



Advice produced by The Planning Inspectorate for use by its Inspectors – 31 March 2011

PLANNING FOR GROWTH

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.
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 set out below.

LOCAL PLAN CASEWORK

- i. 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

- ii. 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.
- iii. 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.
- iv. 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.
- v. 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

- vi. Ask the Council to advertise on their web site and notify participants as above.
- vii. 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

- viii. 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

- ix. 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

- x. As above at the report writing stage.
- xi. Note that the office will inform the Council of any delay to the agreed programme as a consequence of the above measures.
- xii. In the event that a PO is no longer in place, inform the office who will then undertake the necessary correspondence with the Council.