

## The Planning Inspectorate

# PINS NOTE 7/2011 (2<sup>nd</sup> revision)

To: All Inspectors (England) & Casework Teams

Date of Issue: 25 March 2011

Currency: review at 6 months after issue

Last updated: 12 July 2011 – update regarding the DCLG [statement](#) that indicates an approach the Government could take to introducing a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework.

## Planning For Growth

### Background

1. In his 2011 Budget the Chancellor of the Exchequer published proposals to help rebuild Britain's economy, including a 'Plan for Growth'. The planning system has a key role to play in implementing this plan and on 23 March 2011 Greg Clark, Minister of State for Decentralisation, made a Written Ministerial Statement - "*Planning for Growth*" which sets out the Government's commitment to reforming the planning system so that it promotes sustainable growth and jobs.

### Action

2. Inspectors should, in relevant casework, have careful and full regard to the principles in Greg Clark's statement that significant weight should be attached to the need to secure economic growth and employment.
3. Case Officers are being asked to identify casework currently in hand involving economic development and to seek parties' views. We expect that parties will proactively address the Minister's statement in the case of appeals submitted since it was made and it is reasonable to assume that they will do likewise at hearings and inquiries where the event has yet to be held. It is not expected that events will need to be delayed or adjournments permitted to accommodate such evidence other than in exceptional cases.
4. Until further notice, on written representations casework where it is not apparent that the case officer has sought parties' views, and on hearings / inquiries where the event has already been held, Inspectors should consider whether it is necessary to seek the parties' views on the Minister's statement in cases where economic growth and / or employment considerations are likely to be material to the decision.
5. It appears that all incomplete Local Plan casework will have growth and employment implications to some extent. Advice on handling Local Plan casework is in Annex A.

6. If they wish to do so, Inspectors may submit their decision for pre-issue reading. However, given the clarity of the Minister's statement and the likely public awareness of the issues, this is likely to be the exception rather than the rule. Annex B gives advice on pre-issue reading.
7. Inspectors should also be aware of the PINS Budget 2011 Quick Guide, which also includes links to the Budget papers (the Red Book and the Plan for Growth). Inspectors should also note the Government's recent statement setting out the approach it could take to introducing a presumption in favour of sustainable development in the forthcoming National Planning Policy Framework. This will build on the principles set out in national planning policy and the presumption would be central to the approach taken to both plan-making and decision-taking. LPAs should plan positively for new development, and approve all proposals unless the adverse impacts of allowing development would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policy objectives in the National Planning Policy Framework. The statement can be viewed [here](#).
8. Please contact XXXX, if you have any queries on this Note.

XXXX

**Director of Policy, Quality and Development Plans**

## **Local Plans**

1. Economic considerations are likely to be an issue to a greater or lesser extent in most, if not all, local plans. Ministers expect the 'Planning for Growth' agenda to be implemented immediately, and give a high priority and significant weight to the reform of the planning system to promote sustainable economic growth and jobs. Therefore it is necessary to seek views on the implications of this policy development for all local plans that are currently being examined, irrespective of the stage reached. However it is also important that this requirement does not cause unnecessary delay. The following steps should be taken, depending on the stage reached in the examination process.

### **During preparation and before a Pre-Hearing Meeting (PHM) or before pre-hearing correspondence is sent**

2. Through the Programme Officer (PO), ask the Council to place a notice on their web site advising that any written representations relating to the 'Planning for Growth' and other Budget statements should be submitted within 2 weeks, and that they will be taken into account by the Inspector. Through the PO, notify all who have duly made representations, drawing attention to this opportunity.

3. Inform the Council that any statement from them in response to any representation received should be made within 1 week of the close of the consultation period.

4. The implication here is that the Inspector may have to take into account representations that are technically late and not from people or organisations with duly made representations. This cannot fairly be avoided. This will be particularly important at the report writing stage and beyond (see below) as people may not keep a close watch on the Council's web site after the hearing sessions.

5. Make clear through the PHM or in pre-hearing correspondence that the potential materiality of the 'Planning for Growth' and other Budget statements on planning policy reform will be discussed in relevant hearing sessions.

### **After the PHM or after pre-hearing correspondence has gone out but before the hearings start**

6. Ask the Council to advertise on their web site and notify participants as above.

7. Do not delay the start of scheduled hearing sessions. But if it is clearly essential (e.g. see report writing stage), agree to hold a further session at the end of the scheduled programme.

### **Examination hearings in progress**

8. Ask the Council to advertise on their web site and notify participants as above and, if essential (e.g. see report writing stage), schedule a later hearing session.

### **Report writing stage**

9. Ask the Council to advertise on their web site and notify participants as above. The hearings will need to be re-opened if you consider that the pro-growth policy implications are potentially material to your findings or if parties take a strong view that they need to address you on its implications. But preferably use the written representations approach.

### **Report submitted for QA but not yet sent to Council**

10. As above at the report writing stage.

11. Note that the office will inform the Council of any delay to the agreed programme as a consequence of the above measures.

12. In the event that a PO is no longer in place, inform the office who will then undertake the necessary correspondence with the Council.

**Pre-issue Reading**

1. With the need for consistency and the maintenance of quality in mind, Inspectors may if they wish ask for pre-issue reading of any casework involving the development of land where economic growth and employment are considerations affected by the Ministerial statement covered by this PINS Note. It is not however considered likely that this will be necessary in many cases.
2. Decisions on any such casework should be sent electronically to XXXX, and the paper file sent to XXXX at the same time, rather than to XXXX. Once the reading process has been concluded you will be asked to forward the decision to XXXX with "ready for issue" typed into the email header box. In addition, it is essential that all INT12 forms are completed, recording the fact that the case involves economic growth and employment issues, as XXXX have been asked to log the incidence of this casework.
3. The date which counts in terms of your objectives will be that on which the decision is sent to XXXX.