

Written Ministerial Statement for 30 June 2008

Communities and Local Government

Planning Appeals

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (Mr. Parmjit Dhanda):

The majority of planning appeals in England are decided by inspectors, but a small percentage is decided by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, usually because the development is large and/or controversial. Around 27,000 appeals are made each year: in 2007, 110 appeals were determined by the Secretary of State. This statement sets out the Secretary of State's policy on recovering planning appeals. It replaces the previous policy on which appeals are recovered for the Secretary of State's determination (which was set out in a House of Commons Hansard written answer for 24 July 2006). These changes are being made following the review of the 2006 criteria promised in the White Paper, "Planning for a Sustainable Future". They introduce two new criteria, one of which relates to climate change and energy and the others to World Heritage Sites.

In future the Secretary of State will consider recovery of appeals involving:

- proposals for development of major importance having more than local significance;
- proposals giving rise to substantial regional or national controversy;
- proposals which raise important or novel issues of development control, and/or legal difficulties;
- proposals against which another Government Department has raised major objections or has a major interest;
- proposals of major significance for the delivery of the Government's climate change programme and energy policies;
- any proposal for residential development of over 150 units or on sites of over five hectares, which would significantly impact on the Government's objective to secure a better balance between housing demand and supply and create high quality, sustainable, mixed and inclusive communities;
- proposals which involve any main town centre use or uses (as set out in paragraph 1.8 of PPS6) where that use or uses comprise(s) over 9,000m² gross floor space (either as a single proposal or as part of or in combination with other current proposals), and which are proposed on a site in an edge-of-centre or out-of-centre location (as described in Table 2 of PPS6) that is not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan document prepared in accordance with the policy in PPS6;
- proposals for significant development in the green belt;
- major proposals involving the winning and working of minerals;
- and proposals which would have an adverse impact on the outstanding universal value, integrity, authenticity and significance of a World Heritage Site.

There may on occasion be other cases which merit recovery because of the particular circumstances.