



Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan Final Draft Local Plan Consultation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



1. What is a Local Plan?

A Local Plan sets the long-term vision, strategic objectives, and development strategy for the Borough. It also sets the context for making decisions, allocates land for development (residential, employment, and other uses) and includes policies for determining planning applications. It identifies where and how many new homes should be built; locations where businesses may need more land; areas of regeneration and protection. The Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Local Plan covers a period up to 2040.

2. Why produce a Local Plan?

Local Councils are required to produce a Local Plan. The Local Plan sets a framework which identifies the type of development the Council will support, where and when. It provides certainty for residents, communities, developers and the Council and can look to provide for a minimum 5-year supply of housing through the Local Plan. Through the process of preparing a Local Plan, residents and stakeholders can have their say on future development.

3. How has the Local Plan been developed?

The Local Plan has been developed through a number of stages, involving extensive research, analysis and community engagement, this has included: -

- Issues and Strategic Options (Regulation 18, November 2021 – January 2022): we consulted on the key issues facing the borough and explored strategic options for growth and development.
- First Draft Local Plan (Regulation 18, June - August 2023): we consulted on a draft version of the Local Plan. This provided the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to give their views on the content of the Plan, such as draft policies and site allocations
- Final Draft Local Plan (Regulation 19, August – October 2024): we are now consulting on the Final Draft of the Local Plan, focusing on its legal compliance and soundness.

4. Why do we need new housing?

The National Planning Policy Framework has the objective to significantly boost the supply of homes. The minimum housing number proposed in the Final Draft Local Plan has been calculated using the standard method in line with current national planning guidance. It is considered that there are no exceptional circumstances in Newcastle-under-Lyme to justify an alternative approach to calculating housing need, at this time, which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals in the Borough.

5. How does the Council choose which sites should be built on?

The Council has applied a site selection methodology to meet the development requirements of the Final Draft Local Plan. This has focused on sites in the urban area in the first instance. More information about the shortlisted sites is available in the Council's Site Selection Report, published alongside the Final Draft Local Plan.



6. How will the Council plan for new infrastructure?

The Final Draft Local Plan is accompanied by an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which identifies key infrastructure requirements which need to be delivered to support new development proposed in the Local Plan. This is available on the Council's website.

7. How can the Local Plan help protect the environment?

The Final Draft Local Plan provides specific protection for land that is designated for its environmental importance. Additionally, as part of the process of preparing the Local Plan, the council has produced a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment, which examine the impact of development on the environment.

8. What stage of consultation are we at?

The process for preparing a Local Plan is set out in law. Before a Local Plan can be adopted, it must be subject to a number of consultations. This stage, at regulation 19, is the final stage of consultation before the Local Plan is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination. This consultation is your opportunity to provide feedback on the 'soundness' of the Plan alongside legal and procedural requirements.

9. What does the consultation form mean by 'Legal Requirements'?

There are various legal requirements that the council must comply with when preparing a Local Plan. These include:

- Whether the process of community involvement is in general accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) found here:
- Whether the Plan complies with other relevant requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) 2012 Act.
- Whether the plan meets other legislative requirements such as the conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (to which the Habitats Regulations Assessment relates)

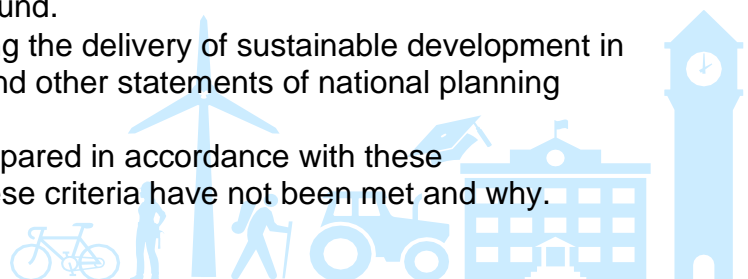
These are just examples, if you do not consider the plan has met the legal requirements, you will need to identify through representations, the relevant legislation and where you consider the requirements have not been met.

10. What does the consultation form mean by 'Soundness'?

Local Plans must be prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), paragraph 35 of the NPPF states that a Plan is 'sound' if it meets the following tests.

- **Positively prepared** – That the Plan provides a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with the other authorities, so that the unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development.
- **Justified** – That the Plan contains an appropriate strategy, taking into account reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence.
- **Effective** – Deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground.
- **Consistent with National Policy** – Enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF and other statements of national planning policy where relevant.

If you do not consider the Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with these requirements, you will need to identify which of these criteria have not been met and why.



11. Can my representation be rejected?

It is very rare that comments are rejected, however the Council **cannot** accept representations which:

- Except for your own and/ or client's details (Part A), divulge any personal information such as someone's home address, email or phone number.
- Include any images of people's faces or of anything that might allow people to be identified (such as car registrations, house numbers on front doors etc)
- Use expletive, discriminatory or offensive language.
- Make any statements that could be considered defamatory (attack or question an individual's personal reputation).
- Make any statements that could be considered libellous (make comments about an individual or organisation that can be challenged as untruthful).

12. What happens to my representation in the Final Draft Local Plan?

All representations received will be reviewed to ensure they have been made in the proper way outlined in this note. These representations will be published online in line with the Council's Privacy Notice (see below). The responses received in the regulation 19 consultation will be considered by Local Plan Inspectors and have equal weighting to those made in person at examination.

13. Appearing at Examination

The representations form will ask you whether you would like to attend the future examination of the Local Plan, which will be held by an independent Local Plan inspector. To assist the Planning Inspector in organising the examination we ask that you briefly set out your reasons for wishing to attend.

There is no requirement for you to attend the examination if you do not wish to. The Planning Inspectorate makes clear that all representations will have equal weight at examination.

14. How to submit a representation

You can send representations to us in the following ways from the 12 August and representations must be received by the Borough Council by the 7th October 2024:

By using our consultation portal: The consultation portal can be accessed on the Council's website using the following link: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/localplan>

By post to: Planning Policy, Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council, Floor 2, Castle House, Barracks Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Staffordshire, ST5 1BL

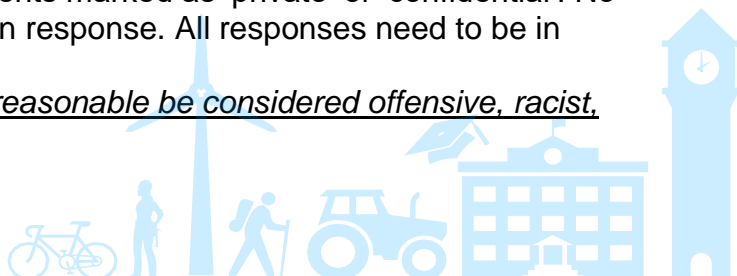
By e-mail to: planningpolicy@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

15. Will my comments be made public?

Any comments will be made public to read online as part of the Local Plan process. Comments will be processed in line with the Council's Planning Policy Privacy Notice -

<https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/privacy-notices/planning-policy-privacy-notice> Please note we cannot accept anonymous comments or comments marked as 'private' or 'confidential'. No verbal comments can be recorded as a consultation response. All responses need to be in writing.

The Council will not accept comments which may reasonable be considered offensive, racist, discriminatory or threatening.



16. Will there be opportunities to ask questions?

We are holding a number of consultation 'drop in' events during the consultation. These events are opportunities to ask questions to officers about where further information can be obtained about the consultation and how to submit written representations. No appointment is necessary to attend the consultation events across the two hour timeslots. The events are expected to be well attended and so if you need to contact an officer separately, you can also use the contact details on our website. The consultation events are not a formal presentation of proposals. They are 'drop in' events to ask questions of officers present. The most up to date list of events can be found on the Council's website: - <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/localplan>

17. What happens next?

Once the consultation period has ended, and all representations have been processed, the Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Final Draft Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, together with all regulation 19 representations and evidence base documents.

At this point, a Local Plan inspector will be appointed on behalf of the government, who will undertake an independent examination of the plan and make recommendations on what happens next with the Local Plan.

Further information about this will be made available on the Council's website in due course.

18. Where can I find more information

Information on the Final Draft Local Plan can be found on the Council's website - <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/localplan>. You can also contact the planning policy team at 01782 742 467 or via e-mail at planningpolicy@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

