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¡PILLO!

The government needs to take back control.

However good a development is… the people who live near it feel its costs and so are likely to oppose it, while those who benefit live far away and do not have a say in whether it happens. So leaving the matter to local people will simply ensure that little gets built. The government needs to take back control.

– **Emma Duncan** in *The Times*

London is the most beautiful and dynamic city in the world but ...

is not currently attracting the necessary investment from private or public sources... to unlock more brownfield sites and address the systemic under-supply of new homes, opines **Rob Perrins**, chief executive of **Berkeley Homes.**

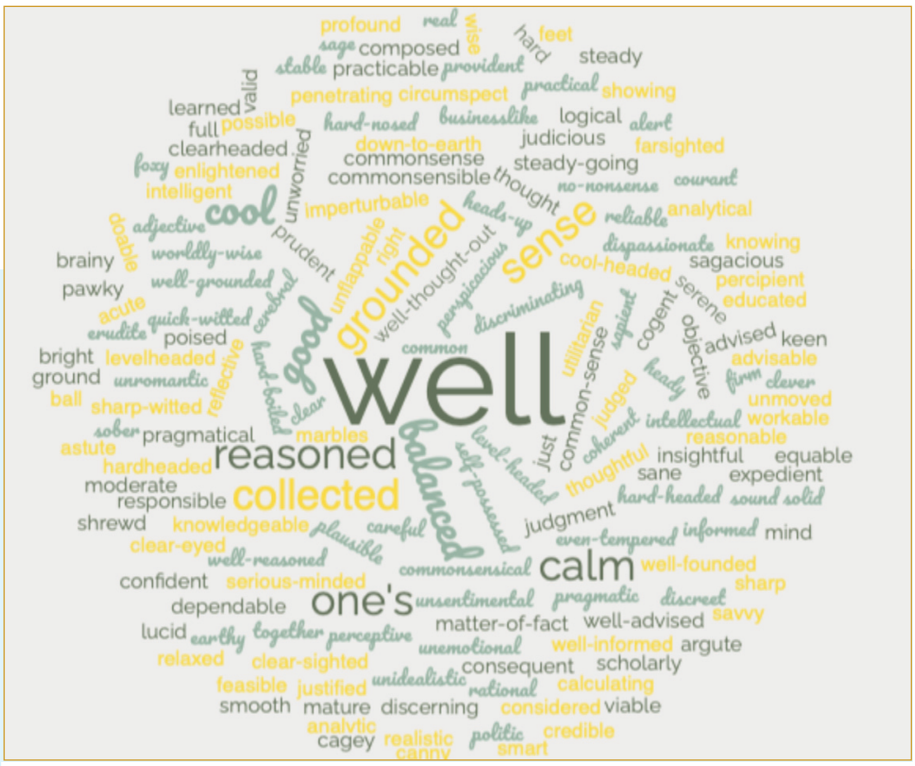
This he says includes a complex and slow planning system, higher build costs, increased regulation and corporation tax being 6 per cent higher, alongside a proposed building safety levy designed to raise a further £3 billion from the industry.

"Gove says PINS will be told 'to no longer override sensible local decision-making' on housing need"

This is a headline from *Planning*. In a written ministerial statement, **Secretary of State Michael Gove** said he wanted to "retain a method for calculating local housing need figures, but consult on changes".

He wrote: "I do believe that the plan-making process for housing has to start with a number. This number should, however, be an advisory starting point, a guide that is not mandatory.

"It will be up to local authorities, working with their communities, to determine how many homes can actually be built, taking into account what should be protected in each area - be that our precious green belt or national parks, the character of an area, or heritage assets. It will also be up to them to increase the proportion of affordable housing if they wish."



A gift for Mr Gove: a word cloud for 'Sensible'

Gove added that the "changes will instruct the Planning Inspectorate that they should no longer override sensible local decision-making, which is sensitive to and reflects local constraints and concerns. Overall this amounts to a rebalancing of the relationship between local councils and the Planning Inspectorate, and will give local communities a greater say in what is built in their neighbourhood."

For a long time practitioners have understoon the bias in the appeals system which leans towards backing LPAs – an average win rate around only 30 per cent reflects this.

How low can it go?

How to meet a target

It is hard for the Fed to hit its two per cent inflation target. Which might explain the renewed interest in another solution.

Getting high, some argue, is a threat to the economy. Being high is not.

So raise the inflation target to, say, five per cent, and maintain it there rather than suffer the pain of reaching for a two per cent target arbitrarily set by a New Zealand finance minister in 1989.

If you can't reach the finish line without injuring yourself, move the finish line to you.

– **Irwin Seltzer** in *The Sunday Times*

Benefit of the doubt

The civil service is advertising for a head of uncertainty, a refreshingly honest title that could apply to any role in government at the moment but on this occasion is at the Department for Transport.

Perhaps their first job will be to amend all the train timetables so they say things like "Il-ish" or "arriving by 9, touch wood".

I can imagine the job interview: "Why do you want to be head of uncertainty?" "I'm not sure I do ...» "Great, when can you start?" "At some point in the future, in the fullness of time, depending on circumstances."

"Can you be more precise?" "No." "Congratulations!"

– **Patrick Kidd** in *The Times*

Planning is part of the solution

If you want growth, planning is part of the solution. Perhaps, rather than promoting plan-free, or planning-lite zones, investors would feel more confident if there were 'well-planned zones' – areas where they know what's planned, when it'll happen and they can be confident of timely decisions which support delivery, including infrastructure coordination.

Confidence is key to success in planning. This is not just about wanting planners to be more valued, but wanting planners to step up and use their skills positively. One thing that might help enormously would be if the government stopped 'talking' about resources and 'reviewing the situation' and actually did something.

– **Steve Quartermain** in *The Planner*