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**THE Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) ‘PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE’ paper, March 2020, sets out the government’s plans for housing and planning following the announcements in the 2020 budget.**

The government is now setting out a number of reforms that will encourage local authorities to take a more proactive approach to enabling home building across the country.

This includes supporting them to consider innovative options, such as housing-led regeneration of their high streets, building upwards on already developed land and stations, densifying gently in existing residential areas and making the most of their under-utilised brownfield land.

As set out in the Budget, these planning changes will be underpinned by an additional £10.9 billion of funding. This will support communities to regenerate brownfield land, invest in new infrastructure and provide more homes for local people, with better access to jobs, schools and opportunities. Together, these changes will promote more, well-planned development where homes are needed.

The Government are proposing the following:

• **Investing £400m to use brownfield land** productively – the Government will work with ambitious mayors and local leaders to regenerate local brownfield land and deliver the homes their communities need on land which is already developed.

• **Launching a national brownfield map** and a call for proposals for **building above stations** – the government will launch a national brownfield sites map in April 2020 and will conduct a call for proposals to seek evidence on the barriers to, and opportunities in, building above stations in urban areas. It is vital that we make the most of existing transport hubs, encouraging modern, green communities where people live close to public transport.

• **Introducing new rules to encourage building upwards, increasing density in line with local character and make the most of local infrastructure** – we will introduce new permitted development rights for building upwards on existing buildings by summer 2020, including to extend residential blocks by up to two storeys and to deliver new and bigger homes. We will also consult on the detail of a new permitted development right to allow vacant commercial buildings, industrial buildings and residential blocks to be demolished and replaced with well-designed new residential units which meet natural light standards.

• **Supporting community and self-build housing** – we will support those who want to build their own homes to find plots of land and provide help to parish councils and neighbourhood forums who wish to build a small number of homes to allow their communities to grow organically, providing homes for the next generation and those wishing to downsize

**• Setting a deadline for all local authorities** to have an up-to-date local plan – the government will require all local planning authorities to have up-to-date local plans by December 2023. The government will prepare to intervene where local authorities fail to meet the deadline in accordance with the existing statutory powers, considering appropriate action on a case by case basis.

• **Give local authorities the ability to ensure that new homes conform to local residents’ ideas of beauty through the planning system** – using the National Model Design Code we will set out clear parameters for promoting the design and style of homes and neighbourhoods local people want to see. We will ask local places to produce their own design guides and codes, informed by listening to local people and considering local context.

• **Continuing to drive supply through the Housing Delivery Test** – we will continue with plans to raise the Housing Delivery test threshold to 75% in November 2020, incentivising local authorities to deliver on their local plans.

•**Reviewing the formula for calculating Local Housing Need** – we will introduce a new approach which encourages greater building within and near to urban areas and makes sure the country is planning for the delivery of 300,000 new homes a year.

• **Reforming the New Homes Bonus (NHB) to reward delivery** – those authorities who strive to build more homes where they are most needed should be rewarded. The government will consult on reforming the NHB in Spring to incentivise greater delivery and ensure that where authorities are building more homes, they have access to greater funding to provide services for those who move into them.

**• Investing another £1.1 billion in local infrastructure** to unlock almost 70,000 new homes – our infrastructure-first approach to building new homes means putting in the transport, utilities, digital connectivity and community services like schools and hospitals early, so that new developments do not put strain on local services. The Budget set out that over £1.1 billion will be provided to fund key infrastructure schemes from Surrey to Sunderland, including new roads, transport links, flood defences, leisure and healthcare facilities, digital and power networks and schools.

• **A new £10 billion Single Housing Infrastructure Fund** – as set out in the Conservative manifesto, we will also build on this infrastructure investment with a new long-term, flexible fund which will give confidence to communities, developers and local authorities. Details of the funding will be announced alongside the Spending Review. Homes England will engage with local authorities and the wider market to build a pipeline of opportunities up and down the country.

• **Respond to the Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission’s report** – we will look to take forward many of the Commission’s recommendations, which include calling for urban tree planting and giving communities a greater opportunity to influence design standards in their area. This will put tree lined streets at the centre of future plans, so that they become the norm not the exception.

• **Review our policy for building in areas at flood risk** – alongside our £5.2 billion investment in additional flood defences announced yesterday, we will seek to ensure that communities across the country know that future development will be safe from floods.

• **Revise the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF**) to embed the principles of good design and placemaking – this will make clear that high-quality buildings and places must be considered throughout the planning process.

**• Introduce a Future Homes Standard (FHS**) – from 2025, the FHS will require up to 80% lower carbon emissions for all new homes. This will help bring an environmental revolution to home building – tackling climate change while keeping household bills low. This will ensure everyone, including developers, is doing their bit to protect the environment.

**• Ensuring renters are treated fairly through the Renters’ Reform Bill –** we will improve security for tenants by abolishing the use of ‘no fault evictions’ so that tenants can put down roots in their communities and plan for their long-term future. We will introduce a new ‘lifetime tenancy deposit’ and support good landlords to continue to provide the homes the country needs.

**• Renewing our commitment to affordable housing** – in the Budget we announced a £12 billion investment in Affordable Homes – the biggest cash investment in affordable housing for a decade. This is expected to bring in around a further £38 billion public and private investment. This new 5-year investment will deliver more affordable housing, help more people to own their own home, and build more social rent homes, helping those most at risk of homelessness in areas of the country where affordability is most acute.

**Commencing a review and pledging over £640 million to end rough sleeping** – rough sleeping is a moral shame which we must address head on. The government is committed to ending rough sleeping in this Parliament. We are now bringing the total funding for ‘move on’ accommodation to £381 million which will enable refurbishment, acquisition and leasing of properties specifically for rough sleepers, together with vital support that will enable them to sustain those tenancies where otherwise they may be at risk of falling out of housing. We are also pledging an additional £262 million for rough sleeper substance misuse services; because we believe that the root causes of rough sleeping are as much substance misuse, alcohol dependency and mental health, as they are housing. And the urgent review, led by Dame Louise Casey, will advise on what additional action is required to end rough sleeping within this Parliament.