

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



# **Local Plan Task Group**

## **Agenda**

**Tuesday, 10th February, 2026  
at 10.00 am**

in the

**Council Chamber  
Town Hall  
Saturday Market Place  
King's Lynn**

Also available to view at

<https://www.youtube.com/user/WestNorfolkBC>

**Kings Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk, PE30 1EX  
Telephone: 01553 616200**

2<sup>nd</sup> February 2026

Dear Member

**Local Plan Task Group**

You are invited to attend a meeting of the above-mentioned Task Group which will be held on **Tuesday, 10th February, 2026 at 10.00 am** in the **Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn, PE30 5DQ** to discuss the business shown below.

Yours sincerely

Chief Executive

**AGENDA**

1. **Apologies**
2. **Notes of the Previous Meeting** (Pages 4 - 9)
3. **Matters Arising**
4. **Declarations of Interest**

Please indicate if there are any interests which should be declared. A declaration of an interest should indicate the nature of the interest (if not already declared on the Register of Interests) and the agenda item to which it relates. If a disclosable pecuniary interest is declared, the Members should withdraw from the room whilst the matter is discussed.

These declarations apply to all Members present, whether the Member is part of the meeting, attending to speak as a local Member on an item or simply observing the meeting.

5. **Urgent Business**

To consider any business which, by reason of special circumstances, the Chair proposes to accept as urgent under Section 100(b)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act, 1972.

**6. Members Present Pursuant to Standing Order 34**

Members wishing to speak pursuant to Standing Order 34 should inform the Chair of their intention to do so and on what items they wish to be heard before the meeting commences. Any Member attending the meeting under Standing Order 34 will only be permitted to speak on those items which have been previously notified to the Chair.

**7. Chair's Correspondence (if any)**

**8. Introduction to and demonstration of the Interactive Version of the Local Plan - Henry.**

- Interactive version of the Local Plan: [Local Plan 2021-2040 \(adopted March 2025\) | Local Plan 2021-2040 \(adopted March 2025\) | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk](#)

**9. New Local Plan System: what we know so far and what this means for the next local plan. To cover new plan-making guidance & the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - Alex, Mike, & Luke.**  
(Pages 10 - 30)

- Local Plan Guidance: [Create or update a local plan using the new system - GOV.UK](#)

**10. Draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) consultation response discussion - Sandra.**

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Consultation: [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](#)

**11. Date of Next Meeting**

To be arranged when required.

To:

**Local Plan Task Group:** R Blunt, M de Whalley, S Everett, J Fry, S Lintern, J Moriarty (Chair), T Parish, S Sandell and Mrs V Spikings

**Officers:**

Stuart Ashworth, Assistant Director for Environment and Planning  
Alex Fradley, Planning Policy Manager  
Michael Burton, Principal Planner  
Luke Brown, Senior Policy Planner  
Henry Anthony, Graduate Planner  
Sandra Homcenko, Assistant Planner

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**

**LOCAL PLAN TASK GROUP**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Local Plan Task Group held on Monday, 10th March, 2025 at 10.00 am in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

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

**Members present under Standing Order 34 on Zoom:**

Councillor J Bhondi  
Councillor D Heneghan  
Councillor B Long

**Officers:**

Alex Fradley - Planning Policy Manager  
Michael Burton - Principal Planner  
Luke Brown - Senior Policy Planner  
Henry Anthony - Graduate Planner

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Ben Jones.

2 **NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The notes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record.

3 **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising.

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

5 **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was no urgent business to consider.

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

Councillors Bhondi, Heneghan and Long

7 **CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE (IF ANY)**

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

The Chair informed the Task Group that all Parish Councils and interested parties had been written to regarding the current status of the Local Plan and he had received correspondence from former Borough Councillor Ives thanking officers, which he read out.

8 **LOCAL PLAN 2021-2040 - PROPOSED ADOPTION**

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

Alex Fradley, Planning Policy Manager introduced the Planning Policy Team to the Task Group and thanked everyone who had been involved in the process and explained that the Local Plan journey started 9 years ago.

He explained that within the agenda was the report which would be considered by Cabinet and a covering presentation.

The Local Plan review would cover the period 2021-2040.

The Plan had been under preparation since 2016, where a significant level of consultation helped form the contents of the Plan.

It was explained that a final draft of the Plan was signed off by the Council in July 2021, and then formally submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in March 2022.

Two Inspectors were appointed by the Secretary of State as the Independent Inspectors to undertake the examination in public on the Local Plan. Three stages of public hearings then took place in January 2023, April 2024 and September 2024.

The Council received a report from the Planning Inspectors on the 'soundness' of the Local Plan in February 2025.

Once adopted, the Local Plan would entirely replace the current Local Plan (consisting of 2011 Core Strategy and 2016 Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Plan).

The presentation also covered:

- The Local Plan Examination Timeline

- Summary of the Main Changes to the Plan following Examination
- Distribution of Planned Growth
- Local Plan policies for:
  - Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy
  - Windfall Development
  - Neighbourhood Planning
  - The Economy
  - Transport
  - Climate Change
  - Environment – Coastal Area and National Landscape Policies
  - Environment – Design, Green Infrastructure and Historic Environment
  - Environment – Open Space, Habitat Regulations and Flood Risk
  - Housing, Affordable Housing and Specialist Housing
  - Shared Housing, Housing in the Rural Areas, Custom and Self-Build Housing
- Policies Map

The Chair then invited questions, a summary of which is recorded below:

Councillor Mrs Spikings raised the issue of infrastructure on the A47, which was lacking in and around the Wisbech area and the impact this would have on existing residents, particularly where it bordered another authority.

In response the Planning Policy Manager advised that this raised an important point, something that the Planning Inspectors got into during the examination was the Duty to Co-operate. It was a key test which required Local Authorities to speak to their neighbours, infrastructure providers and consultees, etc. The Council had been very proactive in meeting its requirements on the Duty to Co-operate, both in meeting with neighbouring authorities in Norfolk and neighbours outside of Norfolk and had worked with Fenland District Council. He added that this point had been looked at in detail at the Local Plan Inquiry.

Michael Burton explained that in relation to the policy around windfall, again any development had to meet the criteria before it could be considered and that included impact on infrastructure. The Council had to work with their neighbours and were aware of the challenges but through the Local Plan was the best way to address them.

Councillor Kemp agreed with the point raised by Councillor Mrs Spikings in relation to infrastructure and made reference to the impact of new development on the A10. There would be the situation of unacceptable impacts on the highway and severe cumulative impacts. This was the concern of residents without the proper rail or road infrastructure and was a failure of the plan.

The Planning Policy Manager advised that it was about the impact of development on communities and the ability for that to be accepted

and integrated, not just about more housing but about place-making and integration with the existing settlement. In relation to the requirements of the Local Plan, he advised that they were quite clear and in-depth and rigorously explored through the examination process and made reference to the West Winch Growth Area Policy and the examination of it. The Local Plan would influence where development took place and the infrastructure which came forward in order to mitigate and make that development acceptable.

This had been looked at in-depth by the Local Plan Task Group and then the Inspector and the examination had been successfully navigated and there was a strong expectation that the Plan would be adopted, and then the Plan and Policies would take effect.

Councillor Parish referred to the A149, and the cumulative impact of development and asked if the policies were based on the holiday season rather than a quiet winter's day.

The Planning Policy Manager advised that transport had been looked at in detail at the Local Plan examination. He explained that sustainable and active travel needed to be considered. He explained that officers had worked closely with Norfolk County Council as the Highway Authority and also Consultants WSP had been employed to provide further data and modelling on transport and further impacts and that had all been tested through the examination. The Inspector concluded that the Plan was sound. The Plan did carry forward a lot of what was in the current local plan particularly in relation to allocations.

In response to a comment from Councillor Parish regarding the need for a windfall policy, the Planning Policy Manager explained that the plan's approach to meeting the housing need was through a combination of site allocations and an allowance for windfall sites.

Under Standing Order 34, Councillor Long made reference to out-of-town shopping and that High Streets had to be re-purposed, cycle-track and footpaths using disused railway lines, custom and self-build and whether a policy would help or hinder this?

The Planning Policy Manager responded and explained that there were specific policies and legislation in relation to custom and self-build. The policy looked to increase the supply of custom and self-build. Part of the incentive for custom and self-build housing was that CIL or Biodiversity Net Gain did not need to be paid.

Policy LP12 sought to protect the disused railway tracks, so they could be used for sustainable transport modes or potentially brought back into use.

In relation to retail policy LP08, this looked protect what was in the town centre and create communities and place, recognising that the role of a town centre was evolving.

*The Committee adjourned at 11.25 am for a comfort break and reconvened at 11.35 am.*

Councillor de Whalley thanked officers for their hard work in relation to the Local Plan. He asked what lessons had been learnt to streamline the process in production of the next Local Plan.

The Planning Policy Manager explained that the key Government priority was to boost the economy and tackle the national housing crisis. He added that there was a lot that was not known currently about the new local planning system but there was now a legal requirement to update the local plan every 5 years.

He explained that one of the things that might be coming in force was national development management policies. He suggested that there should be a separate meeting to go over lessons learnt.

The Senior Policy Planner outlined areas where improvements could be made including joint working with partners, joint studies and maintaining an evidence base.

Councillor Mrs Spikings congratulated the staff on the work and getting the Plan to this stage, and asked what might happen to the Plan in the future given LGR and Devolution.

The Principal Planner outlined what he envisaged might happen to the Local Plan in the future.

Councillor Heneghan also thanked the officers for the work involved and referred to LP32 – HMO's and the fact that planning permission was not required to turn a house into an HMO. The Planning Policy Manager advised that certain developments did not require planning permission and licensing was a method of control for HMO's.

The Chair added that he would also ask the Licensing Team and get back to Councillor Heneghan.

Councillor de Whalley made reference to the new requirements for developers for Climate Change. It was explained that this would be for major applications of 1 hectare or more and if it was not provided then the planning application might not be validated. The Senior Policy Planner advised that this needed to be included at the early stages of the planning application and not an after-thought. The questions were flexible, for when national policies changed.

Councillor Parish referred to Policy LP24 Renewable Energy and asked if there were any allocations for solar farms? In response the Principal Planner advised that there were no allocations for solar farms. There was a policy about managing proposals as they came forward. It would be an important topic in the next Local Plan.

The Chair took the Task Group to the recommendation, which was to endorse the recommendation to Cabinet, which was agreed.

**AGREED:** That the Task Group endorses the recommendations to Cabinet.

9 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

To be arranged when required.

**The meeting closed at 12.02 pm**

# The New Plan-Making System: an overview

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**Local Plan Task Group - 10/02/2026**

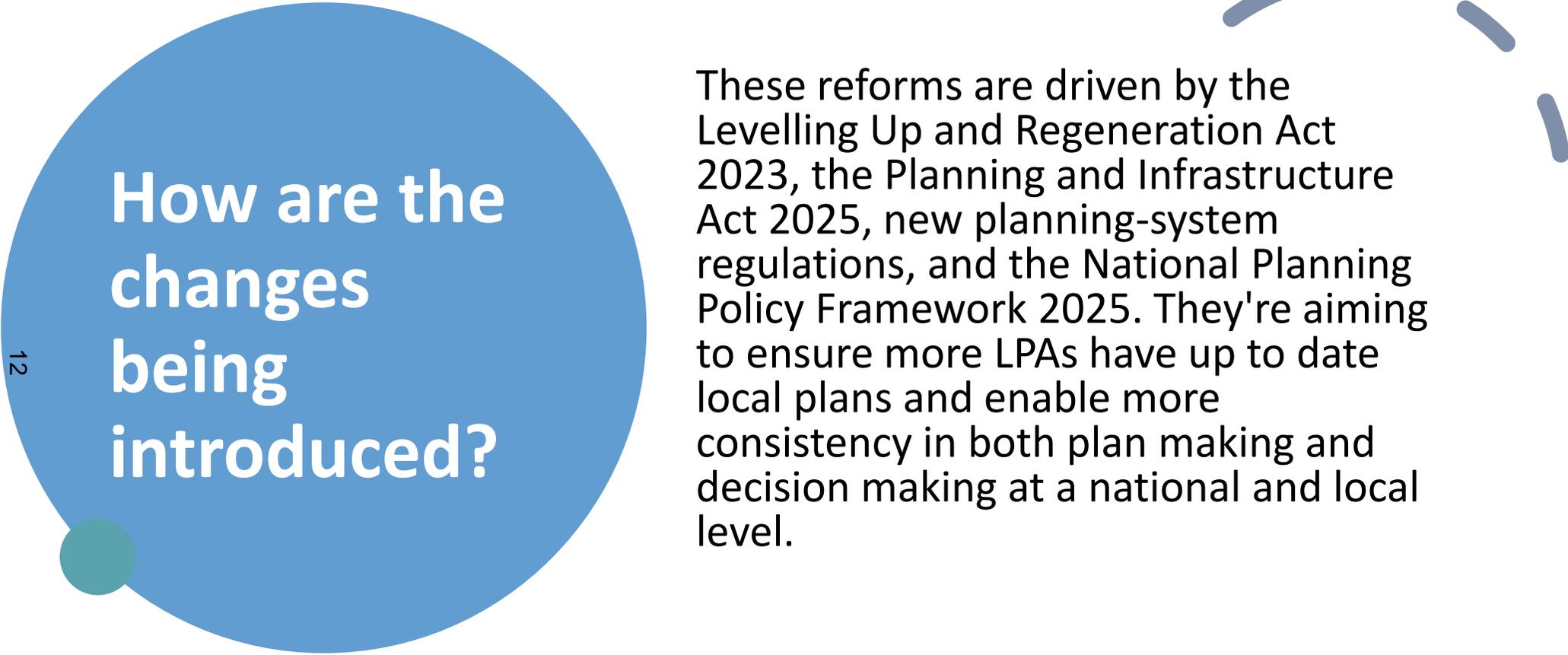
**Luke Brown (Senior Policy Planner)**

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk



# Why are there significant changes to plan making system?

- The Government are introducing significant planning reforms to help speed up the production of local plans to help achieve their aim of building 1.5 million homes within this Parliament;
- Support the re-introduction of strategic plans;
- Average timescale of preparing a local plan was around 6.5 years;
- Many local plan policies were out of date as soon as plans were adopted due to updates to National Policy;
- Only 13% of LPAs have an up-to-date Local Plan under the current system;
- Many LPAs were facing challenges with meeting their growth requirements.



## How are the changes being introduced?

These reforms are driven by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, the Planning and Infrastructure Act 2025, new planning-system regulations, and the National Planning Policy Framework 2025. They're aiming to ensure more LPAs have up to date local plans and enable more consistency in both plan making and decision making at a national and local level.

# What are the new changes to the policy structure ?

1

- National Planning Policy Framework and Guidance

2

- Spatial Development Strategies

3

- Local Plans

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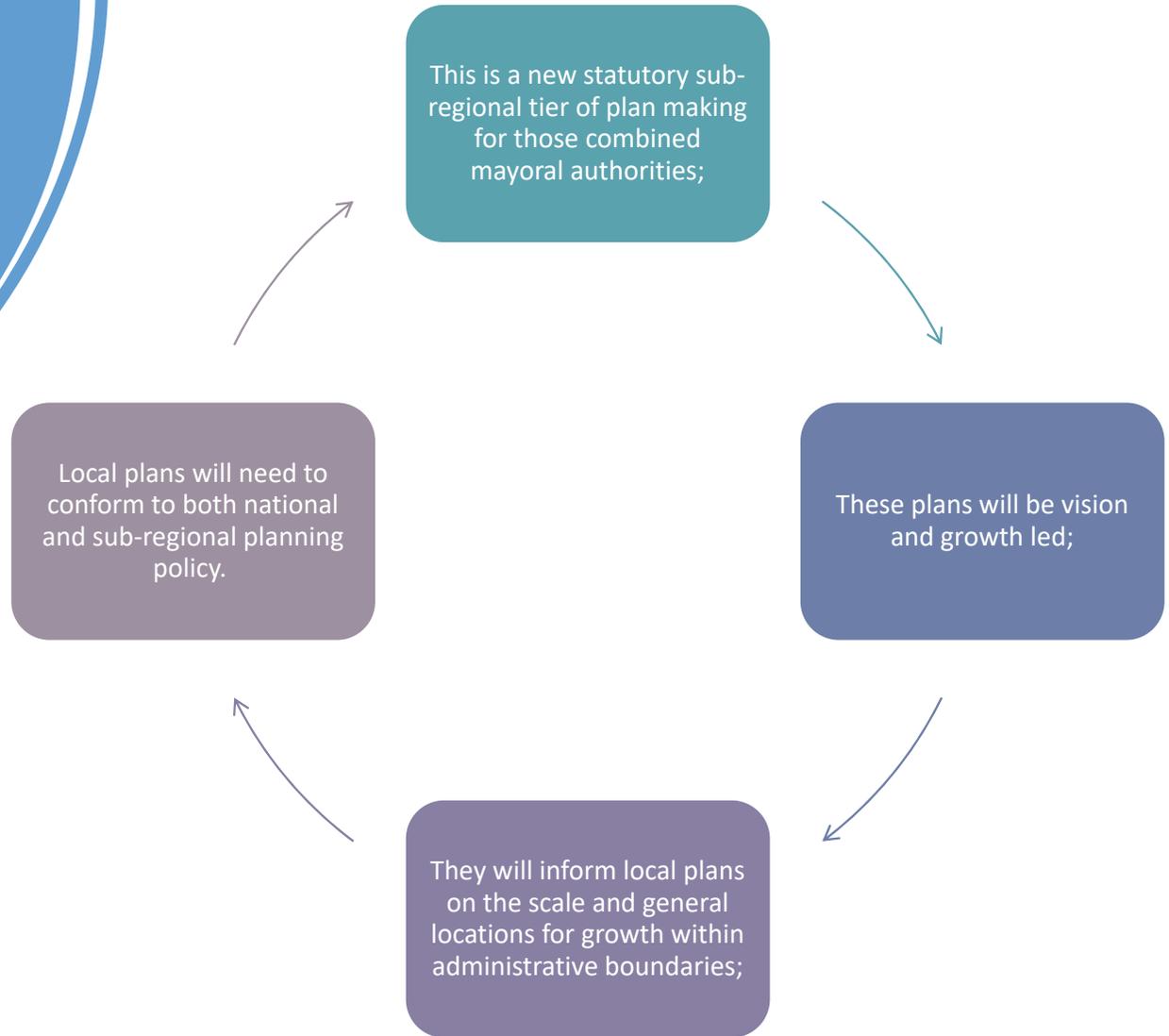
- Supplementary Plans

5

- Neighbourhood Plans

# The Introduction of Spatial Development Strategies

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# 15 New Local Plan 30-Month Timeline

- **Faster Adoption** – LPAs will be required to prepare and adopt new local plans within a 30-month period. All authorities must prepare a Project Initiation Document and a local plan timetable. Publish these and keep them up to date.
- Authorities will need to start preparing a plan in the new system no later than 30<sup>th</sup> June 2026 if they fall under the transnational arrangements set out in the NPPF (2024) – which includes BCKLWN.
- A 4-month ‘pre-notification period’ between 30<sup>th</sup> June and 31<sup>st</sup> October enables authorities to undertake early work and notify of intent to start.
- Formal 30-month process starts after Gateway 1 (31<sup>st</sup> October 2026).
- **Standardised Process** – the process includes early engagement (scoping consultation) and 3 new ‘Gateway Assessments’ are now required prior to submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination (by PINS).

# Three-Gateway System

- New stop/go checkpoints are introduced called "Gateways" to ensure plans are robust and can proceed to the next stage. These milestones are instigated through the plan making process, and a Planning Inspector is appointed for Gateway 2 and Gateway 3.
- **Gateway 1:** Self-Assessment of the Plans Scope and Strategic Priorities.
- **Gateway 2:** Assessment of Draft Plan and evidence base
- **Gateway 3:** Readiness for examination.

# Other Key Changes: MB1



Duty to Cooperate is no longer a separate legal test. However, engagement with consultees remains crucial for a plan to be found 'sound'. As does cooperation with neighbouring authorities.



Digital First Approach – the new system mandates the use of digital tools and standardises data formats to make plans more accessible and transparent.



Local Plan Vision – Plan must include a “vision” supported by no more than 10 measurable outcomes.



National Decision-Making Policies –New style local plans will be focused on site allocations and polices to meet need; they will not include general development management policies. 'Development plan policies which are in any way inconsistent with the national decision-making policies in the new NPPF, once in place, should be given very limited weight.



Supplementary Plans (SPs) will replace Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). These will be used to focus on single or linked site issues that need addressing between plan making cycles. These will be subject to an examination.

**Slide 8**

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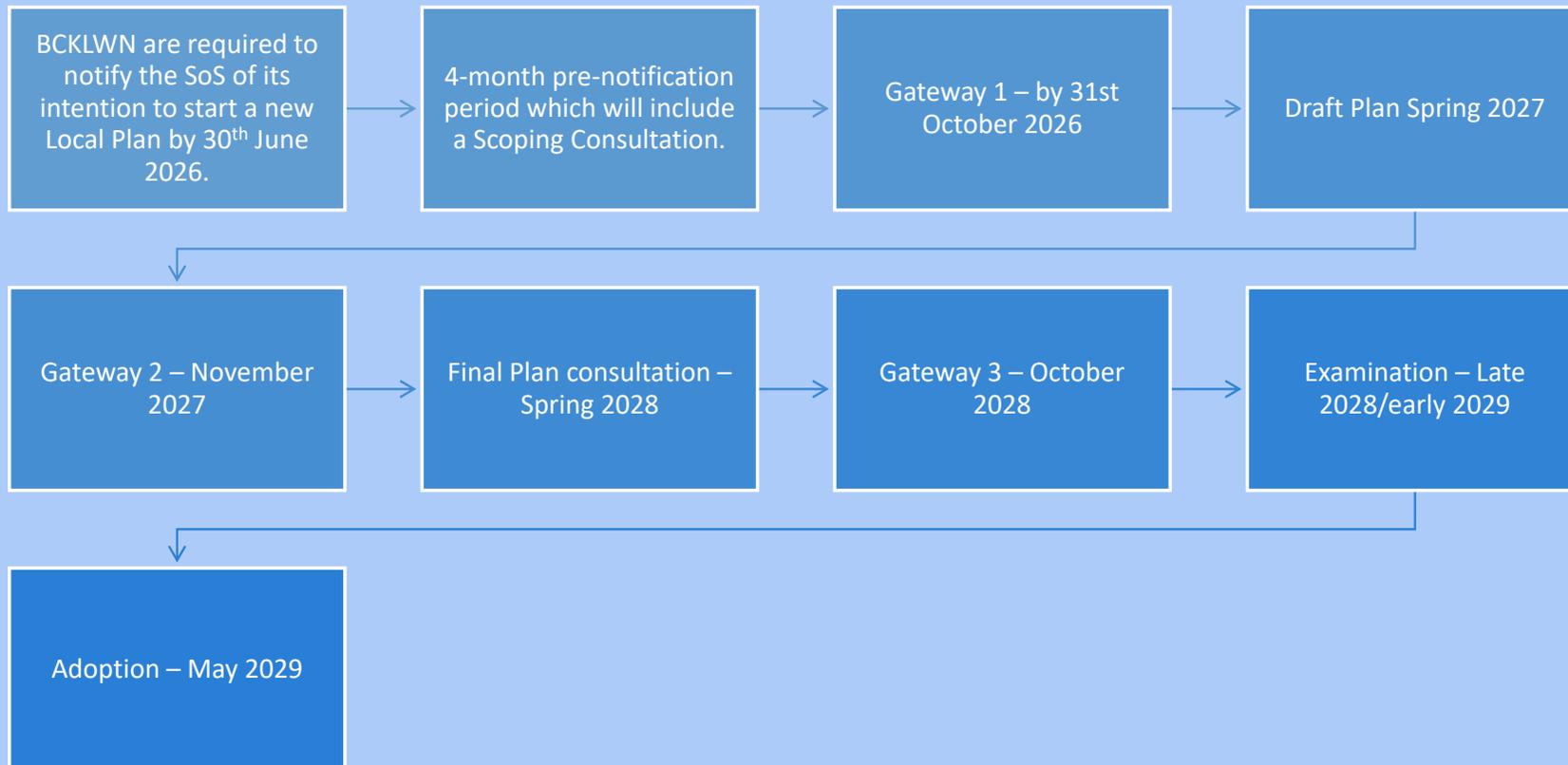
**MB1** Orange box - I would say that "Duty to cooperate" is no longer a legal requirement, but engagement with consultees remains crucial for a Plan to be found sound"

Michael Burton, 2026-01-20T12:23:18.137

**LB1 0** Amended it to this, thank Mike

Luke Brown, 2026-01-20T12:30:30.892

# What does this mean for us – our proposed timetable



# What are we doing to prepare?



Undertaking work on spatial options for growth



Undertaking work on an entirely new evidence base



undertaking a 'call for sites' consultation



Preparing a timetable and PID for the new plan



Investing in digital communications and AI technology



Working with key infrastructure & service providers to understand important issues



Working with other departments to help streamline internal processes.

# Local Plan Task Group – The New National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): an overview

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## 10 February 2026

Michael Burton (Principal Planner, Planning Policy)

Borough Council of  
King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk



# Introduction

1. What is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)?
2. Why is the NPPF being updated?
3. Features of the emerging new NPPF
- 22 4. New NPPF – most significant/ key changes
5. National Development Management Policies
6. Planning & Infrastructure Act
7. Conclusion/ questions

# What is the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)?

- The NPPF is the Government’s statement of national planning policy and is (alongside the Council’s own planning policies set out in the Local Plan) an important consideration in determining planning applications
- The first NPPF was published in March 2012 – subsequent updates have represented the evolution of national (England-wide) policies
- The NPPF provides the national definition for “sustainable development”, which underpins the planning system

# Why is the NPPF being updated?

- Draft NPPF consultation already underway (closing date 10<sup>th</sup> March 2026)
- To support new planning system as envisaged by the LURA 2023 and P&I 2025
- Presenting policies in a clearer way
- More rules-based, for consistency/ predictability
- Comprehensive national decision-making policies
- ...but continued focus on delivering growth (e.g. 1.5m homes by 2029)

  
Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

National Planning Policy Framework  
Plan-making and national decision-making policies

December 2025

# Features of the new NPPF (1)

- Maintain essence of current (2024) NPPF; e.g. presumption in favour of sustainable development (but simplified)
- Separation between plan-making policies (directions for preparing Local Plans) and decision-making (development management) policies
- standardised decision-making policies, to replace similar policies currently set out in Local Plans
- focus for Local Plans upon land allocations – delivery of housing/ jobs numbers and accommodating economic growth sectors

  
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National Planning Policy Framework  
Plan-making and national decision-making policies

December 2025

# Features of the new NPPF (2)

- Clear introduction for each chapter including a brief **objective**,
- Introduction followed by suite of procedural **plan-making** and decision-making policies
- Separate policies, **individually numbered**, for clarity and resilience
- **Footnotes** retained (as per previous NPPFs), but better linked to policies/chapters

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## 4. Achieving sustainable development

The objective of the policies in this chapter is to meet development needs through sustainable patterns of development, including by maximising the potential for growth on suitable land within settlements, enabling development which will support the rural economy, rural communities and the provision of infrastructure, and limiting development away from settlements to help safeguard the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

### Plan-making policies

#### S1: Positive plan-making

1. The development plan should plan positively for future growth and change by:
  - a. Seeking to meet the development needs of their area as a minimum. For spatial development strategies, and for local plans where a spatial development strategy is not in place<sup>22</sup>, this means providing for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses (including supporting infrastructure), as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas, unless:
    - i. the application of the policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance<sup>23</sup> provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or
    - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would substantially outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.
  - b. Providing for new development, and improvement of the environment, in a way which promotes a sustainable pattern of growth and seeks to mitigate climate change and adapt to its effects.

#### S2: Producing a spatial strategy

1. The development plan should set out a spatial strategy setting clear expectations for the location of development and where land should be protected or enhanced for specific purposes, by identifying at an appropriate scale:
  - a. Settlements within the development plan area, whether existing or proposed, and their boundaries (or clear criteria for identifying settlement extents). Settlements should include any allocations that would ultimately form part of the settlement;
  - b. The location and boundary of town centres within settlements, or other specific areas where particular approaches to development apply;

<sup>22</sup> Where a spatial development strategy is in place, the local plan should plan for the level of development provided for in the spatial development strategy covering the area of the local plan.

<sup>23</sup> The policies referred to are those in this Framework (rather than those in development plans) relating to: habitats sites and/or designated as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, land designated as Green Belt, Local Green Space, a National Landscape, a National Park (or within the Broads Authority) or defined as Heritage Coast; inalienable habitats; designated heritage assets; and areas at risk of flooding or coastal change.

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# New NPPF – most significant/ key changes

- Some new & re-ordering of some chapters – stronger focus on climate change, energy, water (resources), public protection
- Presumption in favour of sustainable development reiterated, but some changes; e.g. brownfield approach, integrated with location (spatial) policies
- Clarity re principles of development inside/ outside settlements
- Additional annexes; e.g. standard method (housing targets), flood risk tables

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Ministry of Housing,  
Communities &  
Local Government

National Planning Policy Framework  
Plan-making and national decision-making policies

December 2025

# National Development Management Policies (NDMPs)

## Impact on Decision making

- Promote sustainable, balanced development.
- Provide clarity and reduce ambiguity in planning.
- Speed up decision-making.
- 28 • Development plan policies (including those contained within the Local Plan or a neighbourhood plan) which are in any way inconsistent with the national decision-making policies in the new NPPF, once in place, should be given very limited weight.
- Create fairness and consistency across the country.

# Planning & Infrastructure Act

Royal Assent 18 December 2025

- Comes into effect 18<sup>th</sup> February 2026.
- Planning Committee Reforms – Consultation on Draft Regulations – 2026.
- Planning fees – consultation on the proposed national default fee and guidance on local fee setting – early 2026.

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# Conclusions

1. NPPF has been the definition of national planning policies since 2012; key role in determining planning applications
2. Proposed changes to NPPF represent most significant changes since 2012
3. Comprehensive update, to improve clarity, consistency and predictability
- 30 4. Presumption in favour of sustainable development reiterated, but some changes
5. Separation between plan-making and decision-making (development management) policies
6. More prescriptive, in terms of issues/ themes to be covered by Local Plans
7. Significant procedural changes (P&I Act); e.g. delegation powers
8. **QUESTIONS?**

