

ACCESSIBLE RETAIL BOARD – 14 OCTOBER 2009

CEO Update Note on Lobbying Consultations

1. Streamlined PPS4

At the last meeting it was reported that AR's comments were sent to DCLG on 28 July 2009 commenting that the latest draft had lost much of the new focus on promoting economic development set out in the consultations on PPS4 (2007) and PPS6 (2008) and this better balance between economic and other considerations should be restored. Other property bodies such as the BPF took a similar line.

The streamlined PPS4 has still not been issued and there has been no announcement of an introduction date. It is understood the Department is still considering the representations received.

2. Greater Flexibility in Planning Permissions

This consultation paper asked for views on whether to introduce a temporary mechanism for extending the time limits for implementation of existing planning permission, how to implement a procedure for making minor material amendments and how to streamline non-material amendments.

These changes, especially the first, would be advantageous to the property and retail industries and had received widespread support. The BPF took the lead and prepared a comprehensive and supportive response which the CEO helped to draft. The CEO endorsed AR's support for this submission to DCLG.

The Government has responded by introducing new development control procedures from 1 October 2009. These are beneficial to AR members.

LPAs will be able to extend the life of all existing planning permissions (not just major developments as originally mooted), through the 'grant of a replacement planning permission'. In essence this will be an additional planning permission with a longer time limit for implementation granted alongside the original one. The new procedure will only apply where the development has not begun and only for a planning permission granted on or before 1 October 2009, with a time limit which has not expired. Applications will not need to be accompanied by drawings and will use a simplified application form. LPAs will decide who to consult and whether there have been material changes which will need to be considered afresh. For now, a full application fee must be paid, but DCLG is consulting on a reduced fee of £500 for major applications and £170 for minor ones for introduction by the end of the year.

3. Improving Permitted Development

See separate draft response.

4. Examination Procedures for Significant National Infrastructure Projects

This paper sets out details of the procedures to be followed for examinations by the Infrastructure Planning Commission of applications for development consent. In the last report to the Board it was suggested that a response is not needed and this view is endorsed.

5. Streamlined Information Requirements for Planning Applications

See separate draft response.

6. Publicity for Planning Applications.

This asks whether changes are needed. This is of some interest to AR and the paper has been considered. In the previous report, it was suggested that a response from AR is probably not needed and this is endorsed..

7. Introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy

This seeks views on the detailed proposals for the introduction of the CIL. AR has not yet directly taken part in the debate on the CIL as the views of the property industry have been well looked after by the major effort undertaken by the BPF. It is suggested this is kept under review but the present stance maintained.

8. PPS 15: Planning for the Historic Environment

This paper sets out a new more modern and integrated approach to the conservation of the historic environment and heritage assets with a request for response by 30 October. It is under consideration, but is probably tangential to AR's main interests. In the last report, it was suggested a response from us is probably not needed and this is endorsed.

9. Town Centre Research Project

Work continues in house, albeit quite slowly. A progress report will be submitted later in the year as agreed.

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