

## **White Paper: Planning for the Future**

As Chair of the Penn Parish Council I am writing to you to request your help in trying to amend or withdraw the white paper to reduce the detrimental effects it will have on our community. This attempt to nationalise the planning system is causing great concern in areas such as ours.

An example of this is the response by Buckingham Town Council.

*"Buckingham Town Council (BTC) wishes to express its deep alarm and concern with the implications of the wholesale changes to the planning system proposed by the government's white paper: Planning for the Future, which reduces or removes the influence of Buckingham Town Council, Town and Parish Councils as well as members of the community on future planning applications. The effect of the new regime is likely to impact strongly on the environment and economic prosperity as well as the social well being of Buckinghamshire. Furthermore, it could see the end of local planning, local plans and residents having any ability to influence large developments. Removing a layer of democratic governance undermines accountability within the planning of our community's future and so BTC seeks assurances from Buckinghamshire Council that they will be voicing their objections to the drafters of the White paper about the content and scope of the proposed bill. In addition BTC are pressing Greg Smith our local MP to raise questions and to seek to challenge the details of this bill in parliament. Finally, BTC will write to the secretary of State reiterating the concerns noted at the head of this motion".*

Penn Parish Council endorses Buckingham Town Council's motion fully.

If this proposal goes ahead it will effectively create a crude US style zoning system where in areas zoned for development there will be no planning controls at all. It will also impose development targets on Local Plans (to be produced in a very tight timescale) that will create unbearable pressure on local infrastructure both physical and social.

And of course it will impact disproportionately on the Shire areas that have traditionally supported the government. We are at a loss to understand this headlong rush for development at any cost, not least because of the Government's stated desire to 'level-up' and regenerate the north of the UK. This proposal will have exactly the opposite effect. The paper is quite explicit in seeking to accommodate development where demand is greatest, that is to say in the South East. The paper makes no attempt to address developers who bank land and choose not to develop it, nor does it address how Covid-19 has altered the use of our offices and towns centres, which is surely the greatest challenge facing our country at the moment.

So we are seeking your help with this.

Every good wish.

Roy Bentham

Chair, Penn Parish Council