

5th October 2026

Response submitted by email only to: MayorsPlanningPowersConsultation@communities.gov.uk

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Planning Powers for Mayors in England

The Land, Planning and Development Federation (LPDF) welcomes the opportunity to respond to the consultation on the 'Planning Powers for Mayors in England' consultation. The LPDF supports the Government's wider ambition to strengthen strategic planning and give Mayors the tools they need to support housing delivery, economic growth and infrastructure investment across their areas.

The LPDF are generally supportive of these proposals. Rather than responding to each consultation question the LPDF make some more general observations and comments below.

About the LPDF

The LPDF seeks to represent the UK's leading land promoters, home builders and commercial developers. LPDF members support the housebuilding and commercial development sectors by promoting sites through the planning system, providing "shovel ready" land with a planning permission which can facilitate the delivery of infrastructure and serviced land parcels.

The LPDF seeks to actively engage with government on planning, housing and commercial development policy and to educate the wider public on the social, environmental and economic benefits of development through an evidenced based approach.

The LPDF encourages its members to deliver well designed, high quality, sustainable places which deliver a mix of housing types and tenures, commercial spaces and community uses that have a positive social, environmental, and economic impact.

Our key values include:

- Working in a positive and cooperative way with central and local government and key stakeholders, to deliver a planning system capable of supplying the homes and employment space we need.
- Promoting research and an evidence-led approach to policy development.
- Increasing the supply of new homes to meet demand and make home ownership a realistic possibility for all those who aspire to it.
- Ensuring that we build the affordable homes of all types and tenures that this country so desperately needs.
- Delivering new employment space to meet demand from businesses and support economic growth.

- Championing the impact of increased housing delivery on reducing intergenerational unfairness.
- Creating well designed, high quality and sustainable places to live and work.
- Educating and informing about the social, environmental and economic benefits of development.
- Supporting diversity of delivery in the market and championing SME developers.
- Promoting diversity and inclusivity within the sector.

General Comments

The LPDF sees merit in all Mayors having a consistent set of planning powers. Giving elected Mayors the ability to intervene in genuinely strategic applications could help ensure that decisions reflect the wider housing, economic and infrastructure needs of an area, rather than being determined solely by local pressures. In some circumstances, this could also enable Mayors to support development where local considerations or opposition may otherwise make it difficult to secure development that is supported by wider strategic objectives.

However, the LPDF recognises that Mayoral intervention introduces another stage into an already complex planning process, with consequent potential for delay, cost and uncertainty. The proposed thresholds for applications of potential strategic importance therefore need to be carefully considered. They should capture development that is genuinely strategic, including schemes that can make a significant contribution to meeting identified housing and commercial development needs, without bringing a disproportionate number of applications into a further layer of decision-making.

The LPDF considers that the relationship between Mayoral planning powers and the existing role of local planning authorities should also be clearly defined. Mayoral intervention should be focused on matters that have a genuinely strategic or cross-boundary dimension, with the local planning authority retaining responsibility for applications that do not meet the relevant strategic criteria. This would help preserve local accountability while ensuring that Mayoral powers are available where they can add genuine strategic value.

The LPDF also considers that Mayoral planning powers should support the Government's wider objective of increasing the supply of new homes and supporting commercial development. Given the geographical scale over which Mayors are able to plan strategically, they should have a clear responsibility to plan positively for and seek to deliver the identified housing and employment land needs of their areas. Mayors should use their strategic oversight to help ensure that these needs are met across the Mayoral area, including where delivery may be constrained by individual local circumstances. The exercise of Mayoral planning powers should therefore be clearly aligned with the delivery of agreed housing and commercial development requirements, rather than creating an additional mechanism through which otherwise sustainable development can be delayed or prevented.

There also needs to be confidence that the powers will be used consistently with their intended pro-growth and strategic planning purpose. While Mayors will have an important democratic mandate and should have discretion to intervene, appropriate checks and balances will be needed to ensure that the powers are exercised on the basis of clear strategic and planning considerations, rather than in response to particular lobbying or local pressures. Clear statutory tests, published reasons for intervention and transparent processes will be important in this regard.

The LPDF also considers that Mayoral planning functions should be subject to the same expectations of performance and accountability as those applying to local planning authorities. Where there are established measures for addressing persistent under-performance, including special measures or designation arrangements, equivalent mechanisms should apply where appropriate to Mayoral planning functions. The introduction of additional planning powers should be accompanied by clear accountability for their effective and timely exercise, ensuring that applicants and communities have appropriate safeguards regardless of which planning authority is exercising the relevant powers.

The LPDF would also support clear procedural requirements around the exercise of Mayoral intervention powers. There should be defined timescales for deciding whether to intervene and, once an application has been called in, for progressing it to determination. This will be important in providing applicants with certainty and avoiding the intervention process becoming a source of unnecessary delay.

The effective exercise of these powers will also depend on Mayoral authorities having access to the necessary planning expertise, capacity and resources. The Government should ensure that the introduction of these powers is accompanied by appropriate arrangements for resourcing and technical expertise, particularly where Mayoral authorities are taking on functions that would otherwise have been undertaken by an established local planning authority. It will be important that the new arrangements do not simply transfer existing capacity pressures from local planning authorities to Mayoral authorities.

In practice, the LPDF considers that the greatest value of these powers is likely to be in relation to strategic infrastructure rather than the routine determination of housing applications. Major transport, highways, energy, utilities and other infrastructure frequently cross local authority boundaries, and Mayors are well placed to coordinate these issues alongside strategic growth.

Overall, the LPDF supports the direction of travel, provided the new powers are used selectively, proportionately and with a clear focus on delivery. Their success should ultimately be judged by whether they help development and infrastructure come forward more effectively, rather than simply adding another tier to the planning process.