

BRIEFING



Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning

Date: June 2008

PPS12 Local Spatial Planning

On 4th June, CLG published Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (PPS12). This replaces the previous statement published in 2004. The document can be downloaded from:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/pps12lsp.pdf>

The associated Regulations (coming into force on 27th June 2008) can be seen at:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2008/uksi_20081371_en_1

The aim of the new policy is to simplify the process of preparation and adoption of development plan documents (DPDs). One of the main changes is, therefore, to remove the formal stage of publication of the preferred Options stage of DPD preparation. However, authorities must still demonstrate that they have considered realistic alternatives to the strategy proposed and that the chosen strategy is the most appropriate.

The new PPS focuses heavily on the production of Core Strategies although other DPDs will follow the same, streamlined process. Key changes are to allow the allocation of strategic sites in the Core Strategy and that they should plan for the effective delivery of physical, social and green infrastructure.

The PPS stresses that it is essential for LPAs to engage key delivery agencies (including housebuilders) early in the process and encourages joint working between both stakeholders and other authorities.

The three key tests of a plan are that it must be deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored. Plans will continue to be independently inspected for soundness but the previous 9 tests of soundness have been replaced with just three requirements of strategies being justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

In obvious frustration at the slow progress of the new plan system the PPS suggests that LPAs should try harder to stick to the Local Development Scheme timetable for preparation of DPDs. Unfortunately there remains no realistic sanction against those who do not.

In an attempt to curb the plethora of new policy emerging through supplementary planning documents (SPDs) and other informal policy documents, PPS12 stresses that SPDs should not be prepared with the aim of avoiding the need for the examination of policy which should be examined.

Implementation of the new policy is explained in greater detail through an online guide. This is available through the Planning Advisory Service website at:

<http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pagelId=51391>

The guide includes transitional arrangements for LPAs already producing DPDs using the old regulations.

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