

Email From Councillor Julia Judd : Government White Paper Consultation Oct 2020

[The Planning for the Future - Government White Paper](#) consultation closes at 11:45 pm on 29 October 2020. It is important that as many people respond to it as possible as it could deeply affect the Cotswolds. You may choose to look at the CDC responses to assist you, just click on the link texts below.

At the CDC Council Meeting on 23 September, the CDC responses to two national consultations, [Planning for the Future](#) and [Changes to the Current Planning System](#) were unanimously agreed. I have also responded in-depth to both white papers as an individual, briefly outlined in my statement below. I shall be lobbying and campaigning against the Planning for the Future white paper to our Cotswold MP, Sir Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, with a view to requesting that he relays concerns to Westminster.

The Planning for the Future white paper shows a deep misunderstanding of the planning process and a lack of awareness of significant issues. The proposal to set planning growth areas at Local Plan stage (which would undoubtedly be flawed given the time allowed) with less public engagement and democratic oversight at planning application stage, which would be a devastating erosion of local democratic process. There are good reasons why the planning process takes time. Planning demands a high level of scrutiny, bad development cannot be undone. Land availability is not the cause of delayed building projects, delays are caused by other factors including the delivery of infrastructure, dominance of national developers, land being held as an asset and the availability of finance. The document is littered with unsubstantiated soundbites such as sustainability, giving people a greater say and actively addressing climate change and yet there are no proposals on how these issues can be achieved. The focus on speed over quality and cost will result in poorer developments and increased harm to the environment. 6,438 deliverable planning permissions, including windfall sites, have been identified in the Cotswolds (2018-2033 adopted Local Plan), yet housing completions in 2019/20 were only 312. Land availability and the planning process are not at fault. The white paper proposal would increase the housing requirement in Cotswold District from an average of 420 homes a year to 1,209 homes a year. 80% of the District is in the Cotswolds AONB which would mean that the proposed target is unachievable let alone the terrible harm this would cause to the area.

There are some good initiatives which can be taken from this white paper. Better design, energy efficiency measures and preserving England's heritage is positive, but how these measures are to be paid for or regulated is not made clear. Also excluding areas of flood risk, resisting inappropriate development of amenity areas/gardens and more stringent controls in protected areas are also to be welcomed.

The Planning for the Future white paper is, in my opinion, flawed and needs to be revisited by planning experts. I believe it should be reconsidered without the use of inappropriate algorithms and formulas which aim to simplify the process but would be catastrophic for the Cotswolds.

With best wishes

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