

# Planning Bulletin November 2025

This monthly note highlights some of the recent and forthcoming developments in the world of planning, from a heritage perspective. Please note that this is not necessarily a complete review of matters and is not intended to provide any legal advice on the issues raised. Unless otherwise stated, it does not comprise the formal position of Historic England on these matters.

## Contents

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- [Committees](#), including: updates to built **heritage**, **housing** and **environmental** inquiries.
- [Policy and Guidance](#), including: intended revisions to a more ‘rules-based’ National Planning Policy Framework; and guidance on the **new local plan-making** process.
- [Planning Letters](#), including: November Chief Planners Newsletters
- [Current Consultations](#), including: reforms to the statutory consultee process; and expansion of **permitted development** rights for EV charging.
- [Digital Planning](#), including: government proposals for **AI-augmented decision-making**; and information on **Historic England’s marine data**.
- [Infrastructure Planning](#), including: National Policy Statements for energy infrastructure; proposals for **AI growth zones**; data centre research and consultation on Regional Energy Strategy Plans.
- [Local Government](#), including: recent proposals for **local government reorganisation**.
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- [Historic England Advice](#), including: draft revisions to Historic England’s local heritage listing advice; and the publication of an **online resource** for historic pubs.
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  - [Appendix I](#): further details of key **emerging legislation** and their contents.
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## Legislation and Matters Arising

This section provides a summary of updates to legislation made in the last month. Further information on what the legislation covers can be found in [Appendix I](#).

- The [Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) has passed through its final stages in which amendments were considered by both houses and will **go forward for royal assent**.
- The [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill](#) passed through the House of Commons stages and had its **first reading in the House of Lords** on 27 November.

## Parliamentary Committees

This section provides a summary of updates to [inquiries](#) in the last month.

### Protecting Built Heritage

- **Protecting Built Heritage:** On 4 November, the [Culture, Media and Sport Committee Protecting Built Heritage Inquiry](#) hosted an oral evidence session exploring funding models for heritage projects and workings of the local planning system. A [recording of the Protecting Built Heritage Inquiry oral evidence session](#) can be viewed online.

### Energy Infrastructure

- **Energy Infrastructure:** Alongside the publication of revised National Policy Statements for energy infrastructure (see '[Infrastructure planning](#)'), the government published responses to two [Energy Security and Net Zero Committee inquiries](#), including the [National Planning for Energy Infrastructure Inquiry](#) and [Planning for Nuclear Generation Inquiry](#). Responses include:
  - '[The New National Policy Statement for Nuclear Energy Generation: Government Response - 3rd Report 2024-2026](#)'
  - '[Gridlock or Growth? Avoiding Energy Planning Chaos: Government Response - 2nd Report 2024-2026](#)'

### Housing Growth

- The [Environment Committee Environmental Sustainability and Housing Growth Inquiry](#) is exploring how proposed reforms to national planning policy and housing targets might affect environmental protections. On 11 November, the inquiry published '[Environmental Sustainability and Housing Growth - 6th Report 2024-2026](#).'

## Policy and Guidance

### National Planning Policy Framework

- In the [‘Next Phase of Planning Reform Statement’](#) (18 November), Steve Reed MP stated there would be consultation on a ‘revised, more **rules-based National Planning Policy Framework**’ by the end of 2025. The statement indicates this will include policy enabling a ‘default yes’ to suitable applications for development within a reasonable walking distance of well-connected rail and tram stations.

### Local Plan-Making

- On 27 November, the government announced that the new local plan-making system, the 30-month process introduced by the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023](#), would be in force in early 2026 with draft regulations published shortly.
- Several pieces of guidance were updated concurrently. These are collated in the [‘create or update a local plan using the new system’](#) collection, which includes links to guidance covering the initial stages of plan-making. This includes:
- A plan-making **regulations explainer** ahead of publication of the regulations themselves.
  - An **overview of the 30-month system** and its key gateways.
  - Information, including **transitional arrangements**, for the systems rollout.
  - Guidance on areas including **notification, evidence gathering** and **site allocation**.
  - Related guidance for those continuing under the **legacy system**.
- Whilst not a formal consultation, comments on the [‘create or update a local plan using the new system’](#) collection can be made until 15 March.

## Government Planning Letters

### Chief Planner Newsletter

The Chief Planner for England regularly writes newsletters to chief planning officers within local planning authorities, providing guidance on planning.

- The [Planning Newsletter \(24 November\)](#) covers, amongst other things:

- Reforms to be consulted on as part of a **revised National Planning Policy Framework** (see '[Government Policy and Guidance](#)')
  - Consultation on **reforms to the statutory consultee system** (see '[Government Consultations](#)')
  - The next round of the **Pathways to Planning** scheme in which local planning authorities, statutory consultees and NSIPs can hire graduate planners or surveyors for September 2026.
  - Launching a review of the **Airports National Policy Statement**.
  - **Changes to the way in which Natural England delivers planning advice to public bodies.**
  - Launch of **training on costal planning**, delivered by the Environment Agency and the Town and Country Planning Association.
- The [Planning Newsletter \(27 November\)](#) covers:
- Information on implementation of the **new local plan system** (see [Policy and Guidance](#)).
  - Announcement of a consultation on the package of **emergency measures to support housebuilding in London**.

## Current Consultations

### Reforms to the Statutory Consultee System

- On 18 November, the [Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government](#), opened a [consultation on reforms to the statutory consultee system](#), responses can be made until 13 January. Proposals include **removing statutory consultee status for The Gardens Trust and Theatres Trust**, with proposals to revise their **roles to be closer to that of the amenity societies**, and proposals to fund statutory consultees through a planning surcharge. It further proposes to **streamline instances in which Historic England is consulted and notified** in the following ways:
- Notification of listed building consent applications for **Grade II listed buildings** would be for **total demolition only**.
  - The **footprint threshold for consultation** on planning permission for new buildings or extensions within a **conservation area** would be raised **from 1000m2 to 2000m2**.
  - Removing the requirement for Historic England to **authorise listed building consents within London Boroughs**.

## Electric Vehicle Charging

- In May 2025, the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero consulted on proposed changes to permitted development rights for **solar canopies on car parks** (section 1) and **electric vehicle charging** (section 2). On 26 November, the government published [a response to section 2 of the solar on car parks and electric vehicle charging consultation](#). Of particular interest are the following:
  - **Listed buildings and conservation areas:** The consultation showed support for ‘simplifying planning for EV installations near listed buildings’. It is not proposed to change the rights in relation to listed buildings or conservation areas; however, they commit to **publishing improved guidance for EV installations near listed buildings and in conservation areas**.
  - **Cross-pavement charging:** the consultation showed broad support for streamlining the consenting process for cross-pavement solutions (XPS) for those without driveways and committed to further consultation. Concurrently, the Department of Transport launched a [consultation on cross-pavement charging as well as permitted development rights for equipment housing](#). Responses can be made until **21 January 2026**.

## Digital Planning

- **Artificial Intelligence:** The [Department for Science, Innovation and Technology](#) has announced a [project to develop a tool that enables AI-augmented decision making for planning applications](#). Initially focused on householder applications, it will be expanded to other categories including **listed building consents** and **relevant demolition in a conservation area**.
- **Marine Heritage Data:** Historic England has published information around the [Marine Data Exchange Heritage Accelerator project](#). This aims to ensure critical **marine heritage data** is collected, organised and shared to support decision-making around, for example, offshore wind development.

## Infrastructure Planning

- **National Policy Statements:** the government has published [draft updates to national policy statements for energy infrastructure](#) including EN-1 (overarching NPS for energy), EN-3 (renewable energy), EN-5 (electricity networks) and a **new statement for nuclear**

energy (EN-7). After a 21-sitting day consideration period, these statements will come into force.

- **AI Growth Zones:** On 13 November, the government published the ‘[Delivering AI Growth Zones Policy Paper](#)’. The paper outlines a series of measures to deliver AI data centre capacity in certain areas including, for example, **updating national policy guidance to prioritise AI data centres, streamline consents, and protect land for AI growth zones.**
- **Data Centre Research:** In October, the government laid draft regulations to bring data centres into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project regime. In that context, in November, the House of Commons Library published the [Data Centres: Planning Policy, Sustainability, and Resilience research briefing](#).
- **Regional Energy Strategic Plans:** The National Energy System Operator (NESO) has launched a [consultation to shape the methodology that will help deliver a set of Regional Energy Strategy Plans](#). Responses can be made until **16 January**.

## Local Government

- **Local Government Reorganisation:** In February 2025, the government published a [web resource for policy and programme updates for local government reorganisation](#). This was updated in November to include details of proposals for reorganisation in specific areas.

## Other Initiatives

- **Planning Appeal Submissions:** The [Planning Inspectorate](#) has announced changes to the appeal submission process, with greater emphasis on **digital submissions**. This includes s.20 (listed building and conservation area appeals). From **1 December**, paper planning appeal forms will no longer be issued, and from **1 April 2026**, paper appeal forms will no longer be accepted. [Further information on changes to planning appeal submissions](#) are online.
- **Government call-in:** On 18 November, Steve Reed MP (Secretary of State) published a [written statement outlining the next phase of planning reform](#). This covered development around rail stations (see [Policy and Guidance](#)), and the Statutory Consultee System consultation (see [Current Consultations](#)). It further included proposals to introduce a new consultation direction, change to legislation and policy changes to **require local planning authorities to notify the Secretary of State when they intend to refuse proposals of 150 homes or more, allowing a decision to be taken as to whether to call the proposal in.**
- **Heritage Investment Prospectus:** In 2025, Historic England published the first [Heritage Investment Prospectus](#), showcasing sites across England to connect owners and

investors. Historic England has now issued a call for sites to include in a second edition to be published in 2026, and details of [how to suggest a site for publication in the Historic England 2026 Heritage Investment Prospectus](#) are online. Submissions can be made until 16 January.

## Historic England Advice

All [Historic England planning advice](#) is available online. [Appendix II](#) includes a list of all Good Practice Advice notes (GPAs) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs). These are amended from time to time reflecting changes in legislation, policy or case law interpretation etc.

- **Historic England Advice:** Historic England are consulting on a [revised version of HEAN 7 Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage](#), incorporating feedback from a 2025 survey of local planning authorities. It will be published with an accompanying toolkit and case studies. Responses can be made until 2 January.
- **Pubs Hub:** Historic England has published '[Pubs Hub: England's Historic Pubs](#)', an online resource collecting information, guidance and research on historic pubs.

## Historic England Research

Historic England produces and commissions research to understand how the planning system works in relation to the historic environment. These can be accessed via [Historic England's Planning Research webpage](#).

- **Listed Building Consent Orders:** To understand more about the practical considerations for developing (national) Listed Building Consent Orders, Historic England has published a [scoping study exploring a Listed Building Consent Order for retrofit works to listed board schools in England](#), accompanied by [Listed Building Consent Orders for Board Schools: History, Significance and Gazetteer](#).

## Calendar

### December

9 December – [Part 2 of Historic England Technical Tuesdays Webinar: Union Chain Bridge](#).

31 December – The [Infrastructure Planning \(Onshore Wind and Solar Generation\) Order 2025](#) comes into force.

### January

2 January – Historic England [consultation on revised local heritage listing advice - Historic England Advice Note 7 \(HEAN 7\)](#) closes.

13 January – Government [consultation on reforms to the statutory consultee system](#) closes.

16 January – NESO [consultation on regional energy strategy plans](#) closes.

16 January – Historic England [Heritage Investment Prospectus 2026 call for sites](#) closes.

26 January – The [Department for Transport consultation into changes to permitted development rights for EV charging](#) closes

## Planning Bulletin Notifications

If you did not receive this edition of Planning Bulletin directly from Historic England, you can sign up for notifications when a new edition is issued by emailing: [governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

If you no longer wish to receive Planning Bulletin, or have received this in error, please email [governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk) and we will remove you from the mailing list.



## Appendix I: Emerging Legislation

### Planning and Infrastructure Bill

The government states that the [Planning and Infrastructure bill](#) seeks to:

- Provide for a faster and more certain consenting process for critical infrastructure and strengthen the policy framework around National Policy Statements (NPSs);
- Deliver a more efficient and predictable system for energy infrastructure projects;
- Streamline and improve the efficiency of delivering transport infrastructure projects;
- Introduce a more strategic approach to nature recovery in relation to development, enabling developers to fund restoration more efficiently through a new Nature Restoration Fund, whilst securing improved outcomes for the environment;
- Improve certainty and decision-making in the planning system, including through introducing a new scheme of delegation to modernise local planning committees, and increasing the capacity of local planning authorities by enabling the cost recovery of planning fees;
- Unlock land and secure public value for large-scale investment through reforms to the compulsory purchase order process and compensation rules;
- Strengthen development corporation powers for infrastructure delivery, including transport, and clarify and update development corporation remits and objectives; and
- Provide for the introduction of a strategic planning system for England.
- More information can be found in the following:
  - [Explanatory notes to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#).
  - [Guidance and factsheets for the Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#).
  - [Historic England written evidence to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill committee](#).
  - [House of Commons Library Research Briefing on Lords Amendments to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill \(11 November\)](#)

## English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill

The government states that the [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill](#) falls under 3 broad sections:

- **Devolution:** describing devolution structures, outlining and expanding powers for Mayors and authorities through the new Devolution Framework and explaining routes to devolution for places that do not have it.
- **Local government:** ensuring the process for local government reorganisation supports the ambition in the [English Devolution White Paper](#), outlining changes to local authority governance, reforming accountability and introducing effective neighbourhood governance structures to amplify local voices.
- **Communities:** giving more power to local communities to purchase Assets of Community Value (ACV) and making reforms to commercial leases.
- More information can be found in the following:
  - [Explanatory notes to the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.](#)
  - [Guidance on the purpose of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.](#)
  - [Devolution Framework Explainers, setting out the statutory functions of Strategic Authorities.](#)
  - [House of Commons Library Research briefing on the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill.](#)
  - [House of Commons Library Research Briefing on Progress of the English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill \(20 November\)](#)

## Appendix II: Historic England Planning Advice

All [Historic England planning advice](#) is available on our website. Below is a list of all Good Practice Advice notes (GPAs) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs). These are amended from time to time to reflect changes in legislation, policy, or case law interpretation etc.

### Good Practice Advice Notes (GPAs)

The GPAs provide information on good practice, particularly looking at the principles of how national planning policy and guidance can be applied. They are the result of collaborative working with the heritage and property sectors in the [Historic Environment Forum](#), and have been prepared following public consultation:

- [GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans \(March 2015\)](#)
- [GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment \(March 2015\)](#)
- [GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets \(December 2017\)](#)
- [GPA4: Enabling Development and Heritage Assets \(June 2020\)](#)

### Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs)

The HEANs include detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance. They have been prepared by Historic England following public consultation:

- [HEAN 1: Conservation Areas: Designation, Appraisal and Review \(Second Edition\) \(February 2019\)](#)
- [HEAN 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets \(February 2016\)](#)
- [HEAN 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans \(October 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 4: Tall Buildings \(Second Edition\) \(March 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 5: Setting up a Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement \(November 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 6: Drawing up a Local Listed Building Consent Order \(November 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 7: Local Heritage Listing \(Second edition\) \(January 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 8: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment \(December 2016\)](#)
- [HEAN 9: The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings \(October 2017\)](#)

- [HEAN 10: Listed Buildings and Curtilage \(June 2025\)](#)
- [HEAN 11: Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment \(Second Edition\) \(April 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 12: Statements of Heritage Significance \(October 2019\)](#)
- [HEAN 13: Minerals Extraction and Archaeology \(January 2020\)](#)
- HEAN 14 has been superseded by HEAN 18 and has been withdrawn
- [HEAN 15: Commercial Renewable Energy Development and the Historic Environment \(February 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 16: Listed Building Consent \(June 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 17: Planning and Archaeology \(November 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency \(July 2024\)](#)