

**Standing up for local control of the planning process**

Following the publication by Government of the White Paper, 'Planning for the Future' on 6 August 2020, Council notes:

1. That Barnet Council has a robust system of officer and councillor-led planning controls which has a good track record.
2. That, nationally, the vast majority of planning applications are given the go-ahead by local authority planning committees, with permission granted to around nine out of ten applications.
3. That research by the Local Government Association has said that there are existing planning permissions for more than one million homes that have not yet been started.

Council is concerned that the White Paper proposals, alongside related changes to Permitted Development Rights and Prior Notification regulations, seek as a whole to:

1. Reduce or remove the right of residents to object to applications near them.
2. Grant automatic rights for developers to build on land identified as 'for growth'.
3. Remove Section 106 payments for infrastructure and replace them with a national levy.

Council further notes:

1. The reforms are opposed by Theresa Villiers MP, who warned of a "free-for-all" that would cause "serious damage" and "huge unhappiness in my constituency and many others", and that she urged the Government "to scale back what is proposed".
2. The reforms are opposed by the all-party Local Government Association, currently led by Conservative Councillors.
3. The Royal Institute for British Architects called the proposals 'shameful and which will do almost nothing to guarantee delivery of affordable, well-designed and sustainable homes'.

Council believes:

1. Barnet residents deserve to have local democratic control over what happens in their neighbourhoods.
2. That existing planning procedures allow this local control and give residents a say in planning proposals that affect them.
3. That these White Paper and related proposals for automatic rights to build in 'growth' areas, and increased permitted development rights, risk unregulated growth and unsustainable communities.
4. And therefore that Barnet Council will respond to the White Paper by actively defending current arrangements, insofar as they allow for local democratic control and for residents to have their say.

*Under Full Council Procedure Rule 17.17: If my item is not dealt with by the end of the meeting, I ask that it be voted upon at the Council meeting.*