

Permission in principle for development plans and brownfield registers

Department for Communities and Local Government

RPC rating: fit for purpose

The impact assessment (IA) is now fit for purpose as a result of the Department's response to the RPC's initial review. As first submitted, the IA was not fit for purpose.

Description of proposal

The Department explains that, as part of the Government's plans to streamline the planning process, it proposes enabling local authorities to grant permission in principle to sites in brownfield registers and local plans.

Impacts of proposal

The Department explains that the proposal will be beneficial to developers by providing them with the option of applying for approval through a less onerous Technical Details Consent route rather than through the full planning consent process. The main impacts will be to reduce duplication in the system, provide greater certainty for developers and save them the cost of failed applications turned down in instances where sites are unsuitable for housing.

The Department expects that around 1,200 developers per year will make savings of planning application costs from submitting fewer unsuccessful applications. While the Department anticipates some small one-off familiarisation costs, it expects developers to save around £50.8 million per year by avoiding the cost of failed applications.

The IA covers only primary legislation enabling powers to local authorities and provides an indicative benefit to business. The Department has confirmed that it intends to provide an IA for related secondary legislation, to cover the technical detail of the policy, at which stage the savings will be scored for the purposes of the Business Impact Target.

Quality of submission

As initially submitted, the RPC did not consider the IA to be fit for purpose. Following the RPC's initial review, the Department submitted a revised IA which responded adequately to the following issues:

- The Department now states that, following discussions with stakeholders, it can confirm that the level of familiarisation costs, prior to choosing to follow the proposed new consent route, is negligible. Developers have indicated that such costs will occur only at the point of preparing an application on a site with permission in principle for the first time.
- The Department has provided additional information, from a small sample of developers, to confirm its assumptions that it will take one person in each developer company half an hour to familiarise themselves with the new arrangements (page 10). The Department will test this further through consultation at the secondary legislation stage.
- The Department now explains clearly that only 6,000 of the 14,000 developers will be expected to familiarise themselves with the new arrangements within any given year (page 11).
- As requested by the RPC in its fast track confirmation, the Department has now received feedback from the Theatres Trust and the Canal River Trust to confirm that they will incur only limited familiarisation costs as a result of the proposal (page 11).

The RPC confirms that the Department has provided, at this stage, a sufficient indication of the beneficial impacts of the proposal. The Department should test its assumptions further via consultation undertaken at the secondary legislation stage.

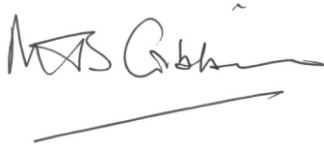
Initial departmental assessment

Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision (OUT)
Equivalent annual net cost to business (EANCB)	Zero at this stage
Business net present value	N/A
Societal net present value	N/A

RPC assessment

Opinion: EANCB Validation
Origin: domestic
RPC reference number: RPC-3069(2)-CLG
Date of implementation: not provided

Classification	Qualifying regulatory provision (OUT)
EANCB – RPC validated	Zero at this stage
RPC rating (of initial submission)	Not fit for purpose



Michael Gibbons CBE, Chairman