

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**LOCAL PLAN TASK GROUP**

Minutes from the Meeting of the Local Plan Task Group held on Thursday, 12th September, 2024 at 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

PRESENT: Councillor J Moriarty (Chair)
Councillors R Blunt, M de Whalley, B Jones, A Kemp, T Parish, S Sandell
and Mrs V Spikings

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S Everett

1 **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

RESOLVED: The notes of the meeting held on 14 May 2024 were agreed as a correct record.

2 **MATTERS ARISING**

None

3 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

4 **URGENT BUSINESS**

None

5 **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillors Morley (zoom) and Ring attended under standing order 34.

6 **CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

None

7 **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION TO INFORM THE BOROUGH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION: PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK (NPPF) AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM**

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The Task Group received a presentation (copy attached with the minutes) on the current Government consultation: Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other changes to the planning

system. These would reverse most national policy changes introduced in the December 2023 version of the NPPF; e.g. Key changes:

- Removal of references to “beauty”
- Removal of 5 year housing land supply protections for recently adopted Local Plans
- Change in direction for affordable housing; e.g. new focus on social renting, removal of 25% First Homes requirement.

It was explained that the proposals which were out to consultation included mandatory housing targets which would double the Council’s current local housing need (LHN) target from 554 to 1042. In looking at the overall increases proposed for the country in addition to the borough, the urban uplift had been dropped, London’s need had been lowered and there were substantial increases in the midlands and north of the country. The LHN methodology continued to use 2014 household projections.

The Local Plan Manager had engaged with MHCLG via a recent Planning Advisory Service (PAS) event and made it clear that housing delivery was a challenge locally. It was clear that without action taken by the Borough Council the housing delivery figures would be much lower.

It was stressed that it was important to get the authority’s emerging Local Plan in place as soon as possible. As the authority should be benchmarked against this once adopted and then should start to prepare a new local plan as soon as possible in the new plan making process, once Government had introduced this.

Councillor Sandell asked whether those Neighbourhood Plans (NP) adopted would be challenged with the new allocations. The Local Plan Manager explained that at this stage not much had been said about NPs via Government announcements, but as many had their own policies it was unclear if it would still be possible to do that, but they shouldn’t be used as a tool to prevent sustainable development. He reminded Members that NPs didn’t remain the same forever, they should be in conformity with the Local Plan, should be reviewed, and any further increase in numbers would likely have to be shared in the borough through a future Local Plan, and any neighbourhood plans. However, this would be considered as part of a future Local Plan.

Councillor Parish commented that because the consultation document had been published it didn’t mean the authority had to agree with its content. He referred to the ask of the increased numbers, and asked where all the people for the housing would come from. He drew attention to problems with water supplies for developments in Cambridge.

Councillor Parish further commented that he considered the Government’s proposals appalling, he referred the numbers of properties being able to be built out, with the numbers of builders and materials available. He considered that any further increases should be more gradual and should be met from where the need was coming from.

Councillor de Whalley drew attention to the fact that the council was developing in the area when private developers weren’t, but that help from the Government was needed to build homes in the form of infrastructure such as roads, hospitals schools etc. He also referred to the Climate Change

commitments for 2050 and the challenges of creating meaningful climate change policies, of which planning was an important factor.

Councillor Blunt commented that there were not usually changes made to consultation documents, despite comments made which meant that the council would have much higher targets, how many resources would be brought forward to assist as there were not sufficient trained planning staff to deal with that number of planning applications and needed the land, the building supplies and importantly the infrastructure. He asked what the implications were if the targets weren't met.

The Chair asked about the relationship between 5-year housing land supply and the potential new time table of 30 months for local plan production should the Government return to this idea. The Planning Policy Manger explained that he thought that if the timetable was reduced that it was unlikely that 5-year land supply test would be altered, however we will have to wait and see what direction the Government decide to take in this space.

Councillor Spikings referred to the additional support required and the additional traffic which would be caused. She also referred to the lack of available burial plots in the Borough which was already affecting her ward.

Agreed: The Local Plan Manager explained that he would take the comments made and respond to the consultation which closed on 24 September 2024 following consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair.

In response to a question as to whether parishes would be consulted, it was reported that the consultation document was available for anyone to respond to, and at the planning training for parishes that evening they would be informed of it.

Councillor Morley at the end of the meeting commented on the consultation document which he considered nonsense. He stated that if it were to come into force the financial settlement should reflect all the additional work involved in the proposals.

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EMERGING LOCAL PLAN PROGRESS AND NEXT STEPS

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The Task Group received a report from the Local Plan Manager which set out the progress to date of the emerging Local Plan, and the expected time frames for the expected adoption of the Local Plan before the conclusion of this financial year (March 2025).

It was noted that once the Inspectors had approved the Main Modifications these (Main Modifications schedules and supporting documents) were published for consultation. This consultation was taking place over 8 weeks (closing date, 2 October 2024). To be "duly made" (valid), consultation responses needed to relate to specific Main Modifications. Other issues related to the Local Plan would not be considered.

The consultation was ongoing. As of 30 August 2024, several representations had been received regarding the following:

- MM5 –Spatial strategy (approach to development on brownfield land)
- MM115 and MM116 –West Winch Growth Area infrastructure triggers; e.g. West Winch Housing Access Road, new primary school provision.

Local Plan policies regarding Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople were being dealt with separately to the remainder of the Local Plan. These had been subject to two previous consultations, firstly regarding potential site allocations and draft policies (January –March 2024), followed by proposed site allocations and policies (10 May –21 June 2024). Representations from the latter consultation were submitted to the Planning Inspectors and were the subject of examination hearings (3 and 4 September 2024).

The Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople examination hearings were undertaken with reference to a series of Matters, Issues and Questions, for which the Borough Council had previously prepared written responses (K31 - Matter 6: BCKLWN Response to MIQs (MIQ416 -MIQ462)). The Inspectors considered these, alongside representations received as part of the recent “Gypsy and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople proposed site allocations and policies” consultation (10 May –21 June 2024).

Following the September 2024 examination hearings, a further Main Modifications (Part 2) consultation would take place, regarding Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople (October –November 2024). Following this, any representations received would be submitted to the Inspectors who would consider these, together with previous evidence considered since submission of the Local Plan. This would inform their final report, which it was expected would be delivered in early 2025. This timetable would allow adoption of the Plan by March 2025 by Council.

9 **GYPSY AND TRAVELLERS AND TRAVELLING SHOWPEOPLE VERBAL UPDATE ON EXAMINATION HEARINGS (3 & 4 SEPTEMBER) AND THE NEXT STEPS**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube](#)

The detail of the position statement on the Gypsies Travellers and Showpeople element was referred to in the previous report.

An update on the 3 September hearing was given and thanks were given to those involved in them. A Main Modification schedule would be provided and subject to consultation for 6 weeks in the autumn. The Inspectors would then assess the results of the consultation which would feed into the Local Plan.

The Chair reported that the hearing had been rigorous.

10 **MAIN MODIFICATIONS CONSULTATION INCLUDING NEW POLICIES**

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The report re-iterated the information regarding the Examination through to April 2024, and the Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Policy.

A significant number of Main Modifications to the Plan (376) were proposed and were the subject of consultation. Most changes were detailed, to ensure the Plan was robust, effective and consistent with current national policy (National Planning Policy Framework).

Members attention was drawn to the following proposed Main Modifications:

- **MM4-MM5** – Replacement of section 4.1 of the submission Plan with a new Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy Policy, which included updated housing figures and a small number of changes to the status of individual settlements within the hierarchy
- **MM6** – New Policy – Residential development on windfall sites – Necessary, to ensure local housing need (554 dwellings per year) could be achieved; incorporating retained parts of policies LP02, LP04, LP31 and LP41 from submission Plan
- **MM7** – New Policy – Neighbourhood Plans – Necessary, to define housing requirements for designated Neighbourhood Areas, as required by national policy
- **MM11-MM15** – Removal of duplicate elements of Policy LP06 and supporting text (Climate Change)
- **MM29-MM34** – Significant changes to transport policies LP11 and LP13, to ensure consistency with national policy and reflect the updated Norfolk Local Transport Plan (2021-2036) and King’s Lynn Transport Strategy
- **MM45-MM60** – Significant changes to Environmental policies (re Green Infrastructure, the Historic Environment and Habitats Regulations Assessment – LP19-LP27), to reflect national policy and legislation changes (e.g. Nutrient Neutrality, 2021 Environment Act requirement for 10% Biodiversity Net Gain)
- **MM68-MM69** – New Policy – Custom and Self-Build Housing policy – To support delivery of Custom and Self Build Housing and ensure consistency with legislation and national policy
- **MM115-MM122** – Policy E2.1 West Winch Growth Area Strategic Policy – Additional policy criteria, including infrastructure trigger points and requirements; to ensure sustainable development
- **MM139-MM140** – New Policy – Downham Market, Bexwell Business Park (BEX) – 20ha employment land allocation.

Members noted the proposed Main Modifications, in particular the most significant and substantive changes specified in the report. It was emphasised that the Main Modifications were proposed with the agreement of the Planning Inspectors, as being necessary to make the Plan “sound” (i.e. fit for purpose) and allow the Plan to be passed and adopted.

Members identified a range of concerns, including possible increases to housing requirements and the implications of typical build-out rates on overall delivery; removal of protections and implications of the new Windfall policy for neighbourhood planning.

Councillor Parish commented that some parishes appeared to be having difficulty logging into the modifications page on the website. Councillor Parish raised concern about MM6 the windfall change, meaning a large number of houses could be built outside the boundary. He referred to the fact that NPs often had a point of no development outside boundaries, and the modification would supersede it. He considered that key rural service centres should only be affected by this. He considered all parishes should have been asked about the change as he had previously instructed officers not to make that change as requested by the Inspectors.

The Local Plan Manager explained changes to the council's web page on the Local Plan and acknowledged that it was technical, but the document was technical. He explained that the plan had to meet the local housing need, during the period Inspectors had requested the changes.

The Chair asked if a link could be provided on the front page of the Council's website to the local plan modifications and sent to parish councils to remind them of the consultation period. The Local Plan Manager confirmed and it was stated that responses to the consultation were welcomed and assistance would be given if problems were experienced, and all comments would be passed to the Inspectors for them to consider.

The Local Plan Manager gave an update on windfall development within the Borough and how the numbers had come about and how the Inspectors had requested the statistics on them.

Councillor Kemp commented that the consultations should have been completed before on the recent West Winch application was considered she commented on the application and the different aspects of the application. The Local Plan Manager re-iterated that there was a whole day on West Winch which Cllr Kemp had fully participated in. He hoped that she had made her comments to the consultation document which would be passed to the Inspectors.

Councillor de Whalley asked if there was a biodiversity net gain for West Winch, to which it was agreed that the Local Plan Manager would speak in detail with Councillor de Whalley off line. and provide the relevant background documents/ information.

ACTIONS:

- Planning Policy officers to email Parish Councils, to remind them of the ongoing consultation and how this is being run
- Planning Policy officers to email Cllr De Whalley, re Biodiversity Net Gain Local Plan examination materials/ documents.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN UPDATE

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube](#)

The Task Group received an update on the Neighbour Plan Referenda undertaken to date, with North Wootton Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036 (autumn 2024); and Ringstead Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2036 (spring 2025).

The following further Neighbourhood Plans may be submitted for examination during 2024-25 and for Referendum in 2025-26:

- Marshland St James;
- Pentney;
- Syderstone;
- The Walpoles
- Walpole Cross Keys (review).

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair explained that it wouldn't be possible to meet before information was back from the Inspectors. It was hoped to be in early January.

Councillor de Whalley commented that there may be National Development Policy consultation which may need a further consultation response. It was noted that if it was launched the task group could be consulted and a meeting could be called.

The meeting closed at 3.56 pm

NPPF Consultation & Wider Planning Reform

Alex Fradley
Planning Policy Manager

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



New Government, New Approach



- **DLUHC MHCLG**
- Housing Development
- Economic Growth
- Tackling the Housing Crisis
- Planning key to enable this

NPPF Consultation Summary



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

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National Planning Policy Framework

- 30 July, MHCLG launched a **consultation** seeking views on proposed reforms to the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and other changes to the system**. The consultation closes 24 September 2024.
- The Government will respond to this consultation and publish **NPPF revisions before the end of the year**.
- Impact: For **decision-making, straight away** post-adoption. For **plan-making, it's more involved**.
- Package includes **WMS: Building the homes we need**, Letters to LPAs, PINS, RTPI, etc...

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
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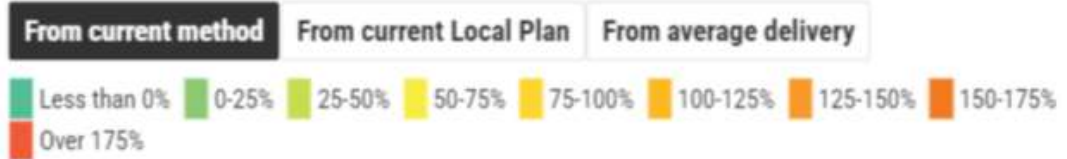


Changes Proposed will:

- Make **Housing targets mandatory** and **reverse 2023 changes**;
- **New standard method formula** to ensure local plans are ambitious enough to support the Government's manifesto commitment of 1.5 million new homes in this Parliament;
- **More weight for housing development** and the development brownfield land;
- Identify grey belt land within the Green Belt, to be brought forward for homes and other important development. Deliver affordable, well-designed homes, with new “golden rules” for land released in the Green Belt to ensure release delivers in the public interest;
- Ensure that LPAs are able to **prioritise the types of affordable homes communities need** and that the planning system **supports a more diverse housebuilding sector**;
- **Support economic growth in key sectors**, including laboratories, gigafactories, datacentres, digital economies and freight and logistics – given their importance to our economic future;
- **More weight for community needs** to support society; and
- **Support for clean energy and the environment**, including support for onshore wind and renewables.

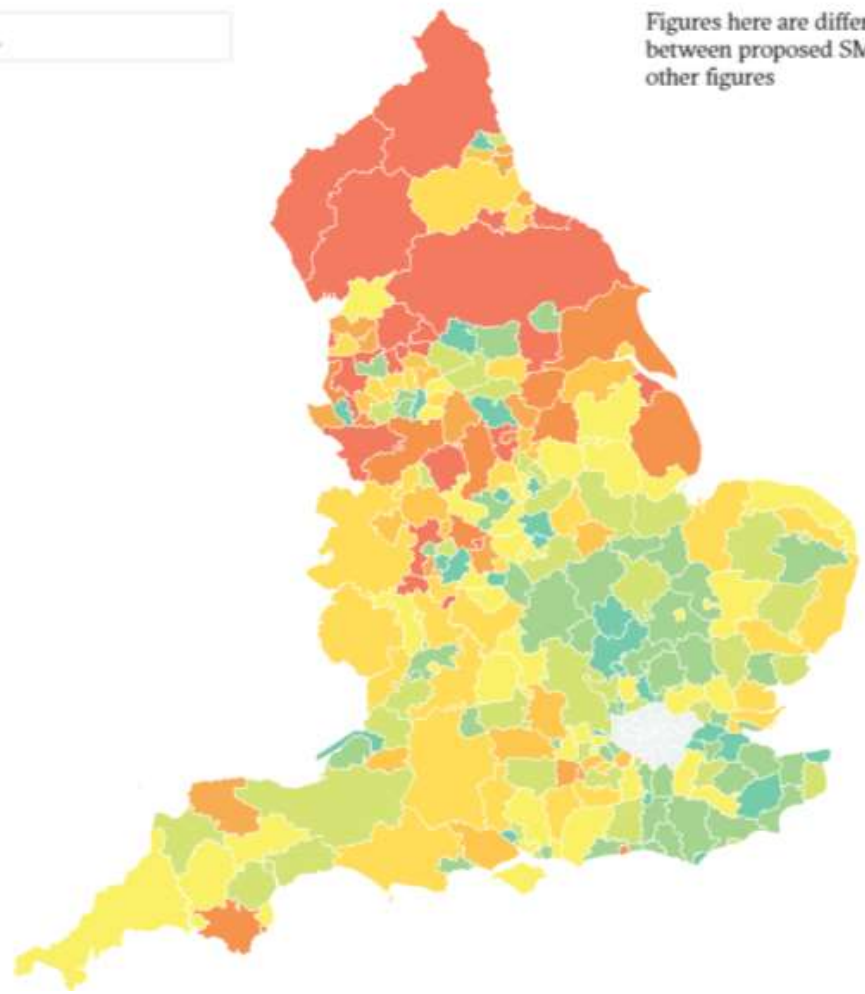


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Figures here are difference between proposed SM and other figures



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Housing Numbers

King's Lynn and West Norfolk		x
From current method		75-100%
Proposed standard method figure		1,042
Current standard method figure		554
Current Local Plan figure		660
Net additional dwellings 3y average		295
Change from current method (%)		88
Change from current Local Plan (%)		58
Change from average delivery (%)		253

Other Consultation Elements

- **Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIP)** regime how it applies to renewable energy, commercial and water development;
- If **local plan intervention** criteria should be updated;
- **Increase some planning fees**, including for householder applications, so that LPAs are properly resourced to support a sustained increase in development and improve performance.

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Wider Planning Reform

- Local Plan Making Process.
- National Development Management Policies.
- New Towns WMS & Commission.
- Strategic Level of Planning.
- 14 • Planning & Infrastructure Bill (including national scheme of delegation).
- New Homes Accelerator programme.
- National Housing Strategy.

BCKLWN Key Impacts



- Local Plan: Continue with examination through to adoption.
- Start again in the 'new system' when in place.
- Decision Making: 5 Year Housing Land Supply & Housing Delivery Test
- Housing Numbers

Discussion