CABINET

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING: DRAFT WHITE PAPER

Memorandum by the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Minister of Housing and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Wales

We circulate, for the consideration of our colleagues, the draft of a White Paper on town and country planning which has been approved by the Home Affairs Committee. The purpose of the White Paper is to announce the substance of legislation to be introduced in the 1967-68 Session for England and Wales, and in the 1968-69 Session for Scotland.

2. As we explain in the White Paper, we want to modernise the main body of planning legislation which, in its essentials, goes back to the early post-war years and owes so much to the care and foresight of Lewis Silkin. There is now an urgent need to streamline procedures and cut down delays which have become a source of justified criticism; to ensure wider public participation in planning particularly when schemes are still at the formative stage; and to adapt the planning process to match the advances in planning techniques and the economic and social changes that have taken place over the last 20 years.

3. The two most important alterations we propose concern the handling of appeals against decisions made by local planning authorities, and the content and procedure for approval of the development plans they prepare. At present, all planning appeals are decided in the name of the Minister or the Secretary of State. The proposal (paragraphs 30-41 of the White Paper), which follows the recommendation of the Committee on Tribunals and Enquiries, is that power should be taken to authorise selected inspectors to decide minor cases that do not invoke issues of policy. This would greatly simplify the handling of thousands of cases each year and should lead to a great improvement in speed of decision. We believe too that most people would welcome the fact that their appeal was being decided by the man who heard their arguments and inspected the site.

4. We propose (paragraphs 15-20) that the content of development plans should be broadened to take in not merely matters of land use but the whole range of considerations that should determine the future structure of our towns and the policies for the countryside. In particular, this means ensuring that traffic, transport and investment policies are properly reflected in these plans. At the same time, we propose that only these structural elements should normally require Ministerial approval since one of the main causes of delay in planning in recent years has been the preoccupation of central government with
the highly detailed proposals for land use that make up the greater part of the current plans. These detailed matters would be dealt with in local plans which would, in the ordinary way, be left for settlement by the local planning authority.

5. In considering these proposals for development plans, the Home Affairs Committee paid special attention to the measures needed to safeguard objectors' rights where planning authorities are approving their own local plans and we propose to retain powers to intervene in the handling of any local plan at any stage should circumstances demand this, and to provide procedures which ensure that planning authorities deal openly and fairly with those who object to their proposals. These are set out in the Annex to the White Paper.

6. We now seek the agreement of our colleagues to the publication of the White Paper at an early date, so that Parliament and the public may be able to consider the broad outline of our proposals and so that we may discuss them with the local authority associations and the Council on Tribunals before the legislation is introduced.

W.R.
A.G.
C.H.

Scottish Office, S.W.1.

15th June, 1967
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING

1. Town and country planning shapes the conditions in which we live together. Planning decisions determine where and how new buildings may be built and whether existing uses of land and buildings may be changed. In the broader sense, they largely determine the environment in which we shall live - whether our towns will be pleasant places to live in, and whether our homes, shops, factories, offices and places of leisure and entertainment will be in the right places, and with easy flowing communications between them. They determine whether the countryside will be protected for farming, forestry and recreation, whether its beauty will be enhanced, and whether the fine buildings of the past will be preserved against decay and wanton destruction. They provide a framework within which thousands of millions of pounds are spent every year on buildings and roads.

2. It matters to everybody that we should have an up-to-date and effective town and country planning system which can help to bring these things about. It matters, too, that the system should be such that people can know about important changes before they take place and influence the decisions which may affect them.

3. Britain is fortunate in having had, for many years, the planning system established by the Town and Country Planning Act of 1947* and the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act of the same year. It was then, thanks to the care and foresight of Lord Silkin, the most advanced and complete system of land use planning in the world. It did much to help in the reconstruction of our war-damaged cities and it protected the countryside from a resumption of the uncontrolled urban sprawl of the 'thirties. But the time has now come to profit from twenty years' experience and to make the changes required by new circumstances, new policies and new advances in planning techniques.

4. Three major defects have now appeared in the present system. First, it has become overloaded and subject to delays and cumbersome procedures. Second, there has been inadequate participation by the individual citizen in the planning process, and insufficient regard to his interests. Third, the system has been better as a negative control on undesirable development than as a positive stimulus to the creation of a good environment.

5. These are the main defects which the revision of the system must tackle and the Government propose to remedy them. To combine the safeguarding of individual interests with quicker decisions means streamlining; to emphasise the positive environmental approach requires a concentration of effort on what is vital, and less central control over detail; and, in considering the changes necessary, we must recognise that planning now is operating in a very different context from that immediately after the War.

A New Context for Planning

6. When the Acts were being prepared, planning was based on the belief that our population was likely to remain stable and there was little appreciation at that time of the likely growth in the volume of motor traffic - and still less of the impact that this would have on the structure of our towns and on the countryside. Now, the best working assumption on population is that we may have to provide...
provide homes for perhaps 17\frac{1}{2} million extra people in Great Britain by the end of the century - an increase of nearly a third. As well as building homes for a growing population, we must replace those houses which have come to the end of their useful life. While this is a continuing process, there already exists a need for about 3 million houses to replace slums and other old houses which are not worth rehabilitating. Not only must the occupiers be given new homes, but the cleared sites should be put to good use.

7. Meanwhile, traffic problems will be mounting. The number of motorcars on the road (already 9\frac{1}{2} million in 1966) is expected to exceed 18 million in 1975, with even bigger increases to follow. The revised planning system must be able to cope justly, flexibly, and swiftly with all this.

8. A new factor has been introduced into planning by the Government's regional policies and by the setting up of the Economic Planning Councils in the regions and in Scotland and Wales. Some of these Councils have been publishing regional studies which should help to shape physical and economic development in the regions. The new planning process must take account of these evolving regional policies.

9. The plans drawn up must also be realistic in financial terms and the demands they make on the main capital expenditure programmes must be reasonable in amount and in timing. However admirable they may be, plans which cannot be realised are positively harmful. They stand in the way of more realistic plans, and cause needless worries to people who fear that their interests may be affected.

10. People must be able to participate fully in the planning process, and their rights must be safeguarded. Many changes have already been made in planning procedures following the report of the Committee on Administrative Tribunals\(^\text{a}\) in 1957 and the subsequent setting up of the Council on Tribunals. One of the Government's main aims in the present review of planning legislation is to ensure that there are greater opportunities for the discussion of important changes while they are still at the formative stage and can be influenced by the people whose lives they will affect. They intend also to maintain the rights of objectors - whether they are individuals or organisations - to argue their case at the formal stages.

11. The problem is that safeguards built into the planning procedure automatically slow it up. Procedural safeguards, vital though they are, slow the progress towards decision, and there is growing impatience at present delays. These delays may hold up development that matters greatly to the people concerned, and may be of economic importance for the country as a whole. While the preservation of proper rights of representation is of overriding importance, some streamlining of the system is essential if unfairness to those who wish to develop is to be avoided.

12. There are therefore conflicting but basic requirements to be reconciled. On the one hand there is the desire for more consultation and wider association of the public with planning; on the other, there is the need for quicker decisions. The Government believe that the way to satisfy these requirements lies in...
devolution of responsibility for some planning decisions, and in
simplification of procedures. With these aims in mind, the
Government have decided to introduce legislation to improve and
modernise the town and country planning system; and this paper
describes what they propose.

OUTLINE OF PROPOSALS

13. Two main threads run through the present system:

(1) development plans prepared and reviewed periodically
    by the local planning authorities and requiring the
    Minister's approval; and

(2) development control exercised by the local planning
    authorities over new building and changes in the use
    of land and buildings. There is a right of appeal to
    the Minister against development control decisions
    made by the planning authorities; and, where
    unauthorised development takes place, planning control
    is enforced by means of notices issued by the planning
    authorities, which may also be the subject of appeal
    to the Minister.

14. Briefly, the Government now propose to introduce:

(1) a new kind of development plan;
(2) a new method of handling some planning appeals which
    will allow decisions to be reached sooner;
(3) more effective means of dealing with infringements of
    planning control;
(4) improved procedures for the preservation and maintenance
    of buildings of historic or architectural importance;
    and
(5) miscellaneous improvements to planning law and
    procedures.

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

15. The present development plans are failing to meet current
    needs. Part of the trouble is that the areas they cover are too
    small; the plan-making process is based upon local government
    boundaries which divide areas with competing and complementary
    needs and resources and, indeed, create planning problems by
    artificially separating town from country at the point where
    pressure for change is greatest. The structure of local
    government and the size of the planning units required to meet
    modern needs are being examined by the Royal Commissions on Local
    Government in England and in Scotland and by the Secretary of State
    in Wales.

16. It is not only the administrative boundaries that are out
    of date: the development plan itself has become an inadequate
    instrument.

* Counties and county boroughs in England and Wales;
  counties and large burghs in Scotland.

** In this paper, references to the Minister should be under-
  stood as references to the Minister of Housing and Local
  Government in England, and to the Secretary of State in
  Scotland and in Wales.
instrument, both in its content and in its procedures. The plan concentrates on land use, and does so in excessive detail. Planning is not just a matter of prescribing permissible land uses, and making sure that incompatible uses are kept away from each other. What matters far more - certainly when it comes to central government level - is whether the physical environment as a whole is being properly shaped to meet evolving social and economic needs, with realistic regard to investment programmes and priorities. In particular, planning must be concerned with the critical problems of movement that arise from the continuing growth of traffic generated by existing development, by redevelopment and by new development. Planning of land use, of transport, and of investment needs to be integrated in order to meet our economic and social objectives.

17. The present concentration on the zoning of land for particular purposes brings before the Minister for his approval a mass of detailed material. Since so much detail is contained in the plans submitted for ministerial approval, it is not uncommon for hundreds of objections to be lodged, for local inquiries into them to last many days and weeks; and dealing with the objections and other matters arising from the plan inevitably takes a great deal of time. Further, the procedures introduced after the report of the Committee on Administrative Tribunals and Inquiries may occasion a second local inquiry. Often approval of the statutory map for a town takes 3 to 4 years; urgent proposals for comprehensive redevelopment may wait 2 years for decision. This concentration on a mass of detail has been at the expense of treating the development plan as a positive basis for environmental planning.

The Planning Advisory Group

18. A Planning Advisory Group (P.A.G.) comprising officers of local government, the professions and Departments concerned was appointed in 1964. Its report, "The Future of Development Plans", published the following year set out in detail the defects of the present type of development plan. It recommended a new form of plan consisting of:

1. a "structure plan" submitted for ministerial approval: this would be primarily a written statement of policy, accompanied by a diagrammatic structure map for counties and major towns only, designed to expose clearly the broad basic pattern of development and the transport system. These structure plans would form the main link between policies on a national and regional level and local planning. They would indicate "action areas", i.e., areas where comprehensive treatment (development, redevelopment, improvement or a mixture) was envisaged in the ensuing ten years;

2. "action area plans" to be adopted locally, showing the shape of development in those areas; and

3. other "local plans", to meet local needs, again to be adopted locally;

The Group also recommended more straightforward powers of compulsory acquisition for planning purposes.

Proposals for Legislation

19. The Government believe that a system following these recommendations is needed to improve the quality and effectiveness of planning. It would make planning more relevant and more flexible.
flexible. It would speed up ministerial approval by concentrating on the main issues of policy and removing from Government Departments detailed work which raises no issues of central government policy; and it would improve procedures which now cause complication and delay.

20. The Government therefore intend to introduce legislation to modify development plans broadly on these lines. It will take into account two important questions raised in the comments about the Group's report by the local authority associations and the public and professional bodies concerned. These questions were:

(1) whether the present local planning authorities are able to undertake this new and more sophisticated type of planning; and

(2) whether the procedures will ensure fair treatment of those affected by planning proposals.

Transition to the New System

21. Some local planning authorities lack the resources to make an immediate start on the new system, and some well-organised authorities administer areas which make it difficult for them to draw up a satisfactory structure plan of the new type. But others are anxious to make a start, are fully able to do so, and are being held back by the rigidity of the present statutory provisions. It is wrong that the planning of a number of important cities and counties should be so constrained. The Government therefore propose to provide for the gradual introduction of the new system into those parts of the country where it can usefully be operated in advance of its general introduction when local government is reorganised. The transition to the new system will be a gradual one, controlled by the Minister under powers which will be exercised after consultation with the local planning authorities concerned. Arrangements will be made for adapting the new system to the special circumstances of London.

Planning Staffs

22. The Government recognise that however good the statutory and procedural framework, success will depend largely on the availability and the correct use of professional staff in the planning field — planners, architects, engineers and surveyors.

23. The number of planners being trained by universities and further education establishments is being increased with the help and encouragement of the Government. But, though the situation will improve, there is at present a shortage and this will continue for some years. The authorities chosen for early transition to the new system must therefore show that they have the necessary nucleus of professional staff properly organised and deployed, and that they are ready where necessary to supplement them by affording opportunities for training and by using professional skills from outside.

Procedures

24. The devolution of responsibility which is a cardinal feature of these proposals means that many matters of detail will no longer be submitted for ministerial approval as a matter of course. It follows that there must be full safeguards for those affected by local plans (including action area plans) and proper opportunity for the hearing of objections whether these are made by individuals or by local or national organisations. These safeguards will be provided and they are outlined in the Annex to this paper.
25. Both local plans and structure plans must be drawn up with proper regard to Government policies, and local planning authorities will be expected to consult fully, during the process of preparing plans, with Government Departments whose interests may be affected. Which these are will depend on the subject matter of the plan and the area covered by it; but they might, in a particular case, include, for example, the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, the Ministry of Transport and the Board of Trade, as well as the planning Departments. In framing structure plans local planning authorities should also maintain close liaison with the regional planning machinery so that account can be taken, at the formative stage, of regional policy.

26. The existing powers of local planning authorities to acquire land compulsorily for planning purposes need changing. The requirement that land subject to compulsory purchase should be "designated" in advance will be done away with; experience has shown that it adds procedural complications without compensating benefits for anybody. Consequent changes will be made to the procedures for compulsory purchase by the Minister of Public Building and Works and the Postmaster-General; and the opportunity will be taken to implement the undertaking given in the White Paper on the Land Commission to enable all public authorities to use the vesting procedure available to the Land Commission. The present right of objection to compulsory purchase orders will, of course, be maintained.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

27. The system of development control introduced by the Acts of 1947 has, on the whole, worked well and the Government do not believe that there need be any great change. The chief complaint is that decisions take a long time. Sometimes this is unavoidable, if the proposal is controversial or difficult, and if proper opportunity is to be given to those affected to express their views. But present performance can be improved and, with the co-operation of the local authority associations, a management study of development control at local level is being undertaken. The results of this should be available during the summer, and recommendations arising from it which would require legislation will be examined then.

28. The methods of controlling development to be carried out by statutory undertakers are also being examined.

29. There are three aspects of development control which urgently require legislative action. These are the arrangements for dealing with appeals from decisions of local planning authorities, the enforcement of planning control, and the preservation of buildings of architectural or historic importance.

Planning Appeals

30. The number of planning appeals made to the Minister in England and Wales under section 23 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1962 has been running at a high level for several years. It reached a peak of over 14,000 in 1964, falling to just under 12,000 in 1966. More than half of the appeals decided are the subject of a local inquiry; almost all of the remainder are settled after an informal visit to the site and an exchange of correspondence ("the written representations procedure").
31. There is no reason to expect any substantial reduction in the flow of appeals, and the handling of these vast numbers is a major problem. As early as 1957, when there were far fewer, the Committee on Administrative Tribunals and Inquiries said that they "did not regard it as satisfactory that a Government Department should be occupied with appeal work of this volume, particularly as many of the appeals relate to minor and purely local matters in which little or no departmental policy entered." This criticism is borne out by an analysis of the subject matter of appeals. About 60% concern development on a small scale; and many of these, though of vital concern to the appellant, raise issues of purely local significance. They include, for example, minor residential development, small groups of shops, small caravan sites, betting shops, garages and minor changes of use. About 25-30% relate to single houses. Of all appeals, big and small, that have been the subject of local inquiries over the last five years, 97.5% were decided as the inspector recommended.

32. One particularly unsatisfactory feature of the present system is the time required to deal with an appeal. It has been taking, on average, about nine months to issue decisions on planning appeals which go to inquiry in England. Part of the time is taken up in waiting for the local inquiry - because of the pressure on the inspectorate the average waiting period has at times been as long as six months - and part while the inspector prepares a lengthy and detailed report of the inquiry, and while that report is considered. Although the delays have already been reduced, it is clear that radical changes in the system are needed if there is to be a real and lasting improvement. The preoccupation of central government with matters that do not involve government policy must be reduced; and the process of handling appeals must be simplified.

33. The Government have considered whether it would be right to set up local tribunals to deal with certain planning appeals. On the assumption that three-man tribunals would be required and that the necessary professional element would be provided by an inspector sitting as a member of the tribunal, several hundred lay members would be required. This would be difficult. Many of the people best able to undertake such work could not spare the time, and others would already be associated with planning or development in their professional capacity, or in local government, to such an extent that they should not take part of the work of tribunals near their home. It would also be difficult to get an even quality of decisions in different parts of the country. Lay tribunals could not be expected to have detailed knowledge of planning policies. If there were inconsistency in their decisions, appellants and planning authorities would be rightly aggrieved. For these reasons this proposal has not been adopted.

Proposed Delegation to Inspectors

34. The Government propose instead to amend the law so as to enable the Minister to delegate to selected inspectors the responsibility for deciding certain planning appeals in England and Wales. This solution was recommended by the Committee on Tribunals and Inquiries (paragraph 392 of their report). They had also considered and rejected the idea of local tribunals.

35. The types of case to be dealt with in this new way will be defined by a statutory instrument, which can be amended as a result of experience and need. The categories which seem suitable for this treatment at the outset include single houses and residential development on small sites, small groups of shops, caravan sites of less than one acre, and other minor forms of development. Where the /power
power to decide is delegated, the decision will be the
inspector's and not the Minister's, whether it follows a local
inquiry or an exchange of written representations. The Minister
would, however, be answerable in Parliament for the general
operation of the system and for the planning policies within which
the inspectors would continue to operate; and the Parliamentary
Commissioner for Administration will have the same powers of
investigation as at present. Inspectors' decisions will be
subject to the control of the courts, should there be an error of
law or procedure, just as the Minister's decisions now are; and
the conduct of appeals would remain subject to supervision by the
Council on Tribunals as at present.

36. The advantage will be that the inspector who has visited
the site and heard the arguments of the parties will immediately
take the decision. He will not have to write a detailed report for
consideration by others. He will be able instead to prepare and
despatch, on his own authority, a letter setting out briefly but
clearly the relevant facts, the main arguments on both sides, and
the reasons for his decision. In cases dealt with by inquiry, the
aim will be for the inspector to send the decision letter to the
parties within two to three weeks whereas under the present system
it takes three months or more to issue a decision after an inquiry.
The new procedure will shorten the time taken after the inquiry to
decide appeals which are suitable for delegation; it will also
help indirectly by reducing the burden of report-writing on the
inspectorate. It should also lead to a useful reduction in the
waiting period for inquiries.

37. The "written representations procedure", now used for
nearly half the planning appeals decided, is suitable for cases
where the issues are primarily local and there is no important
third-party interest. Many cases suitable for settlement by
inspectors should therefore be handled by this method. The pro­
cedure has the virtues of saving time, trouble and expense to the
parties and its use will be encouraged.

38. Within the categories proposed for delegation, cases will
still arise which require ministerial decision because they raise
questions of policy, are of exceptional public importance, or are
unusually complex. The Government propose that the Minister should
have power to direct that particular cases or kinds of case should
be decided by him, notwithstanding that they fall within one of the
prescribed categories for delegation. These cases would then be
handled in accordance with existing arrangements. It would also be
open to an inspector to decline to decide an appeal if matters
arose (for example, unforeseen issues of policy) which he considered
should be referred to the Minister. In these cases the inspector
would make this known to the parties and would report to the
Minister instead of issuing his own decision letter.

39. This new procedure will mean that although for some appeals,
appellants and local planning authorities will no longer receive a
ministerial decision, they will receive an earlier decision and
they will have the satisfaction of knowing that it has been
taken by an inspector with first-hand knowledge of the site
who has himself listened to the arguments put forward.

40. The Government intend to limit delegation in the first place
to appeals against planning decisions of local planning authorities
sections 23 and 24 of the Act of 1962) relating to development on
a comparatively small scale (see paragraph 35 above). But
provision would be made for other types of appeal to be delegated
by statutory instrument as and when this proves useful and
desirable.
41. In Scotland proportionately far fewer appeals are lodged; there were only 302 in 1966, of which 168 were withdrawn. Inquiries are taken not by salaried inspectors but by independent reporters who are seldom qualified planners. There is not the same proportion of cases which would be susceptible of delegation even if qualified inspectors were appointed to take inquiries. Also, because of the much smaller number of cases, improvements in management leading, for example, to the quicker submission by local planning authorities of observations on appeals, could have a relatively greater effect. Still, growing pressure on land in Scotland may greatly increase the number of appeals. The Secretary of State therefore intends to take the powers of delegation outlined in paragraphs 31-40, but, before exercising them he will explore new ways of expediting the handling of cases through the present machinery.

Enforcement of Planning Control

42. The enforcement of planning control under the Act of 1962 is slow and complicated, and some elements of the law as it stands favour the contravener. Enforcement action can only be taken within four years of the contravention; after four years, unauthorised development becomes established and immune from enforcement. An enforcement notice is stayed if an appeal is made to the Minister, and it is thus in the interest of the contravener to spin out proceedings as long as possible.

43. The Government intend to abolish the "four-year rule", so that it will not in future be possible for unauthorised development to become immune from enforcement action by the mere passage of time. Further, local planning authorities will be empowered to serve a notice requiring the immediate stopping of any operations which are the subject of an enforcement notice. If proceedings on the relevant enforcement notice show that permission was not required, the planning authority would be liable to pay compensation for loss or damage resulting from the cessation of operations brought about by the stop notice.

Preservation

45. The Government have welcomed the changes to be made by the Civic Amenities Bill at present before Parliament, but they propose also to make some further improvements in the protection afforded to buildings of special historic or architectural interest.

OTHER MATTERS

46. The opportunity will also be taken to make a number of other improvements and simplifications in the law, and to deal with certain practical difficulties which have arisen in its operation. Consideration is being given to the question whether long standing planning permissions which have not been exercised should remain valid indefinitely. Improvements will be proposed in the present powers to stop up or divert highways; at present these are inadequate for the implementation of planning policies, particularly in relation to urban renewal. Local new street byelaws, which in many respects duplicate planning control, will be abolished.
CONCLUSION

47. The Town and Country Planning Acts of 1947 gave Britain a system of land use planning which has served well; but the time has now come to modernise it. It must be speeded up, so that growth is not delayed or frustrated; it must be broadened, both to take advantage of new advances in technique and to set problems of land use in the wider context of traffic, transport and investment policies. The safeguards for the individual which form part of the system must be retained and strengthened. The Government's proposals provide for this. The new forms of plans and the procedures associated with them will give everyone a clearer grasp of changes that may affect them, and will give them full opportunity to express their views. The devolution of responsibility to local planning authorities to decide their own local plans, and the delegation of certain appeal decisions to inspectors, will help to simplify and shorten planning processes.

48. These have been the Government's aims in reviewing the law. They are now anxious to receive the views of interested organisations (including the local authority associations and the Council on Tribunals) on how these aims can best be achieved, within the framework proposed in this White Paper.

15th June, 1967
PROPOSED NEW PROCEDURES FOR DEVELOPMENT PLANS

Structure Plans

1. The Minister will approve structure plans which will be prepared for counties, county boroughs and other towns of over 50,000 population (and corresponding local government areas in Scotland) and, on the Minister's direction, for other towns with significant planning problems. Structure plans will follow a procedure very similar to that adopted for the current development plans. They will be placed on deposit, an opportunity for objections will be given and a local inquiry will be held into the objections. The Minister will issue his decision on the structure plan after considering his inspector's report. The decision will take the form of a letter commenting on, and expressing approval or disapproval of, the main policies and proposals presented by the local planning authority in their structure plan.

Local Plans

2. Local plans will be prepared within the framework of the policies approved in the structure plan. They will in the normal course of events be adopted by the local planning authority after following prescribed procedures, and will not require the Minister's approval. The planning authority will be required to consult with local interests during the plan-making process, before resolving to deposit a plan formally for public objection. The authority will be required to consider objections and representations and to afford a hearing to any objector who so desires; the report of any hearing or inquiry will be published. They will be required to give notice of intended modifications to the deposited plan and time will be allowed for the lodging of objections to those modifications by persons affected. Having considered any such further objections the authority will resolve provisionally to adopt a plan, subject to specified modifications, and after the lapse of not less than 28 days, will be able to confirm that resolution, the plan thus adopted then becoming part of the development plan for the area.

3. Some local plans should be subject to further safeguards. These will be comprised in powers for the Minister:

   (1) to call-in any local plan and decide it himself, just as he may at present call in any planning application. Where a local plan comes to the Minister under this procedure it will be handled in the same way as a structure plan and will go through the normal process of objection and public inquiry. This procedure will be appropriate in cases of national importance, or of very great controversy, or of unusual technical complexity;

   (2) to require a local planning authority to arrange a public local inquiry conducted by a person appointed by the Minister. The report of the inquiry will be made to the planning authority. The authority will be required to publish it and to resolve on each of the inspector's recommendations severally before adopting the plan. This procedure will be suitable where the issues are not of national significance, but raise acutely the question of fairness between the citizen and his local authority, e.g., a controversial policy to erect new offices for the authority;
4. The combined effect of these proposals is that:

(1) when the Minister is dealing with a plan, existing procedures will be virtually unchanged; but, since the number of plans requiring ministerial approval will be reduced and their content will be far less detailed, a substantial speeding up in the process of approval should be achieved;

(2) where a plan is left for local approval, objectors will have the same rights of being heard before the local authority as they have at present before the Minister; and, where circumstances justify this course, the hearing will be before an inspector appointed by the Minister who will report to the local planning authority;

(3) the Minister will have powers which will enable him to deal with any local plan if at any stage it appears to him that it should not be left for local settlement.