporary measures intended to help businesses and construction sectors, to get back to work safely and quickly.
- 2.2 The Business and Planning Bill received Royal Assent on 22 July 2020 which became the Business and Planning Act 2020. This new Act includes changes as detailed below
- 2.3 On 6 August 2020, the Government published a White Paper on Planning for the Future proposing significant changes to the Town and Country Planning system in England. The White Paper is a consultation document so its proposals will not come into effect yet and could be modified if and when they become law. The deadline for responses to the White Paper is 29 October 2020.
- 2.4 Alongside the White Paper, the Government also published consultation on changes to the current planning system with the aim of improving its effectiveness prior to the implementation of any changes that might result from the proposals contained in the White Paper. The deadline for responses to this consultation is 1 October 2020.

3. LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

Extension of Planning Permissions (and Listed Building Consents)

- 3.1 Under section 93A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, unimplemented planning permissions with time limits for implementation which were due to lapse between 19 August 2020 (when the provisions came into force) and 31 December 2020 are extended to 1 May 2021. This happens automatically, with no requirement to obtain Additional Environmental Approval.

- 3.2 Unimplemented planning permissions with time limits for implementation which passed between 23 March 2020 and 19 August 2020 are also restored and the time limit extended to 1 May 2021, subject to Additional Environmental Approval being granted.
- 3.3 Additional Environmental Approval process – applicants must explain in writing what Environmental Assessments were undertaken before and provide an environment report containing explanation why circumstances haven't changes. No statutory requirement to consult with statutory consultees. Deemed consent if no decision made within 28 days. There is a right of appeal against refusal.

Permitted Development Rights

- 3.4 The Town and Country Planning (Permitted Development and Miscellaneous Amendments) (England) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020 introduce a new permitted development right which allows for the construction of new dwellinghouses on detached purpose-built blocks of flats by allowing an upward extension. The right is subject to obtaining prior approval from the local planning authority. This came into force on 1 August 2020. The following issues can be considered as part of the Prior Approval process:
- transport and highways impact of the development;
 - air traffic and defence asset impacts of the development;
 - contamination risks in relation to the building;
 - flooding risks in relation to the building;
 - the external appearance of the building;
 - the provision of adequate natural light in all habitable rooms of the new dwelling houses;
 - impact on the amenity of the existing building and neighbouring premises including overlooking, privacy and the loss of light; and
 - whether because of the siting of the building, the development will impact on a protected view identified in the Directions Relating to Protected Vistas dated 15 March 2012(3) issued by the Secretary of State.
- 3.5 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No.2) Order 2020 allows existing houses to be extended to provide more living space by constructing additional storeys. This came into force on 31 August 2020.
- 3.6 The Order also introduces permanent permitted development rights to allow the construction of up to two additional storeys on free standing blocks and on buildings in a terrace that are houses or in certain commercial uses, and in mixed uses with an element of housing, to create additional self-contained homes. Existing homes, whether detached, semi-detached or in a terrace, will also be able to extend upwards to create new homes or additional living space. The right applies to houses built since 1 July 1948 and 28 October 2018. The right is subject to obtaining prior approval from the local planning authority.
- 3.7 The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No.3) Order 2020, introduces a new permanent permitted development right to allow for the demolition of certain types of buildings and replacement build as residential to create new homes, while allowing for local consideration of key planning matters. This will apply to vacant and redundant free-standing buildings that fell within the Classes B1(a) offices, B1 (b) research and development, B1 (c) industrial processes (light industrial), and free-standing purpose-built residential blocks of flats (Class C3).
- 3.8 To provide that the right applies to buildings that are vacant and redundant and are no longer suitable for modern use, the right will apply to those built before 1 January 1990. The right provides for the new residential building to be up to 7 metres higher than the old to

accommodate up to two additional storeys to provide additional homes, with a final overall maximum height of 18 metres. The right is subject to obtaining prior approval from the local planning authority. This came into force on 31 August 2020.

Use Class Order Reform

3.9 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020, which will come into effect from 1 September 2020 and amend the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987, which the following changes:

- Creation of a new **Class E** "Commercial, Business and Service" Use Class. This would subsume the existing Class A1 (Shops), Class A2 (Financial and Professional Services), Class A3 (Restaurants and Cafes), and Class B1 (Business) Use Classes.
- Creation of a new **Class F1** "Learning and Non-residential Institutions" and includes any non-residential use for the "provision of education, for the display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire), as a museum, as a public library or public reading room, as a public hall or exhibition hall, for, or in connection with, public worship or religious instruction, as a law court".
- Creation of a new **Class F2** "Local Community" uses. These are listed in the regulations as "a shop mostly selling essential goods, including food, to visiting members of the public in circumstances where the shop's premises cover an area not more than 280 metres square, and there is no other such facility within 1,000 metre radius of the shop's location". They also include: "a hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community, an area or place for outdoor sport or recreation, not involving motorised vehicles or firearms, an indoor or outdoor swimming pool or skating rink".
- The changes allow such uses to change to another use within the particular Class without planning permission.
- Exemptions include any "public house, wine bar, or drinking establishment", "drinking establishment with expanded food provision, hot food takeaways, live music venues, cinemas, concert halls, bingo halls and dance halls". These uses would be classed as Sui Generis and planning permission will be required for changes into or from these uses.

3.10 The detailed Use Classes changes are enclosed as **Appendix 1**.

Construction Site Hours

3.11 Section 74B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides a temporary, fast track deemed consent route for developers to apply to local planning authorities to vary existing conditions, or the details submitted under a condition, that limit construction site working hours. Local authorities have 14 calendar days to consider such applications. This came into force from 28 July 2020.

3.12 If an application is approved, this will temporarily amend planning restrictions on construction working hours until 1 April 2021, unless either another earlier date has been requested by the applicant or is decided upon by the local planning authority, with the agreement of the applicant. Where the planning authority is considering a different end date to that in the application, it is recommended that the developer and planning authority respond promptly to one another to reach an agreement prior to the 14 days determination deadline.

3.13 If the local planning authority does not determine the application within 14 days (excluding public holidays), the revised working hours are deemed to have been consented to and

construction can take place in accordance with these new hours. There is right of appeal against refusal.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Deferral

- 3.14 The Community Infrastructure Levy (Coronavirus) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 CIL charging authorities a discretion which is applicable for a limited time (in certain prescribed circumstances and if it is considered appropriate) to defer CIL payments, to disapply late payment interest and surcharge payments; and to credit interest already charged to developers. The regulations came into force on 22 July 2020.

Pavement Licenses for Outdoor Seating

- 3.15 A pavement licence is a licence granted by the local authority, or deemed to have been granted, which allows the licence-holder to place removable furniture over certain highways adjacent to the premises in relation to which the application was made, for certain purposes. This is a streamlined process to allow businesses to secure these licences in time for the summer and, where they are deemed to have been granted, allow these licences to remain in place for a year but not beyond 30 September 2021. Where a pavement licence is granted, clear access routes on the highway will need to be maintained, taking into account the needs of all users, including disabled people. A business which uses (or proposes to use) premises for the sale of food or drink for consumption (on or off the premises) can apply for a licence.
- 3.16 Once a licence is granted, or deemed to be granted, the applicant will also benefit from deemed planning permission to use the land for anything done pursuant to the licence while the licence is valid.

4. IMPLICATIONS OF LEGISLATIVE CHANGES FOR THE LOCAL PLAN PART 2

- 4.1 The introduction of the new Class E "Commercial, Business and Service" use class is reflective of the broader recognition nationally that a wider variety of land uses needs to be allowed in town centres such that they can adapt and regenerate in the face of changes in shopping habits and the way town centres are used. The new Class E adds to flexibility. However, the combination of such a wide range of different land uses into one use class, with the attendant lack of control over how the use of a property could change from, for example, a shop and to a light industrial use without planning permission could not have been anticipated. It could make it more challenging to plan for the appropriate supply and mix of land use in appropriate places, which is fundamental to achieving sustainable development.
- 4.2 The Northampton Local Plan Part 2 Proposed Submission Round 2 (LPP2), which is currently out for public consultation, also takes considerations of how the town centre is used into account and is more flexible about changes of use in the town centre than the Central Area Action Plan. This is reflected in LPP2 Objective 3 which seeks to drive the regeneration of the town centre where people have access to commerce, leisure and culture, heritage, wide ranging employment opportunities and retail options. Policy 8 supports this objective and also emphasises the importance of housing and digital connectivity in the town centre.
- 4.3 For the LPP2, the principal impact of the new Class E will be on Policy 19 – New Retail Developments and Retail Impact Assessment. In situations where units in the town centre have remained vacant for 12 to 18 months and the units have been effectively marketed, this policy supports changes of use to alternative main town centre uses (retail, leisure, entertainment (including cinemas, restaurants, bars, pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and

fitness centres), offices, arts culture and tourism, but these changes would still have needed to be subject to a planning application. However, because Class E incorporates many of these types of use, in many instances, planning permission would no longer be required, so changes could, from 1st September, happen more quickly.

- 4.4 Within the Primary Shopping Area of the town centre, LPP2 Policy 19 also seeks to prevent the loss of Class A1 shop uses within a frontage unless the alternative town centre use proposed contributes to the vitality and viability of the town centre. The effect of the new Class E will be that many such changes (if for other Class E uses) will not require planning permission, so they can happen anyway. In such circumstances, the only influence that the Council could potentially have is if the proposed new use requires Licensing.
- 4.5 Because the reform to the Use Classes Order also has the effect of abolishing the Class A5 hot food takeaway use class and makes takeaways a sui generis use, LPP2 Policy 20 - Hot Food Takeaways will need to be slightly amended to remove reference to Class A5.
- 4.6 The Examination in Public of the Local Plan for the London Borough of Brent is scheduled to take place in September. It is understood that the Inspector appointed for that Examination has questioned the town centre policies in that plan in the light of the changes to the Use Classes Order, particularly Class E. It is logical to assume that a similar stance could be adopted by an Inspector after the LPP2 is submitted to the Secretary of State.
- 4.7 Whilst the intention behind the Use Class Order reform is mainly to facilitate the regeneration of town centres in the face of unprecedented changes in the way town centres are being used, it must be remembered that this reform applies everywhere. A perhaps unintended consequence of the new Class E is that there could be a significant loss of control on development proposals outside town centres. One potential implication could be that gymnasiums or light industrial units in out of town locations could be turned into shops without planning permission. If this were to happen, it would run counter to the sequential approach to the location of shops (town centre first, then edge of centre) that has been a cornerstone of planning policy nationally since the 1990s. This has the potential to have the negative effect of further reducing retail footfall in the town centre.

5. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER

- 5.1 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has published the White Paper on Planning for The Future on 6 August 2020. This will be subject to 12 weeks public consultation expiring on the 29 October 2020.
- 5.2 The White Paper proposes fundamental changes to the planning system. The paper acknowledges that the planning system is central to providing quality homes and places where people want to live and work; combating climate change; improving biodiversity and supporting sustainable growth. In seeking to meet these challenges, the White Paper proposes changes to the planning system to make it fit for purpose and make land available in the right places for the right forms of development.
- 5.3 The government actively encourages sustainable, beautiful, safe and useful development rather than obstructing it. The proposed recommended changes, as summarised below, seeks to achieve a simpler, faster and more predictable system.

Simplify the role of Local Plan

- 5.4 The role of the Local Plan is proposed to be simplified to focus on identifying land under three categories:

- i) Growth Areas – suitable for sustainable development where outline planning permission will be automatically secured.
 - ii) Renewal Areas – suitable for some development such as gentle densification.
 - iii) Protected Areas – where development is restricted.
- 5.5 Local Planning Authorities will be allowed to identify sub-areas within the growth areas for self and custom-built homes.
- 5.6 The Local Plan should set clear rules rather than general policies for development and shall be prepared in no more than 30 months.
- 5.7 This is a fundamental change of emphasis for the role of Local Plans, marking a move to zoning sites for development rather than allocating them. For Growth and Renewal Areas, the Plan will have to set out acceptable land uses, heights and densities. Because the Local Plan is where planning permission is granted in outline or principle, the zonal approach could have the impact of making the development industry focus even more than it currently does on the preparation of the Local Plan, which is potentially in tension with the aspiration of achieving a new Local Plan within 30 months.
- 5.8 The form of the Local Plan is likely to change significantly. It is proposed that Local Plans become much shorter and fully digital with interactive mapping and text which will be produced in a compatible form across England.
- 5.9 The White Paper proposes a single statutory sustainable development test for Local Plans which would:
- replace the tests of soundness;
 - replace the sustainability appraisal that normally accompanies Local Plans; and
 - allow for the replacement of the test of deliverability with an indication that a range of suitable sites have been allocated for development.
- 5.10 Alongside this, it is proposed that the duty to co-operate be abolished and that some other arrangements will be put in place to ensure that cross-boundary issues are dealt with.
- 5.11 The White Paper proposes that Local Plans should identify sites sufficient to create ten years' supply of housing, business and community facilities. There will be nationally-set binding housing need targets that Local Plans will have to incorporate. The White Paper proposes that this would obviate the need for local authorities to have a five years' supply of housing sites, but that local planning authorities would still be held to account by the continued requirement to pass the Housing Delivery Test.
- 5.12 Future Local Plans could also look significantly different because the White Paper proposes, among a series of options, that a standard list of development management policies will be set nationally, so Local Plans would only contain development management policies that are "specific development standards" relating to local circumstances.

Changes to the Development Management System

- 5.13 As sites identified in the Local Plan as Growth Areas would have outline planning permission in principle, detailed planning permissions could be obtained in three different ways:
- i) Through a reformed reserved matters application process;
 - ii) Local Development Order linked to masterplan/design codes which will be made parallel to the preparation of Local Plan; or

- iii) For exceptionally large sites, through Development Consent Order under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects.

5.14 For Renewal Areas, consent can be obtained in three ways:

- i) Pre-specified form of development whereby consent will be given automatically;
- ii) Fast planning application process with reference to the National Planning Policy Framework; or
- iii) Local and Neighbourhood Development Order.

5.15 In Protected Areas, development proposals will come forward as through existing planning application process.

Decision Making Process

5.16 Applications should be determined within 8- or 13-weeks firm deadline with no provision of extensions of time. Planning fee should be refunded if LPA fail to determine applications within time limit. Deemed consent will be given if applications are not determined within time limit.

5.17 Validation of application should be integrated with submission and key information requirement will be reduced. There should be a digital template for planning notices.

5.18 National data standard for smaller applications should be created and standard planning statement should have no more than 50 pages.

5.19 Development such as schools, hospitals and GP surgeries will be delivered quickly.

5.20 If applications were refused and successful at appeal, LPA will automatically rebate the planning fee.

Design Codes

5.21 The White Paper emphasises the importance of place-making and good design delivering places that endure, protect and enhance the environment and support efforts to combat climate change. It proposes a new role for Homes England in facilitating these efforts. A National Design Code and National Model Design Code will be produced, including revision to Manual For Streets.

5.22 Local guides and codes are prepared wherever possible, through working with neighbourhood planning groups. Design codes should only be given weight if it can be demonstrated that local community input has been secured.

5.23 Design Codes and masterplanning are proposed to be the main mechanisms for designing new development in Growth Areas and Renewal Areas. It is proposed that these could be set out in Local Plans, Supplementary Planning Documents or Neighbourhood Plans.

5.24 There is an aspiration in the White Paper that new homes should produce 75-80% less CO₂ than the current housing stock and that it should be capable of becoming fully carbon zero without further retrofitting.

Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission

5.25 A Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission to be created, with the principle of “fast track for beauty”. If proposal complies with pre-established principles of what good design

looks like (informed by community preferences), applications will be expedited through the planning process.

5.26 Development should be fast tracked in three ways:

- i) NPPF will be updated to support schemes that comply with local design guides and codes;
- ii) Within growth area, masterplan and site-specific design code as a condition of the permission in principle and details of which should be in place prior to detailed proposals coming forward;
- iii) Permitted development rights to be widened and replicable forms of development to be approved easily and quickly. Prior Notification approval from LPA to ensure design is right for the context.

Heritage and conservation

5.27 The White Paper acknowledges that current arrangements for conservation areas and listed buildings have worked well but considers that they need to be reviewed to respond to new challenges such as the need mitigate and adapt to climate change. Accordingly, it proposes that the planning framework for conservation areas and listed buildings will be updated to ensure their significance is conserved while allowing, where appropriate, sympathetic changes to support their continued use and to address climate change.

Planning for Infrastructure

5.28 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and Section 106 will be combined into one "Infrastructure Levy". This will be a flat rate, value-based charge and set nationally, either at a single rate or at area-specific rates. It should be charged on a final value of development, based on the applicable rate at the point planning permission is granted and levied at the point of occupation.

5.29 The Infrastructure Levy should include a value-based minimum threshold, below which the levy is not charged, to prevent low viability development become unviable.

5.30 There is an alternative option – Infrastructure Levy could remain optional and set up by LPAs.

5.31 As there is no S106 agreement, affordable housing delivery should be through in-kind on site, working with a nominated Register Provider (RP). The RP can purchase the dwellings at a discount rate and the difference between the discounted rate and the market value will be subtracted from the liability for Infrastructure Levy, which the White Paper states should provide an incentive to provide more affordable housing.

5.32 There will be more freedom for LPAs to spend the levy. It is also envisaged that Councils can borrow against Infrastructure Levy revenue to forward fund infrastructure.

5.33 The White Paper also raises the possibility that certain types of permitted development could be liable for the new Infrastructure Levy. This could include office to residential conversions or rebuilds.

Neighbourhood Plans

5.34 Neighbourhood planning is set to continue in its current form, because it encourages local communities to work proactively, for example with design codes. The government will be looking to see if there would be a benefit in allowing neighbourhood plans to be focused on

smaller areas, such as groups of streets and also how they can be made more digital, in the same way as proposals for Local Plans.

Other Proposed Changes

- 5.35 To improve public engagement and the public can use smartphones to give views of Local Plan and Design Codes.
- 5.36 Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and mitigation process will be quicker and easier to understand.
- 5.37 Each LPA should have a Chief Officer for design and place making.
- 5.38 To ensure and set efficiency energy standards including safety.
- 5.39 Planning fees will continue to be set nationally.
- 5.40 LPAs should be subject to a new performance framework.
- 5.41 Planning enforcement powers and sanctions should be strengthened.
- 5.42 Planning should be digitalised in terms of plan making and application process.

6. CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE CURRENT PLANNING SYSTEM

The standard method for assessing housing numbers in strategic plans

- 6.1 The Changes to the Current Planning System consultation proposes a change to the standard method for assessing local housing need, which defines the housing requirement that Local Plans have to set for each local planning authority area. The government introduced the standard method in 2018 with a view to ensuring that a net additional 300,000 dwellings per year are built in England. The method has been changed slightly to ensure that past under-delivery does not lead to a lowering of housing requirements in future. It now takes into account the size of the existing housing stock in a given area. Any changes that in the Planning Practice Guidance that result from this consultation will have an impact on the future Local Plans for West Northamptonshire. Because the current housing requirement for Northampton is set out in the adopted West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, this proposed change is not expected to have an impact on the emerging Local Plan Part 2.

Delivering First Homes

- 6.2 The government is proposing that a minimum of 25% of onsite affordable housing provided at new developments should be First Homes (which is a scheme to provide first time buyers with new homes at a 30% discount against market value). The consultation sets out a number of options for how this could be achieved in the context of existing Local Plan policies with transitional arrangements where Local Plans have been prepared under the current system. Plans submitted to the Secretary of State within six months of this provision coming into force would not have to incorporate policies about First Homes, so this should not affect the emerging Local Plan Part 2. As with other types of affordable housing, First Homes will be exempt from Community Infrastructure Levy.

Supporting small and medium-sized developers

- 6.3 As a way of supporting small and medium-sized developers and to stimulate economic recovery, this consultation proposes for new housing developments, the threshold for

seeking affordable housing contributions should be increased from 10 dwellings to 40 or 50 dwellings for a time-limited period until the economy recovers.

- 6.4 If the Government decides to go through with this approach, it would be implemented by way of a Written Ministerial Statement in the Autumn.

Extension of the Permission in Principle consent regime

- 6.5 Currently, local planning authorities have powers to grant Permission in Principle for housing-led development on sites allocated on brownfield land registers and also for developments of fewer than 10 dwellings. The first stage of this route involves establishing whether site is suitable in principle for development, then a second stage (technical details consent) takes place when detailed development proposals are assessed, and conditions are attached. This Council has not chosen to exercise these powers.
- 6.6 The consultation proposes that, in future, regulations should be changed to allow for Permission in Principle to be sought on housing-led developments of 10 or more dwellings. It is envisaged that this would assist small and medium-sized developers, by reducing their up-front planning costs and provide more certainty about the principle of developing the site.
- 6.7 Because of regulations on Environmental Impact Assessment, this change in the Permission in Principle regime would only apply to sites of up to five hectares or 150 dwellings. It would also not be suitable for sites where there is a probability or risk that the project is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This is particularly pertinent in Northampton because of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area, part of which is within the borough.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The legislative changes set out in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.16 above have either come into effect already or are about to. Changes to the Use Classes Order, in particular, will have a significant impact on the Council's Development Management service, potentially reducing the number of planning applications received.
- 7.2 For the Local Plan Part 2, the introduction of Use Class E could have a significant impact on some key policies. It is appreciated that this change has been made in order to increase flexibility of uses in town centres to ensure their continued survival, adaptation and re-purposing. This is in the same spirit as policies in the Local Plan Part 2 and also the Town Centre Masterplan. However, there are concerns about possible unintended consequences, such as the possibility that new retail could be provided in unsustainable locations by the conversion of buildings in other Class E uses without planning permission. Officers will watch closely what happens with the Brent Local Plan to see how this change is considered by the Local Plan Inspector.
- 7.3 These legislative changes have been made very quickly and it is not inconceivable that these changes could be reversed or further altered on the basis of how they operate in practice.
- 7.4 As regards the White Paper, this report sets out officers' initial impressions concerning some most important and potentially far-reaching changes to the Town and Country Planning system in England proposed since 1947. Further analysis will be done by the planning community over the coming weeks - the Royal Town Planning Institute intends to hold regional round table White Paper briefings for officers in the near future.
- 7.5 Much of the necessary detail about how the White Paper's proposals would work is lacking at this stage, and many of the proposals present a set of options rather than a definite way

forward. For these changes to occur, it is clear that there will need to be primary and secondary legislation and significant changes to the National Planning Policy Framework. More detailed guidance will be needed on matters including design, heritage, climate change and ecology, for example.

- 7.6 One of the key areas that will need to be dealt with by the Government is the transitional arrangements for moving from the current planning system to the new one. It is important that ongoing work on Local Plans, such as this Council's Local Plan Part 2, is not caused to stall in the expectation that the new system will make important changes. For Northampton, the emerging Local Plan Part 2 sets the context for development to 2029. It allocates sites for new development and factors in some important national and local considerations such as climate change and public health, which it would be undesirable to lose because of a policy hiatus nationally.
- 7.7 The White Paper does not set a timetable for when any legislative changes will take place, but it is considered that the legislative process might start early in 2021. Officers will draft this Council's response to the White Paper in due course, taking into account any further information that emerges over the coming weeks.
- 7.8 The consultation on changes to the current planning system seeks to put in place a number of changes prior to the introduction of any changes made as a result of the White Paper and covers some of the same themes. Officers will reflect on any likely local implications specific to Northampton and draft the Council's response to this consultation in due course.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 As set out in the report.

9. SUMMARY AND LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN

- 9.1 In reaching the attached recommendations regard has been given to securing the objectives, visions and priorities outlined in the Corporate Plan together with those of associated Frameworks and Strategies.



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