

Planning Bulletin September 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.

Government Departments

Ministerial Appointments

The [full list of Ministerial Appointments for September 2025](#) can be found online.

Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

- [Steve Reed OBE MP](#) was appointed Secretary of State. [Alison McGovern MP](#) was appointed as Minister for Local Government and Homelessness, and [Miatta Fahnbulleh MP](#) has been appointed as Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport

- [Ian Murray MP](#) has been given responsibility for heritage in the House of Commons ([Baroness Twycross](#) remains Minister for Museums, Heritage and Gambling).

Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

- [Katie White OBE MP](#) was appointed Minister for Climate. [Martin McCluskey MP](#) was appointed Minister for Energy Consumers, with responsibility for public sector decarbonisation and domestic energy efficiency. [Michael Shanks MP](#) was appointed Minister for Energy.

Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

- [Emma Reynolds MP](#) was appointed Secretary of State. [Dame Angela Eagle DBE MP](#) was appointed Minister for Food Security and Rural Affairs.

Legislation and Matters Arising

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

Emerging Legislation

Government Bills

Planning and Infrastructure Bill

- The Committee Stage of the [Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) (commenced 17 July) continued throughout September. Report stage is due to commence 20 October. A range of [proposed amendments to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) were tabled including;
 - Changes to permitted development rights including removal of rights for conversion to dwellinghouses (134, withdrawn) and demolition of buildings where they are designated Assets of Community Value (112, withdrawn).
 - Substituting ‘preserving’ with ‘conserving or enhancing’ in the Planning (listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 (172, withdrawn).
 - Securing commencement of heritage-related sections of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 including the duty of regard to certain heritage assets in exercising planning functions (182, not moved) and statutory Historic Environment Records (183, not moved).
 - Provisions to ensure listed building consent applications remain free of charge (97, not moved).
 - Changing the parliamentary procedure for accepting Listed Building Consent Orders from an affirmative to negative resolution (185C, not moved).
 - Addition of due regard to enforcement (95) and archaeological services in setting planning fees (96, not moved).
- On 19 September, a [factsheet for Compulsory Purchase Reforms in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) was published, outlining proposed measures including increased delegation of decisions to planning inspectors and Local Planning Authorities alongside extension of powers to remove hope value.

English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill

- The [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill](#) had its second reading in the House of Commons on 2 September and entered Committee Stage on 16 September.

Committees

This section provides a summary of updates to Parliamentary Committee Inquiries in the last month. Further information on open inquiries can be found in [Appendix II](#).

Environmental Audit Committee

- The [Environment in Focus Inquiry](#) (opened 5 September) launched a call for topics of inquiry in the areas of climate change, the environment and nature, inviting proposals for future committee inquiry focuses. Evidence can be submitted until 10 October.
- On 9 September [Government published a response to the Environmental Audit Committee Inquiry Report into Governing the Marine Environment](#). Addressing recommendations including revisions of the Marine Policy Statement and a framework for marine spatial planning,

Transport Committee

- On 12 September, [Government published a response to the Transport Committee Inquiry into managing the impact of street works](#), including on surface and public realm quality. This addresses recommendations such as increased warranty periods and fines to ensure the quality of reinstatements.

Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance

- On 17 September, the [Flood Risk and Coastal Change](#) guidance was updated with further information on what constitutes readily available sites and areas of search for the sequential test. It furthermore states that the sequential test need not be required where a site-specific flood risk assessment shows that design, layout and mitigation measures ensure occupiers and users are safe from current and future surface water flood risks.

Consultations

Government Consultations

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

- A [consultation on streamlining infrastructure planning](#) was launched 1 September seeking views on guidance, public sector services and secondary legislation for the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project consenting process. The consultation closes at 11:59 PM on 27 October and includes the following proposals:

- new guidance about consultation and engagement following removal of statutory pre-application consultation requirements through the Planning and Infrastructure Bill
 - guidance and secondary legislation to support notification and publicity
 - guidance to support the acceptance stage for applications
 - the use of Initial Assessments of Principal Issues to focus examinations
 - guidance for public bodies about their role in examinations
 - changes to regulations related to the examination of applications including compulsory acquisition
 - reforms and improvements to pre-application services provided by the Planning Inspectorate and the fast-track process
 - supporting pre-application services through effective resourcing of statutory bodies
 - It also seeks views on the removal of statutory pre-application requirements for onshore wind projects under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 guidance.
- On 19 September, [government published a response following consultation on reforms to compulsory purchase processes and compensation](#). This includes several recommendations to be taken forward in the Planning and Infrastructure Bill including increased delegation of decisions to planning inspectors and Local Planning Authorities, alongside extension of powers to remove hope value.

Historic England Consultation Responses

Historic England [responses to recent consultations](#) are available on our website. In September, this included:

- [Historic England's response to a Department for Energy Security and Net Zero consultation on Land Rights and Consents for Electricity Network Infrastructure](#), which focused specifically on proposals to increase the size of substations that can be built under permitted development rights.

Marine Planning

- The [Marine Management Organisation](#), the authority for marine planning in England, is continuing to engage with stakeholders on replacement to the East Inshore and Offshore Marine Plans. They are holding an [online webinar for stakeholders to hear about the review of the East Marine Development Plan](#) (October 7).

Advice

- All [Historic England planning advice](#) is available on our website, and [Appendix III](#) includes 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 or policy or case law interpretation etc.

Training

- Historic England provide webinars and e-learning courses. Visit [Historic England's training webpages](#) for information and booking, or keep up-to-date on new courses and training news by signing up to receive [Historic England's bi-monthly Training Newsletter](#).

Historic England Planning Research

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

Other

- On 23 September, the Planning inspectorate published [pre-examination checklists](#) to help local planning authorities ensure their development plan is ready for examination.
- On 25 September, the Planning Inspectorate published a [guide to the language used for Crown Development Applications](#), a type of planning permission for developments on Crown land when the development is of national importance.

Calendar

October

7 October – Marine Management Organisation [online webinar exploring review of the East Marine Development Plan](#)

10 October – The Environmental Audit Committee call for topics ([The Environment in Focus Inquiry](#)) closes

27 October – The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government [consultation on Streamlining Infrastructure Planning](#) closes

31 October – The Department for Energy Security and Net Zero consultation on the [future network strategy for carbon capture, usage and storage](#) closes.

November

11 & 13 November - [Historic England Heritage Carbon Literacy Training: Local Authority Heritage](#) – second set of sessions.

December

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

Planning Bulletin Notifications

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Appendix I: Emerging Legislation

Government Bills

Planning and Infrastructure Bill

The [Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) is accompanied by [explanatory notes](#). MHCLG published a [guide to the bill](#) and a series of [factsheets](#) on a range of issues covered in the bill. [Historic England written evidence to the Planning and Infrastructure Bill committee](#) can be found online. The government states that the 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 (LPAs) 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.

English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill

The [English Devolution and Community Empowerment Bill](#) is accompanied by [explanatory notes](#). MHCLG have also published [guidance on the purpose of the bill](#) and [Devolution Framework Explainers](#) that set out the statutory functions of Strategic Authorities. The House of Commons Library has also published a [research briefing](#). The government states that 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 don't have it.

- Local government: ensuring the process for local government reorganisation supports the ambition in the [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 and making reforms to commercial leases.

Holocaust Memorial Bill

- The [Holocaust Memorial Bill](#) was carried over from the previous Parliamentary session. The bill will enable the government to deliver on a long-term commitment to build a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre next to the Houses of Parliament by allocating funding and removing restrictions on development in Victoria Tower Gardens. After a third reading on 17 June, a date is yet to be announced for consideration of Lords amendments.

Appendix II: Committees

Commons Select Committees

The following House of Commons committees examine the spending, policies and administration of government departments.

Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

The [Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee](#) has five inquiries open, including:

- [Delivering 1.5 million new homes: Land Value Capture](#) (opened 22 January) is looking at how land value capture policies - which seek to capture the value uplift on land when it is granted planning permission - can contribute to the delivery of the government's home building plans and help fund affordable housing and public infrastructure.
 - All [written evidence submitted to the Delivering 1.5 million new homes: Land Value Capture Inquiry](#) is available online.
 - On 15 July, Matthew Pennycook MP gave evidence to the Inquiry and a [transcript](#) and [recording of the session](#) is available online.

Culture, Media and Sport Committee

The [Culture, Media and Sport Committee](#) currently has six inquiries open, including:

- The [Protecting Built Heritage Inquiry](#) (opened 16 December 2024) is examining issues with funding and whether current finance models are suitable and accessible. It will also engage with how the government can tackle practical and regulatory challenges, such as the availability of skilled practitioners, the managed decline of assets on publicly owned land, and policy issues arising from net zero targets and planning policy. Alongside this, MPs will examine the importance of built heritage for economic regeneration and to community identity, as well as how those communities can be empowered to manage their local built heritage assets.
 - [Historic England's written evidence to the Protecting Built Heritage Inquiry](#) is available online.

Energy Security and Net Zero Committee

The [Energy Security and Net Zero Committee](#) currently has nine inquiries open, including:

- [National planning for energy infrastructure](#) (opened 25 April) launched in response to the [government's consultation on updates to three National Policy Statements for energy infrastructure \(EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5\)](#).

- All [written evidence submitted to the National planning for energy infrastructure inquiry](#) is available online.
- On 7 July, the Inquiry published its final report [Gridlock or growth? Avoiding energy planning chaos](#). A government response was due 7 September.
- [Retrofitting homes for net zero](#) (opened 19 November 2024). Two stakeholder panels considered the policy changes needed to deliver low carbon heating and energy efficient homes.
 - All [written evidence submitted to the Retrofitting Homes for Net Zero inquiry](#) is available online.
 - On 22 May, the Inquiry published their [Retrofitting homes for net zero report](#). A summary published on the Inquiry’s website notes that poorly designed retrofit schemes, a “skills crisis” and costly assurance failures have significantly set back efforts to decarbonise home heating and bring down energy bills and pushed the UK’s clean, secure energy targets farther off track.
 - The [Government response to the Retrofitting Homes for Net Zero report](#) was published 18 August.

Transport Committee

The [Transport Committee](#) has eight inquiries open, including:

- [Managing the impact of street works](#) (opened 6 December 2024) is looking at the effects of street works on surface quality and maintenance costs, and how well local authorities can manage disruption for road and pavement users.
 - All [written evidence submitted to the Managing the impact of street works Inquiry](#) is available online.
 - The inquiry published the [Managing the impact of street works report](#) on July 3.
 - A [government response to the Managing the impact of street works report](#) was published 12 September.
- [National Policy Statement for Ports](#) (opened 27 June). The Inquiry is looking at the government’s proposal for a revised National Policy Statement for Ports.
 - All [written evidence submitted to the National Policy Statement for Ports Inquiry](#) is available online.

Environmental Audit Committee

The [Environmental Audit Committee](#) has nine inquiries open, including:

- [Environmental sustainability and housing growth](#) (opened 18 November 2024) seeks views on how the government’s proposed reforms to national planning policy and

housebuilding targets might affect environmental protections and current approaches to sustainable development.

- The terms of reference are available at the [Environmental Audit Committee's evidence portal](#).
 - [Historic England's written evidence to the Environmental Sustainability and Housing Growth Inquiry](#) is available online.
- [Governing the marine environment](#) (opened 16 December 2024) is focusing on the UK's environmental obligations under marine treaties and how the UK is delivering on them, as well as the government's strategy for marine planning and protection in its domestic waters.
 - [Historic England's written evidence to the Government the marine environment inquiry](#) is available online.
 - On 5 June, the Committee published their [Governing the marine environment report](#).
 - A [government response to the Governing the marine environment report](#) was published 9 September.
 - [Flood resilience in England](#) (opened 10 December 2024) focuses on how flood resilience can be strengthened in response to increasing risks from extreme weather, rising sea levels, and evolving flood hazards.
 - [Historic England's written evidence to the Flood Resilience in England Inquiry](#) is available online.

Public Accounts Committee

The [Public Accounts Committee](#) has 60 inquiries open, including:

- [HS2: Update following Northern leg cancellation](#) (opened 31 October 2024).
 - On 28 February, the [Public Accounts Committee report for the HS2: Update Following Northern Leg Cancellation Inquiry](#) was published.
 - The [government's response to the HS2: Update Following northern Leg Cancellation Inquiry](#) was published on 16 May.
- [Improving local areas through developer funding](#) (opened 6 May) looks at the use of the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Agreements.
 - [Historic England's written evidence to the Improving Local Areas Through Developer Funding Inquiry](#) is available online.

Lords Select Committees

The following are House of Lords committees that investigate public policy, proposed laws and government activity to consider specific policy areas.

Built Environment Committee

The [Built Environment Committee](#) has two inquiries open:

- The [Grey Belt Inquiry](#) (opened 5 September 2024) is looking at what Grey Belt land is, how it can contribute to housing targets and what sustainable Grey Belt development looks like.
 - [Historic England's written evidence to the Grey Belt Inquiry](#) is available online.
 - The [Committee's Grey Belt Inquiry conclusions were set out in a letter to the Deputy Prime Minister](#) on 5 February from the then Chair, Lord Moylan.
 - On 19 March, [Minister of State, Matthew Pennycook MP's reply to the Inquiry was published](#).
 - On 29 April, the new chair of the Committee, Lord Gascoigne, wrote [a further letter to Mathew Pennycook MP](#) requesting a further response the questions raised by the Inquiry.
- The [New Towns Inquiry](#) (opened 23 May) is a modular inquiry into new towns and expanded settlements. The first module focused on whether their construction is practicable and achievable. Subsequent modules will cover themes including enabling infrastructure, social infrastructure, housing delivery, and creating communities.
 - [Historic England's evidence for the first New Towns Inquiry module](#) is available online.

Industry and Regulators Committee

The [Industry and Regulators Committee](#) has two open inquiries including:

- [The energy grid and grid connections Inquiry](#) (opened 8 January) focuses on the regulatory, planning and funding barriers to delivering energy infrastructure and the ability of the government's proposals to address them.
 - [Historic England's written evidence to the Energy Grid and Grid Connections Inquiry](#) is available online.
 - On 4 June, the Inquiry published their [Power struggle: Delivering Great Britain's electricity grid infrastructure report](#).
 - The [government response to the Power Struggle: Delivering Great Britain's electricity grid infrastructure report](#) was published on 5 August.

Appendix III: Historic England Planning Advice

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 \(July 2024\)](#)