

Heads of Planning Service: All local planning authorities in England, regional planning bodies and all interested parties.

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Dear Sir/Madam,

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PUBLICATION OF PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 3 “HOUSING”

I am pleased to say that Planning Policy Statement 3 *Housing* (PPS3) is being launched today. A hard copy will be put in the post to you. Also published today is a housing policy document *Delivering Affordable Housing*. Both of these documents can be viewed at www.communities.gov.uk/planning.

PPS3 puts in place a new national policy framework for planning for housing at the local and regional levels. It provides an enabling framework for local planning authorities, working with their stakeholders, including developers, to deliver both the right quantity of housing to address need and demand in their areas, and the right quality and mix of housing for their communities.

PPS3, along with other Government housing policy and planning policy statements provides the context for plan preparation in relation to housing development.

The Government wants to move as quickly as possible to a development plan policy framework which reflects this PPS. Local planning authorities and regional planning bodies should consider the extent to which emerging local development documents and regional spatial strategies can reasonably have regard to the policies in this statement, depending on their state of preparation. As far as is practicable, changes should be made to emerging spatial plans so that they reflect PPS3 policies, but this should not be done at the expense of putting in place an effective policy framework for housing as quickly as possible.

Where it is not practicable for changes to emerging plans to be made, local planning authorities and regional planning bodies should set out the steps they will be taking to address any issues arising from this PPS through an early plan review.

In some cases, it may be necessary to review local plan-making programmes in order to achieve a comprehensive policy framework in reasonable time. Maximum use should be made of core strategies as a means of setting out the approach for housing development, and of planning, monitoring and managing a 5-year supply of deliverable sites in line with new PPS3. In some cases - where, for example, a core strategy has made it clear that housing supply will be focussed on one or more large locations, or where the overall supply of new housing is not high - it might be appropriate to consider whether a site allocation development plan document is needed.

The examinations in public of the regional spatial strategies for the North West and South East of England are currently underway. The Panels should have regard to this statement and other emerging policy statements as these examinations proceed over the coming weeks. They should consider the implications of this statement for the proposed approaches to planning for housing, including the level of housing provision. In finalising emerging regional spatial strategies, regional planning bodies will need to consider whether each strategy will provide an adequate framework for local development documents to provide land for housing over a period of at least 15 years as required by this statement and what action needs to be taken if it does not.

As regards existing local plans, local planning authorities will need to assess the extent to which they have, and can maintain, a 5-year supply of deliverable land for housing as required by PPS3. This will be the context for making planning decisions from 1st April 2007 (paragraphs 7, 8 and 68 of PPS3 refer).

PPS3 advocates a collaborative approach to the preparation of evidence bases to support planning for housing policies on the basis of housing markets. Where emerging plans do not reflect this approach, local planning authorities will wish to have in mind the potential implications for the timely completion of emerging local development frameworks, in considering whether or not to change the approach for this plan round.

PPS3 may be viewed on the Department's website at www.communities.gov.uk/planning. Other documents being published shortly include:

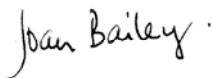
- Summary of responses to consultation draft PPS3;
- Regulatory Impact Assessment of PPS3;
- Regulatory Equality Impact Assessment of PPS3
- *Delivering Affordable Housing* - a statement on affordable housing policy;
- *Preparing Design Codes* - Guidance on Design Coding;

- Strategic Housing Market Assessment Guidance;
- Identifying sub-regional Housing Market Areas Advice Note; and
- Directions which will cancel with effect from 1 April 2007: The Town and County Planning (Residential Development on Greenfield Land) (England) Direction 2000 and the Town and Country Planning (Residential Density) (London, South East England, South West England, East of England and Northamptonshire) Direction 2005 .

There will also in due course be guidance on strategic housing land availability assessments. We will be working with the Local Government Association and the Home Builders Federation to produce this. The aim is to publish the guidance in the early part of next year.

Further copies of PPS3 may be obtained from TSO (The Stationery Office), PO Box 29, Norwich NR3 1GN (the ISBN number is 978 11 753976 1). Order through the Parliamentary Hotline (Lo-call): 08457 023 474, fax: 0870 600 5533, textphone 0870 240 3701, email: book.orders@tso.co.uk or visit www.tsoshop.co.uk to buy online.

Yours Faithfully



MRS J M BAILEY