

<b>Committee(s):</b> Planning & Transportation Committee	<b>Date(s):</b> 08/01/2019
<b>Subject:</b> City Corporation Response to MHCLG consultation - Planning Reform: Supporting the high street and increasing the delivery of new homes	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Carolyn Dwyer, Director of the Built Environment	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Peter Shadbolt, Assistant Director (Planning Policy)	

### Summary

The Government is consulting on further reforms to the planning system, seeking greater flexibility to extend existing buildings upwards and new permitted development rights to ensure that the planning system is speeding up the delivery of homes and supporting the regeneration of high streets. Views are also sought on changes to the process for disposing of local authority land at less than best value. The consultation is open until 14 January 2019.

The proposed changes would allow for the redevelopment of office buildings to provide residential as permitted development and flexibility to change from retail use to office use and, in some cases, residential use. Views are sought on changes to the Use Class Order to allow greater flexibility for change to retail uses to reflect current market trends. The consultation also seeks views on creating a permitted development right to allow the upwards extension of buildings to deliver new residential accommodation. Alongside this deregulation, the consultation proposes removing permitted development rights for phone boxes and associated advertisements on the street. In line with proposals in the 2017 Housing White Paper, the current consultation also seeks views on changes to the disposal of local authority land at less than best value.

The proposal to remove permitted development rights for telephone kiosks should be strongly supported. The City Corporation has received 68 applications for prior approval for such kiosks since 2016, many of which have been refused due to their prominent visual impact on the City's townscape and impact on pedestrian movement, and subsequently determined on appeal. The proposed change will give greater planning control to refuse unacceptable schemes.

Proposals to extend permitted development rights to the redevelopment of offices and allow the upwards extension of buildings to deliver new residential units would potentially have a significant effect on the City's cluster of office buildings, introduce residential uses into primarily commercial areas and adversely impact on business activity. Such a change would run contrary to the City's current exemption from national permitted development rights for the change of use from offices to residential and the City's Article 4 Direction and should be strongly resisted.

Proposals for greater flexibility for local authorities in the sale of local authority land at less than best value, including land held for planning purposes, could reduce the time and risk involved in disposing of land and should be supported.

**Peter Shadbolt**

Assistant Director (Planning Policy)

T: 020 7332 1038

E: [peter.shadbolt@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:peter.shadbolt@cityoflondon.gov.uk)