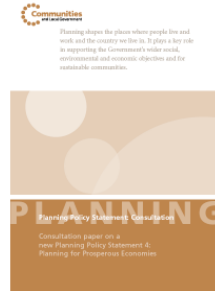


Planning for Prosperous Economies

Consultation paper on a new Planning Policy Statement 4

**Communities and Local
Government July 2009**

Overview



- Context
- Streamlining policy
- Features of new PPS
- Town Centres Practice Guidance
- Summary and where next ?



- 2007 Planning White Paper commitment to:
 - i) positive approach to economic development by revising PPG4
 - ii) improve effectiveness of town centres policy
 - iii) review national planning policy to achieve a more strategic, clear and focused framework
- Published draft PPS4 Dec 07- built upon existing approach in PPG4. Received 320 consultation responses
- Published PPS6 proposed changes last July- limited revisions NOT wholesale replacement. Received 370 responses



- Since published draft PPS4\PPS6 proposed changes:
 - i) economic conditions changed significantly- reinforces need to improve effectiveness of our policy
 - ii) Matthew Taylor review published- recommended a more positive approach to rural economic development
 - iii) Killian Pretty Review published- recommended national policy should be focused on needs of the user
- In light of above, now is right time to bring forward strengthened approach to planning for economic development which supports business and local economies through the downturn+ allows regions and local authorities to plan for future economic prosperity

Streamlining policy (1)



- Merging 4 existing documents (PPG4\5 PPS6\7) into a streamlined statement on economic development
- All substantive economic development policies in one place- encouraging stakeholders to think about the economy in the round, rather than as a series of sectors
- Draft PPS incorporates our response to draft PPS4 \PPS6 consultations- stakeholders broadly supportive of proposals which are carried forward in this statement, together with some additional changes
- Consultation draft- structure and expression of policy is very different from what has gone before. So we think it makes sense to give stakeholders the opportunity to comment on our proposals

Streamlining policy (2)



- Drafted with key users (LPAs, practitioners etc) in mind in line with KP review recommendations
- Structure- divided into clear plan-making, monitoring and development management sections
- ‘Development Plan’ style policies- 2 types:
 - i) outcome focus
 - ii) Policy specific
- Separate implementation ‘how to do ‘guidance
- Much shorter than existing policy- 28 pages compared to 80+
- Aim : policies should be clearer, more concise and easier to use than existing policy

Features of new PPS (1)



Key features include:

- Regions\local authorities should achieve sustainable economic growth through flexible and pro-active policies which recognise the needs of the market. Includes good supply of land which meets the needs of different types of business
- Maintaining strong ‘town centres first’ policy by:
 - i) removing current ‘need test’ for planning applications
 - ii) replacing existing need + impact tests with improved impact test- clearer, more robust and holistic framework for assessing the impact of proposals
 - iii) improving approach to consumer choice and retail diversity- supporting small shops, independent retailers + identity of town centres

Features of new PPS (2)



- Protection of local services and rural economies – want Councils to consider importance of village and local centre shops and services like pubs to their local communities. Might involve protecting existing facilities + responding positively to proposals to convert shops where this improves viability
- Strong and diverse rural economy-agree with Matthew Taylor that rural communities need to plan for change. Want to see economic growth + high quality environment achieved together
- Regions\local authorities developing robust economic evidence bases

Features of new PPS (3)



Other features include:

- Identifying suitable locations for development- encouraging mixed-use development + strong emphasis on regeneration
- High quality and sustainable environment- recognise importance of good design for sustainable economic development + securing low carbon emissions
- Development management- local authorities adopting positive approaches to proposals, using robust evidence to weigh up the costs and benefits of development

What's new compared to PPS4/PPS6 consultations (1) ?



6 main areas where proposing additional changes:

- Rural economies- responding to Matthew Taylor in terms of more +ive approach to growth by specifically:
 - i) supporting small scale economic development in villages\other locations remote from rural service centres
 - ii) proposing to remove current requirement which supports farm diversification for business purposes which help to sustain agricultural enterprise. Removing agricultural link will broaden opportunities for small scale non-agricultural enterprise

What's new (2) ?



- New RSS requirement to set employment land targets at local authority level- ensure regions\local authorities develop shared policy objectives through good supply of land
- Linked to Government's *Low Carbon Industrial Strategy*, greater recognition of low carbon economic opportunities such as producing low carbon goods or services
- Strengthened proposed approach to retail diversity compared to last year's PPS6 consultation document- many respondents stressed the need for a stronger policy approach to small shops, independent retailers and small businesses

What's new (3) ?

- Sequential approach: draft PPS (Policy EC21) says:
 - refuse planning permission where the applicant has not demonstrated compliance with the requirements of Policy EC19 (the sequential approach)

2 ways of interpreting this:

- Gateway test
- Current approach.

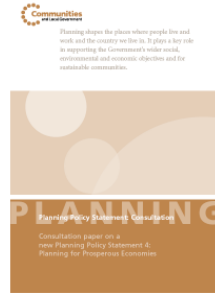
Interested in views!

What's new (4) ?



- Strengthened approach to impact compared to last year's PPS6 consultation, including:
 - i) accessibility, need for high quality\inclusive design and addressing climate change are proposed as key impact considerations
 - ii) allowing local authorities to set specific floor space thresholds (above which impact assessments will be required for retail and leisure development) in plans
 - iii) clearer, more robust approach to unplanned development which causes harm- planning permission should be refused where there is clear evidence that a proposal is likely to lead to significant adverse impacts in respect to one or more of the key impact considerations

Planning for town centres practice guidance



- Practice guidance essential to effective implementation of policy. Commissioned GVA Grimley last November to develop framework illustrating how to:
 - i) assess need and impact when preparing plans
 - ii) test impacts arising from planning applications
 - iii) apply sequential approach when preparing plans + considering planning applications
- Covers main town centre uses (focus on retail, leisure, offices) + uses case studies to illustrate good practice
- PPS6 Select Committee- draft praised but we see it very much as 'work in progress'- less rhetoric, more 'how to do' examples



- Economic downturn likely to continue- planning needs to support economic aspirations of our communities + do all that it can to protect the v & v of town centres
- Planning can't solve all these problems BUT it can help to create the right conditions to support economic recovery- **this is a key objective of draft PPS-** creating a modern set of policies to meet the challenges we face both now and over the longer term
- Setting out comprehensive policy framework for planning for sustainable economic growth in urban and rural areas, particularly town centres. Integrated, streamlined policies should lead to speedier and better quality plan-making and decision taking



- Summer – consultation on draft PPS and ‘living draft’ guidance. Currently holding series of stakeholder events\workshops. **Want to hear stakeholder views by 28th July on:**
 - i) draft PPS- plse send to **Richard Canovan** at CLG **OR** email economicdevelopment@communities.gsi.gov.uk
 - ii) ‘living draft’ guidance – plse send to **Sylvia Williams** at CLG **OR** email TownCentresPracticeGuidance@communities.gsi.gov.uk
- Winter- aiming to finalise PPS and guidance
- 2010 onwards- comprehensive implementation strategy- working with stakeholders to build capacity, improve understanding, share good practice etc



- Tesco appealed against Competition Commission's findings last year
- Competition Appeal Tribunal upheld Tesco's challenge in March- found that certain considerations about how the test would work and its costs and benefits should have been explored further
- BUT CAT judgment did not question the Commission's findings nor its proposed measures- hasn't challenged rationale for a competition test or its design
- CC is reconsidering aspects of the test- due to publish supplementary report by Autumn. Govt will then consider any revised recommendations made by the CC