

Briefing Notes published alongside the Queen's Speech May 2016:

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE BILL

“To support the economic recovery, and to create jobs and more apprenticeships, legislation will be introduced to ensure Britain has the infrastructure that businesses need to grow.”

The purpose of the Bill is to:

- Support the Government’s ambition to deliver one million new homes, whilst protecting those areas that we value most including the Green Belt.
- Deliver the homes and infrastructure that this country needs.
- Transform the way we plan for major infrastructure projects in this country.

The main benefits of the Bill would be to:

- Further empower local communities to plan the homes and infrastructure that they need.
- Drive more effective and efficient delivery of housing and infrastructure that local communities need, and make the process clearer, faster and fairer.
- Support long term economic growth through an overarching and independent assessment of the long-term infrastructure needs of the nation.
- This will help deliver the manifesto pledge to invest over £100 billion in our infrastructure over this Parliament (p.14).

The main elements of the Bill are:

Neighbourhood Planning

- To further strengthen neighbourhood planning and give even more power to local people.
- The new legislation would also strengthen neighbourhood planning by making the local government duty to support groups more transparent and by improving the process for reviewing and updating plans.

Planning Conditions

- To ensure that pre-commencement planning conditions are only imposed by local planning authorities where they are absolutely necessary.
- Excessive pre-commencement planning conditions can slow down or stop the construction of homes after they have been given planning permission.
- The new legislation would tackle the overuse, and in some cases, misuse of certain planning conditions and thereby ensure that development, including new housing, can get underway without unnecessary delay.

Compulsory Purchase

- To make the compulsory purchase order process clearer, fairer and faster for all those involved.
- Including reform of the context within which compensation is negotiated – often a very significant and complex part of finalising a compulsory purchase deal. Our proposals, on which we have already consulted, would consolidate and clarify over 100 years of conflicting statute and case law. We would establish a clear, new statutory framework for agreeing compensation, based on the fundamental principle that compensation should be based on the market value of the land in the absence of the scheme underlying the compulsory purchase.

National Infrastructure Commission

- To establish the independent National Infrastructure Commission on a statutory basis.
- The Commission would provide the government with expert, independent advice on infrastructure issues by setting out a clear, strategic vision on the future infrastructure that is needed to ensure the UK economy is fit for 2050.
- To unlock economic potential across the UK and ensure that growth and opportunities are distributed across the country, boosting productivity and competitiveness through high-quality infrastructure.

Land Registry

- The new legislation would enable the privatisation of Land Registry, which would support the delivery of a modern, digitally-based land registration service that will benefit the Land Registry's customers, such as people buying or selling their home.
- It could also return a capital receipt to the Exchequer to help reduce national debt.

Devolution:

The Bill's substantive provisions apply across England and Wales. The measure relating to the National Infrastructure Commission would apply across the UK in line with current infrastructure decision-making responsibilities.

Key facts:

- We've already seen a revolution in neighbourhood planning, with 193 neighbourhood plans approved at referendum and nearly 2,000 groups involved, covering around ten million people.
- Plans for housebuilding are more than 10% higher in the first areas with a neighbourhood plan as opposed to only the council's Local Plan.