



**Damian Hinds**  
*MP for East Hampshire*

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## **Localism Bill to Tackle Retrospective Planning Applications**

Damian Hinds has welcomed the inclusion of the tough new measures in the Localism Bill to combat the use of retrospective planning applications to legitimise unauthorised developments. Under the terms of the Bill, Councils may use their discretion and refuse to consider such an application when there is already an enforcement notice against the site or if the application goes against current planning controls.

The Bill also significantly curtails the right of appeal against planning enforcement notices given by local authorities in England. Local Authorities will be allowed to exercise their own judgement to make the distinction between legitimate oversights or mistakes and abuses of the system.

Currently, many unauthorised developments are undertaken suddenly, over a bank holiday weekend for example, and Local Authorities find that by the time offices reopen on Tuesday a retrospective planning application has been submitted. This and any enforcement notice issued can then be drawn out and appealed for months, sometimes years.

Damian Hinds said

*"I am greatly encouraged that the Localism Bill is going to have real teeth, these are exactly the sort of changes to the system we wanted to see. Together with the abolition of regional spatial strategies these changes will mean that the Local Authority will get the final say and that it will not be subject to a lengthy and wasteful appeals process.*

*It has become all too apparent in a number of communities that people have lost faith in a system that has become divorced from fairness. This Bill will take a big step in restoring that faith."*

The Bill, first announced in the Queen's Speech, is currently in the Committee stage in the House of Commons and the Government hope it should receive Royal Assent before the summer.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

Full text of the Bill and its provisions on local planning can be found here:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmbills/126/11126.72-78.html#i842>

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