

# PRESS RELEASE



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## **Coalition proposals for re-use of farm buildings**

The Government published a consultation paper on 8 April 2011 relating to the relaxation of planning rules to Change of Use of buildings from commercial to residential. One of the aspects of this consultation is that ministers are inviting local planning authorities to support the change of use of farm buildings to affordable homes where such buildings are inappropriate for employment re-use. They are also suggesting that consideration should be given to the need for affordable homes when assessing individual applications. The Coalition have also reaffirmed plans to publish a Countryside Policy Statement setting out rural policy priority and it is proposing to amend National Park legislation to reflect the importance of sustainable development.

Andrew Bays of BCM, rural property specialists based in Sutton Scotney says "This consultation seems to be holding a welcome change of emphasis in planning policy. In particular, the need for affordable homes in rural areas is well documented. This need has often seemed to be poorly addressed by planning policy which now may improve. The Coalition's intentions to clarify countryside rural planning policy generally is welcome, particularly if it allows more sustainable development in the countryside which has often been stifled by planning policy guidance which often seems unduly restrictive in rural areas. Of course it should be remembered at this stage it is only a consultation and interested parties should make sure they make their feelings known now in order that any future legislation can take such representations into consideration.

For more details contact Andrew Bays at BCM.

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