Historic England

Planning Bulletin September 2026

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

In this edition you will find:

- NPPF, including the publication of individual chapters of the NPPF
- Review of local government reorganisation
- New Building Management Portal for the Church of England comes into force
- Planning Inspectorate: New Chief Operating Officer announced
- Chief Planner's letter: Published in August
- Guidance, including Planning Inspectorate updated guidance on the use of AI in casework evidence and new guidance from MHCLG on its Pride in Place programme
- Permitted Development Rights (PDRs): New PDRs introduced for EV charging
- Environmental Delivery Plans (EDPs), including Nature Restoration Levy Regulations 2026 coming into force and Natural England's first draft EDP published for consultation
- MHCLG updated planning policy for traveller sites released
- Historic England Webinars and eLearning, including a webinar on NSIPs and the launch of a new eLearning course on solar photovoltaics and heritage.
- Historic England consultation responses, including on the draft Heathrow expansion National Policy Statement and proposed PDRs for electricity network ground investigations

Other Information

- Useful links, links to Historic England resources.
- Calendar, key upcoming dates.
- Appendix I, a list of advice notes on the planning system published by Historic England.

Abbreviations

- BNG: Biodiversity Net Gain
- DEFRA: Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
- DESNZ: Department for Energy Security & Net Zero
- MHCLG: Ministry of Housing. Communities & Local Government
- NPPF: National Planning Policy Framework
- NSIPs: Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects

National Planning Policy Framework - Chapters

In September 2026, the Government published the new NPPF as individual chapters.

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: Plan-making policies (PM1-17)
- Chapter 3: Decision-making policies (DM1-10)
- Chapter 4: Achieving sustainable development (S1-6)
- Chapter 5: Meeting the challenge of climate change (CC1-3)
- Chapter 6: Delivering a sufficient supply of homes (HO1-13)
- Chapter 7: Building a strong, effective economy (E1-4)
- Chapter 8: Ensuring the vitality of town centres (TC1-4)
- Chapter 9: Supporting high quality communications (CO1-2)
- Chapter 10: Securing clean energy and water (W1-4)
- Chapter 11: Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals (M1-6)
- Chapter 12: Making effective use of land (L1-3)
- Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt land (GB1-8)
- Chapter 14: Achieving well-designed places (DP1-4)
- Chapter 15: Promoting sustainable transport (TR1-8)
- Chapter 16: Promoting healthy communities (HC1-8)

- Chapter 17: Pollution, public protection and security (P1-6)
- Chapter 18: Managing flood risk and coastal change (F1-9)
- Chapter 19: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment (N1-6)
- Chapter 20: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment (HE1-10)
- Annex A: Implementation
- Annex B: Glossary
- Annex C: Information requirements
- Annex D: Housing calculations and supply
- Annex E: Green Belt assessments
- Annex F: Managing flood risk and coastal change

Local Government Reorganisation

On 7 September, the Government announced a review of plans to streamline local government to ensure the process is robust and aligns with the new government's plans to rewire the state.

Church of England's new Building Management Portal

The Church of England's Online Faculty System was replaced by the new Buildings Management Portal launched on the 6th October. For organisations involved in consultations on church buildings proposals – including local planning authorities, national amenity societies, statutory consultees, heritage bodies, and other interested organisations – the Building Management Portal will provide a more structured and auditable way of receiving, reviewing, and responding to consultations.

As dioceses adopt the system, consultees may be invited to register for access to the Building Management Portal so that consultation responses can be submitted and managed through the same system used to administer applications. Organisations already using the system through one diocese will be able to extend their existing access to others rather than create new accounts.

Full information, including FAQs on the Church of England website.

Planning Inspectorate new Chief Operating Officer

The Planning Inspectorate has announced the permanent appointment of Tom Warth as its Chief Operating Officer (COO).

Chief Planner's letter

- Chief Planner's Letter: The most recent issue of the regular Chief Planner's letter was released 25 August and highlights two key consultations:
  - Consultation on planning powers for mayors: includes proposals to implement new mayoral planning powers outside London, including powers relating to strategically important planning applications, Mayoral Development Orders, Mayoral Community Infrastructure Levy and changes to Local Development Orders.
  - Consultation on standard planning agreements for medium-sized sites: including proposals for standard section 106 agreements and affordable housing schedules intended to simplify negotiations, reduce delays and provide greater consistency and certainty for medium-sized housing developments.

Advice and Guidance

- The Planning Inspectorate has updated its guidance on the use of AI in casework evidence, including when and how to declare responsible AI use.
- MHCLG has published its Pride in Place Programme prospectus and guidance.

Permitted Development Rights (PDRs)

New PDRs have been introduced for EV charging: *The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) (No. 2) Order 2026* introduces new permitted development rights to support the rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure, including increased support for households without off-street parking.

The changes come into force on 21 October 2026.

In parallel the Government has published its response to the consultation.

Environmental Delivery Plans (EDPs)

- Natural England has published its first draft EDP for consultation, covering nutrient pollution affecting the Norfolk Broads Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (Yare and Bure), Broadland Ramsar and River Wensum SAC in Norfolk. The consultation closes on 27 October.
- The Nature Restoration Levy Regulations 2026 came into force 11 September 2026, which establish the detailed framework for calculating, collecting and administering the Nature Restoration Levy, which will fund measures identified in EDPs.
- More information on using nature restoration levies can be found on the gov.uk website, plus guidance on understanding the Nature Restoration Fund.

MHCLG Updated Planning Policy

Traveller site policy incorporated into the NPPF: Following revisions to the NPPF, the standalone *Planning Policy for Traveller Sites* has been replaced, with national policy on traveller sites now set out within the NPPF and its implementation provisions. Full information can be found in the updated policy.

Historic England Webinars & eLearning

- Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) - Thursday, 22 October, 14:00-15:00

  This webinar will give you the opportunity to find out what Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) and Development Consent Orders (DCOs) are and how we engage with them in Historic England. The webinar will include a summary of the process and some examples of NSIPs that Historic England has recently been involved with. There will also be time for a Q&A at the end of the session.

  Sign up: https://historicengland.adobeconnect.com/e6n6fpxuuof8/event/event_info.html

  See our full training offer on our website and sign up to the bi-monthly Training & Skills newsletter for our latest news direct to your inbox.

- Solar photovoltaics and heritage eLearning launch

  Historic England has launched a new eLearning course that explores the decision-making process for incorporating solar technology into listed buildings, emphasising solutions that respect heritage and energy efficiency goals. You'll learn about photovoltaic technology and installation, the relevant planning policy, and the benefits and considerations of solar panels and tiles.

  Create your free account on the Historic England Learning Platform to enrol on the course https://training.historicengland.org.uk/course/view.php?id=88

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Historic England Consultation Responses

- Historic England responses to governmental consultations can be found online. Responses in September include:
    - Heathrow Expansion National Policy Statement
    - Permitted development rights for electricity network ground investigations
    - Call for evidence: National Lottery Good Causes: Fund What Matters to You

Useful Links

- Historic England Planning Advice: the list of Historic England published planning advice can be found online and is summarised in Appendix I.
- Planning research: Historic England commissions and undertakes research to understand how the planning system works in practice. A list of published Historic England planning research can be found online.
- Heritage Counts: Historic England maintains Heritage Counts, a compendium of evidence and insights to support making the case for heritage.

Calendar

October

5 October – consultation on planning powers for Mayors in England

20 October – consultation on standard planning agreements for medium-sized sites

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.

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

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Appendix I: Advice Notes on the planning system published by Historic England

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, 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 (December 2025)
- 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 (December 2025)
- HEAN 6: Drawing up a Local Listed Building Consent Order (November 2015)
- HEAN 7: Local Heritage Listing (third edition) (May 2026)
- 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 (June 2026)
- HEAN 16: Listed Building Consent (June 2021)
- HEAN 17: Planning and Archaeology (November 2022)
- HEAN 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency (February 2026)