



Intelligent Transport
 Planning Solutions

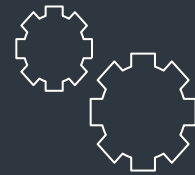


Planning System

For many developers in the Real Estate sector, the current planning system in the UK is seen as slow moving, expensive and bureaucratic. The Budget 2011 asserts that the planning system, “held back investment and created distortions in the way that businesses complete, deterring development and growth.” This can also restrict development and hinder the creation of new jobs in a sector that is desperate to reach the “peak” enjoyed before the economic downturn.

The Government has taken an ambitious approach to tackle some of the barriers that have previously stood in the way of an efficient planning system. The following proposals have been made:

- The Government has implemented a twelve month time limit on processing planning applications. The Government will also ensure that planning applications will comply with up-to-date planning policies at both national and local level. The only situation where a presumption in favour of planning will not apply is if the development is in a Green Belt Area or an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. This seems to be a fair compromise.
- National planning policies will be condensed into one document called the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This will contain the Government’s key economic, social, environmental objectives and planning policies. By streamlining the policy and making it more user friendly, this should hopefully make it easier to comply with.
- The Government is going to pilot a land auction model for public sector land with the intention of reducing the price of development land. Local Authorities will ask landowners to submit sealed bids for the price at which they would be willing to sell the land. The Local Authority will then be given the right to buy the land for a fixed period and grant planning permission accordingly. The land can then be auctioned to interested developers who will benefit from any increase in the land value. The Local Authority is likely to capture a greater share of the uplift in value following the grant of planning permission. This scheme will make more land available for development, increase competition and also bring greater certainty and reduced risks for developers.
- In an attempt to turn around the level of empty commercial properties, developers will be given the opportunity to change the use of office blocks (B1), warehouses (B2) and business parks (B8) to housing (C3) without having to obtain planning permission. This is likely to bring relief to many commercial landlords and developers who are struggling with empty commercial premises and enable them to take advantage of the buoyant residential rental market.



UNIQUE APPROACH

As one of the UK's leading consultants in the transport sector, iTransport Planning provides *integrated, individual, sustainable and innovative* Transport Planning solutions. We are leading the way in supporting developers, landowners, property owners, town planners, property agents and project managers with a comprehensive service that delivers far-sighted transport planning solutions.



PLAN & DESIGN

We plan and develop *sustainable* transport solutions to ensure that our advice *improves* and *sustains* the quality of people's lives in the *built, natural, economic and social* environment. We resolve transport problems through the design and applications of *innovative* technical and engineering solutions.



ENABLE

We work with our clients to ensure that our in-depth experience & expertise in Development & Regeneration directly benefits the project so that risks & costs are *minimised*, savings & innovation are *optimised*, and progress is *expedited*. What we learned in 25 years of *global* experience will directly *benefit* our clients and their projects.

- The Government is planning to place an obligation upon every Local Authority to encourage and support growth. Local authorities should be pressing ahead without delay in preparing up-to-date development plans which set out opportunities for growth in their areas. Local Authorities must ensure that they are not imposing any unnecessary burdens in the way of development which has previously been the case. In situations where development may stall, Local Authorities should be open to reviewing section 106 agreements at the request of developers, and looking at making amendments where possible.
- It has also been argued that the proposed planning reform will offer hope to the renewable energy sector. Experts have suggested that the concept of "sustainable development" is favourable to onshore wind farms that are subject to planning controls. This is positive news for sustainable energy developers who can hopefully look forward to their applications being dealt with more quickly and efficiently.

In addition to the above, the Government is putting a number of procedures in place with the view to speeding up the planning system. Although these proposals are likely to have a positive impact on the current planning system, it will mean that both the applicant and Local Planning Authority will have to cooperate in pushing through the applications efficiently whilst complying with planning procedures and policies. This is encouraging for developers and if successful will reduce the lengthy planning procedure currently encountered by many.

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