

AVEBURY PARISH COUNCIL
RESPONSE TO MHCLG'S CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR REFORM OF THE
PLANNING SYSTEM IN ENGLAND

- 1) We refer to the slide deck sent us by Wiltshire Council with the title 'Member Briefing: Planning White Paper' dated 2 October on which, by email dated 16 October, we have been asked to comment with a deadline of 29 October.
- 2) **We welcome** proposals to allow the Infrastructure Levy to be used for affordable housing (slide 7) and for stronger enforcement (slide 8).
- 3) **We are disappointed** that no consideration is given to the increasingly urgent need to provide affordable housing. This ought to permit the ring-fencing of land for that purpose.
- 4) **We regret** the proposal to streamline environmental assessment (slide 5) as it is bound adversely to affect the quality of the work undertaken.
- 5) **We regret** any change reducing the already minimal influence that people have over plans that affect the place in which they live. Slide 7 asserts: *"There must be a fundamental cultural change on how planning departments operate. They need to be more outward looking, proactively engaging with developers, businesses, architects and designers, as well as a wider cross-section of their local communities."*
- 6) Whilst we make no comment about the culture of planning departments, we believe strongly that they are already engaging sufficiently with developers, architects, and designers. Indeed they do so to the exclusion of contact let alone proactive engagement with representatives of local communities.
- 7) That results in the people most affected by development being the least consulted. The consequence is that they are detached from the process and disillusioned with it. Planning departments need to reflect on their fundamentally anti-democratic approach.
- 8) It is disappointing that town and parish councils have been given less than a fortnight to comment on a subject of such importance to the people whom they represent.

21 October 2020