

**Q1 Do you agree that there should be no size limit on the buildings that could benefit from the new permitted development right to change use from Commercial, Business and Service (Class E) to residential (C3)?**

*Yes. Although we accept that times have changed with so much commerce now conducted on-line, we are concerned that the size and scale of residential development/conversions could, unchecked, severely damage town centres and that it would therefore be wise to have a size limit. That's not to say that above a particular size, a change of use should not be allowed, just that it would require planning consent and the scrutiny that goes with that.*

*Any new or converted dwellings must be of high standard, appropriate size and with good facilities.*

**Q2.1 Do you agree that the right should not apply in areas of outstanding natural beauty, the Broads, National Parks, areas specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of section 41(3) of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, and World Heritage Sites?**

*Yes. These are highly sensitive areas of significance nationally and internationally and vitally important to tourism, education, recreation, mental health etc. Our view is that these areas are too important not to be subject to the full scrutiny of a planning application and, if needs be, Sec of State intervention and that the right should not apply in these areas.*

*We feel very strongly that the list must also include Green Belt.*

**Q2.2 Do you agree that the right should apply in Conservation Areas?**

*No. Their importance warrants the full scrutiny of a planning application.*

**Q2.3 Do you agree that, in Conservation Areas only, the right should allow for prior approval of the impact of the loss of ground floor use to residential?**

*No. Prior approval of the impact of the loss of ground floor use to residential should apply everywhere, not just within Conservation Areas, as it does already for changes of use from retail or office use to residential. See also Q3.1*

**Q3.1 Do you agree that in managing the impact of the proposal, the matters set out in paragraph 21 of the consultation document should be considered in a prior approval.**

*Yes. We agree that Prior Approval is necessary. These are all sensible matters that need to be considered. However, consideration of the impact on the viability/sustainability of the area, shopping facilities in particular, should also be included.*

*Without the requirement to consider and take representations on impact on shopping facilities at Prior Approval, this proposal will remove the local authority's ability, through planning, to effectively guide/manage the re-sizing of shopping areas in a way that ensures that they function effectively and are sustainable.*

*We don't believe we can rely solely on market forces to protect the viability of a shopping area without some degree of overriding control. The landlord of a shopping centre or parade of shops can and will exercise management control to maximise benefit for the whole, but that cannot be relied on where ownership is fragmented as is often the case. We have to*

*bear in mind that we aren't just to imagine the developer stepping in to redevelop a tired retail parade for houses or flats. We also have to think about the owner of an individual unit in the middle of a parade whose decision making need have no regard for how it might impact on others.*

**Q3.2 Are there any other planning matters that should be considered?**

*Yes. Approval must take into account design and physical appearance, and how that fits with the area as a whole especially uniqueness, environment, architecture etc. and the vision of how the town should look. Also, and just as importantly, how it should function, e.g. infrastructure, car parking, public transport etc. Change should not be indiscriminate but sympathetic and positive.*

**Q4.1 Do you agree that the proposed new permitted development right to change use from Commercial, Business and Service (Class E) to residential should attract a fee per dwellinghouse?**

*No. We are concerned that the level of fee that might be acceptable would involve a disproportionate bureaucratic burden on local authorities.*

**Q4.2 If you agree there should be a fee per dwellinghouse, should this be set at £96 per dwellinghouse?**

*No*

**Q5 Do you have any other comments on the proposed right for the change of use from Commercial, Business and Service use class to residential?**

*Yes. We are concerned that the government shouldn't implement a change like this whilst we are still in the midst of a pandemic nor until we are sufficiently over it for markets to have found their level. There won't be much demand for shops right now, and there will be further casualties but, hopefully and given time, things will improve and units will be re-occupied albeit not necessarily to levels pre-Covid. Units need to be there for when demand returns.*

**Q6.1. Do you think the proposed right for change of use from business, commercial to residential impact on locality?**

*Yes. Essentially, our reasons are as set out in our answer to Q3.2.*

**Q6.2 Do you agree that Consideration of change of use to be given to the impact on those who share protected characteristics.**

*Yes. It should, at the very least, be a matter for Prior Approval and, where appropriate, a conventional Planning Application.*

**Q7.1 Do you agree that the right for schools, universities, hospitals be amended to allow for development which is not greater than 25% of their footprint or up to 250 sq meters of the current buildings on site, whichever is the greater?**

*Yes*

**Q7.2 Do you agree that the height limit can be raised from five to six meters?**

*Yes. Provided it can be justified.*

**Q7.3 Do you have any evidence to support an increase of over six meters?**

No

**Q7:4 Do you agree that prisons can have the same right?**

*No. Location/expansion of a prison can be more public sensitive.*

**Q8 Do you have comments on Permanent Development Rights for schools, colleges, universities, hospitals or prisons?**

*Yes. We object to permanent Development Rights. They impact on Local population and infrastructure.*

**Q9.1 Do you think the proposed amendments to PDRs for schools, colleges, Uni and hospital could impact on business, communities or Local Planning Authorities?**

*Yes. The examples given relate to numbers of people e.g. increase in traffic/transport noise/crowd factor perhaps.*

**Q9.2 Do you think the proposed amendments to the right in relation to schools, college , Uni, hospitals could give rise to any impact on people with shared characteristics?**

*Yes. These could arise within sensitive areas as listed in Q2.1 as well as Green Belt and our response is the same.*

**Q10.1 Do you think the proposed amendment to allow prisons to benefit from these changes would impact on business, community or Local Authorities?**

*Yes, for much the same reasons as our response to Q3.2*

**Q10.2 Ditto impact on those with shared characteristics?**

*Yes, as asserted earlier*

**Q11 Do you agree that new Public Service processes as in para 43-44 should only apply to major development not to Environmental Impact Assessments?**

*Yes. Any alternative would slow up the system, environmental factors should always be taken into account.*

**Q12 ditto should also apply to hospitals schools, prisons, HM YOIs, other criminal justice accommodation, FE colleges, - a modified process**

Yes

**Q13 Do you agree that the determination period for applications should be reduced to ten weeks?**

*No. The current period allowed is just about sufficient for proper scrutiny, representation and consideration*

**Q14 Do you agree to a minimum publicity/consultation period being reduced to fourteen days?**

*No. Not less than twenty eight working days.*

**Q15 Do you agree that the Secretary of State should be notified of planning applications**

*Yes. It is particularly important where there is sensitivity e.g applicant/proposal/site/location etc and possible need for Sec of State intervention.*

**Q16 Do you agree that the policy in para 94 of NPPF should be extended to require local planning authorities to engage proactively to resolve key planning issues of other public infrastructure projects before applications are submitted?**

*Yes. To avoid unnecessary delay and expense and ensure an efficient application/decision process, and to encourage local planning authorities to engage proactively.*

**Q17.1 Any other comments on other matters set out in the consultation document including post permission matters and guidance or planning fees. Specify**

*No*

**Q17.2 Any suggestions on how Public priority infrastructure projects be prioritized within the planning system?**

*Yes. Applications should be prioritized by need, not forgetting funding.*

**Q18 Impact of proposed amendments on those with protected characteristics.**

*Yes, as might any development proposal and should, at the very least, be a matter for Prior Approval and, where appropriate, a conventional Planning Application.*

**19.1 Do you agree with the broad approach to be applied to the review and update of existing development rights in respect of categories 1-3 in para 76. [? to wave these applications through?]**

*No. Public scrutiny in a democracy is sacrosanct and fundamental. Inherent in this is the right to have sufficient time to complete the necessary investigations.*

**Q19.2 Are there any additional issues we should consider?**

*Yes. Profit should not be the underlying reason for development.*

**Q20 Do you agree that betting /pay day loan shops can change their use within the new business, commercial and service use class?**

*Yes. Provided that the Prior Approval process is widened sufficiently to allow for proper consideration of impact.*

**Q21 Do you agree the broad approach to para 76 to smooth the process of change of use?**

*Yes. Subject to earlier responses. Then we are in favour of streamlining the system but it must not reduce the level of, or ability to examine and respond in such detail as may be necessary to each application. We all fear hidden consequences of these proposals.*

**Q22. Do you have views on the simplification of Permitted Development Rights and their impact on commerce and community?**

*Yes. We fear that precipitate actions will be taken without due regard to the sensitivities, uniqueness and environment of our loved and valued local communities, open spaces and Green Belt. We believe that these proposals should be first tested in a Pilot Scheme over a period of at least twelve months.*