

Local Plan FAQs

What is the Local Plan?

The Local Plan sets out the vision and sustainable planning frameworks for the future development of Bradford and its local communities across a period spanning 2025/26 to 2042/43. The plan features new sites for housing and employment and a range of policies and strategies which will help guide development and the determination of planning applications. It also sets out new information on protecting and promoting open spaces, green infrastructure and places of ecological value across the District.

Delivering our net zero carbon ambition by 2038, tackling air pollution, supporting public transport, cycling and walking and making the District a more prosperous and greener place to live, work and enjoy are central to the plan. Additionally, the Local Plan contributes to an attempt to deliver the national 300,000 dwellings per annum target.

Why is it needed?

The Local Plan supports growth and investment in Bradford, by providing clarity on local ambitions and circumstances, and certainty to business, investors and infrastructure providers. In particular, it:

- supports economic growth through new employment land to support local business expansion, new investment and jobs.
- supports delivery of a wide range of homes to meet current and future needs.
- Supports urban regeneration, quality place-making and unlocking brownfield land.
- helps align land use proposals to support future funding and investment priorities.

Across the Bradford District, the Local Plan also helps to protect key environmental assets and open spaces through policies and the designation of areas. Through its planned approach, the Local Plan identifies land to be developed in Bradford, supports citizens via policies which considers their many needs, and avoids the challenges of unplanned development.

On a legislative and policy level, the Council has a duty to prepare and maintain an up-to-date Local Plan for the Bradford District in accordance with the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). In line with the agreed Local Development Scheme (LDS) adopted by the Council on 14th October 2025, the Council has progressed work on the new Local Plan in line with legal, regulatory and national policy and guidance.

What is the Regulation 19 consultation stage?

The process of preparing a Local Plan involves several stages. Regulation 19 consultation is a technical stage where we invite representations for the Local Plan Publication Draft and the supporting documents in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012. Following the Executive Committee and Full Council's approval in October on the decision to consult on the local plan, **a public consultation period will run over 6 weeks from 19 October 2026 to 30 November 2026**, in accordance with regulations 19 and 20 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Statement of Community Involvement adopted by the Executive on 2 December 2025.

The Regulation 19 consultation offers anyone with an interest in the Bradford District a final opportunity to comment on the draft publication version of the Local Plan before it is submitted to central government for examination before the end of 2026. This offers a chance for you to influence policy by commenting on the Local Plan's legal compliance and soundness and to suggest any changes you think are needed. Your comments will be considered by the Council and the Planning Inspector once the Local Plan is submitted for examination.

Prior to this stage, we completed Regulation 18 consultations. In this opening stage of plan preparation, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) consulted the public, landowners, developers and statutory bodies on the issues facing the area and the broad policy options for how growth and development might be addressed. The Council received a total of 29,523 representations at the Regulation 18 stage.

Why is it necessary?

The main difference between the Regulation 19 consultation and the previous stage of consultation (Regulation 18) is the statutory requirements, therefore making this a technical consultation. It is necessary to ensure that anyone with an interest in Bradford has a chance to comment on whether the plan is sound and legally compliant. Details and definitions of these terms can be found at the bottom of this page.

How can you get involved?

The Council's *strongly preferred* method of submitting representations is through the dedicated consultation portal: <https://bradford.oc2.uk>, which will assist with speeding up processing and reducing administrative costs. The portal requires a registration / login and is intuitive to use. Advanced features include a built in 'summarisation tool' to save you time on making larger representations. A video on how to use the portal is available.

If not submitted via the council's online portal, completed representation forms can be returned by email to: planning.policy@bradford.gov.uk, or by post or by hand to: Local Plan Team. City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, 4th Floor, Britannia House, Hall Ings, Bradford, BD1 1HX. Please ensure that the envelope is clearly marked.

Because of the statutory timetable, the period will not be extended, and representations received after the closing date cannot be accepted as duly made.

What should I/can I comment?

Comments must focus on the soundness and legal compliance of the Local Plan. You are able to comment on whether you consider that the inclusion or exclusion of particular sites means that the Local Plan fails to meet the tests of the above statutory requirements. Your representation should be supported by evidence wherever possible. It will be helpful if you also say precisely how you think the plan should be modified.

Where groups or individuals share a common view on the plan, it would be very helpful if they would make a single representation which represents that view, rather than many separate representations repeating the same points. In such cases the group should indicate how many people it is representing and how the representation has been authorised.

Before making a representation, it is highly recommended that you:

- Read the Local Plan and supporting documents
- Review the guidance on making a representation, found [here](#)

Can I comment anonymously?

We cannot accept anonymous comments, or anything marked as private or confidential. Comments will be attributed to individuals and organisations. If you submit comments, the consultation responses and your personal data will be passed to the Planning Inspectorate and a Programme Officer. The Programme Officer manages the procedural and administrative aspects of the examination. The Programme Officer will contact you using the personal information you have provided if you have indicated in the representation form that you wish to engage in the examination.

What happens next?

Following the end of the representation period, the Full Council will consider whether to submit the Bradford Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for examination, together with all the Regulation 19 representations and the other supporting documents.

Once submitted to the Secretary, a Local Plan Inspector will be appointed on behalf of the Government who will undertake an independent examination of the plan and then make recommendations on what happens next with the Local Plan. Following a report confirming the Plan is 'sound', the Council will be able to adopt the Bradford Local Plan. It will then form part of the statutory development plan for the district and have full weight when determining planning applications.

Why are Green Belt sites included in the Local Plan?

Green Belt sites are included in the pre-submission Local Plan because insufficient land is available to meet all our development needs. This has meant taking the difficult decision to amend Bradford's Green Belt boundary adjacent to our most sustainable settlements to release land for development. We have sought to minimise this release by ensuring development proposals on site allocations make efficient use of land whilst respecting the existing character of areas.

What is grey belt land?

In December 2024, the Government overhauled the planning system and introduced the concept of 'grey belt' land as part of the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the aim to address national housing targets. Grey belt is defined in the NPPF as 'land in the Green Belt comprising previously developed land and/or any other land that, in either case, does not strongly contribute to any of purposes (a) to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas, (b) to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another, or (d) to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns'.

Plans still need to demonstrate exceptional circumstances for the release of land within the Green Belt to meet needs. Where it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give priority to previously developed land, then consider grey belt land not previously developed, and then other Green Belt locations.

How does the Local Plan affect housing?

The Government's target is for 300,000 new homes to be built each year within England. To address housing need and contribute to the national target, the Plan will deliver circa 33,669 units min within the plan period – 1,845 min per annum in year 1, and 1872 min per annum from year 2 onwards. At the heart of this is the Regional City of Bradford which looks to deliver approximately 70% of the new housing. Overall, the Plan will address the net shortfall of 759 affordable dwellings per year, maximising social rent where possible, and apply the recommended 70:30 rented/home ownership split.

How does the Local Plan affect jobs?

The Local Plan sets targets for the allocation of new employment land, supporting the economic expansion of local businesses, retention of local jobs, and attracting new investment into the District. New sites are considerably allocated to serve the purpose of enhancing established employment bases, for example in manufacturing and knowledge-based services. Developments that help diversify and strengthen the rural economy of the District will also be encouraged.

To address employment need, the Plan will deliver at least 110.5 ha of employment space, resulting in a job estimate in the region of 30,000.

How does the Local Plan affect schools?

Proposals for new or enhance education provision will be supported under the Local Plan, particularly where it meets an identified needs and improves the scale, range, quality and accessibility to such facilities.

It is recognised that new housing development has the potential to create demand for additional education places and/or increase pressure on existing education facilities. To address this, on occasion developers may therefore be required to make financial contributions to the provision of additional school places and/or setting aside an area of land or space within the proposed development to allow a new facility to be constructed.

How will the plan consider environmental features of the District?

The Local Plan will support growth in a balanced way, ensuring key environmental assets are retained and enhanced. This will be achieved by a designation of circa 1,693 open spaces (almost 2,800 ha of land), plus protection for 108 local wildlife sites, 16 local geological sites, 13 Local Nature Reserves, 4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 1 Special Area of Conservation/Special Protection Area (SPAs), and a new National Nature Reserve. The Green Belt will continue to account for around 64% of the District's land area.

What happened before the Local Plan?

The current development plan for the Bradford District is the Replacement Unitary Development Plan (RUDP) which was adopted in October 2005. The Council's Planning Policy Team is now in the process of preparing a new Local Plan.

The Local Plan for the Bradford District will be made up of numerous planning documents that will guide future growth and development for housing, employment, leisure and retail

for the next 10-20 years. It will also identify areas of restraint and protection for their environmental or heritage value. Each document has a role to play in delivering the District's vision for the sustainable development and encouraging good design.

Upon adoption, the Local Plan will be a result of carefully considered and evidence-led policy, public consultations and engagement, and reviews from the local authority and central government to ensure the Local Plan is fit for purpose.

The meaning of Legal Compliance:

- Local Plans are legally compliant if they are:
 - Prepared in accordance with the Council's latest Local Development Scheme;
 - Accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment;
 - Subject to consultation carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement;
 - Compliant with all relevant laws including the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and the Town and Country
 - Prepared in line with the Duty to Co-operate:
 - The Council has a legal duty to cooperate with other national and local bodies, such as neighbouring planning authorities, Leicestershire County Council and the Environment Agency. The purpose of the duty is to discuss and address strategic cross-boundary issues such as housing, employment and infrastructure needs
 - Whilst the duty to cooperate was abolished on 25 March 2026, Inspectors are still expected to examine plans in line with NPPF policies on maintaining effective cooperation between neighbouring authorities and statutory bodies.
 - Further information on legal compliance and soundness is broadly set out in NPPF 2024 (paragraphs 36-37) and with reference to the consultation chapter (chapter 1) to the Local Plan.

The meaning of Soundness:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states a local plan is sound if it meets the following four tests of soundness:
 1. Positively Prepared: The plan provides a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development.

2. Justified: The plan contains an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and is based on appropriate evidence.
3. Effective: The plan is deliverable over the plan period and is based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters, as evidenced by the statement of common ground.
4. Consistent with national policy: The Plan enables the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with national planning policy, where relevant.