

PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

GOVERNMENT CONFIRMS 'AUTOMATIC' EXTENSION FOR PLANNING PERMISSIONS IN ENGLAND



In a welcome boost for developers the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) has confirmed plans that will see the automatic extension until April 2021 of all planning permissions and listed building consents that are due to lapse during the coronavirus pandemic.

Charlotte Howlett, Planning Consultant with BCM Rural Property Specialists comments: "This is a welcomed move by the government. Providing essential flexibility for those development sites that need additional time to mobilise and to start works on site. The Government has listened to the industry,

something which will work to secure jobs and give the building supply chain certainty at this time."

The move follows lobbying by industry groups including The Royal Town Planning Institute and Home Builders Federation, following measures put in place by the Scottish Government at the start of the lockdown, highlighting concerns that 24,000 homes across an estimated 400 new home projects, would slow the home builders industries recovery from the Covid-19 crisis.

The development industry has also been hoping that measures may also be introduced to address the difficulties arising on affordable housing commitments and in connection with Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments due on schemes which have been delayed or stalled due to the pandemic, which remain unaddressed by the MHCLG at this time.

Charlotte adds: "After planning permissions are granted it takes an inordinate amount of time to resolve planning conditions, deal with statutory utilities, financing, building regulations, tender packages and contracts and so this extension provides essential time without the need to resubmit a new planning application, which would have otherwise submitted the same package as previously granted. Covid19 has had an effect on all businesses and so this allowance is a positive and proactive move to assist the industry."

However, planning permissions that lapse during this period but before the extension provisions come into force are expected to require an 'Additional Environmental Approval' before the extension can take effect. Something which developers still need to take into account.



This latest move to support the industry follows Housing Minister Robert Jenricks efforts to reopen the property market by encouraged construction to expand capacity by extending their working hours up to 9pm Monday to Saturday in residential areas, and later in non-residential areas.

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