

Kirklees Local Plan Update

Shaping a new Local Plan

Early Engagement

Information about the early engagement on the Local Plan and why it is being updated

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Kirklees Local Plan Update

We are undertaking early engagement as part of the Kirklees Local Plan update.

This document sets out the following information:

- The purpose of a Local Plan.
- Why the Kirklees Local Plan is being updated.
- The context for developing a new Local Plan and some of the key issues it has to include.

We would like you to get involved in shaping the Local Plan by sharing your views on the key challenges and opportunities for Kirklees and how the Local Plan can help to address these. You can do this by completing our Kirklees Local Plan Early Engagement Survey <https://online1.snapsurveys.com/localplan>. It is aimed at involving everyone with an interest in the planning of Kirklees to get involved in shaping the Local Plan content at the earliest opportunity.

We hope that this document will provide the context for the survey by providing additional information. The closing date for comments on the survey is 28th February 2025.

This is the first stage of early engagement, and a second stage is planned for April/May 2025 where we will feedback on what you said, and outline our Local Plan vision, strategy and objectives and the scale and distribution of growth for jobs and homes.

The purpose of the Local Plan

The purpose of a Local Plan is to set out:

- A vision and strategic objectives for development within Kirklees (particularly for new housing and employment).
- How and where different levels of development will be located (site allocations).
- A suite of planning policies to guide decisions on planning applications.
- Designations showing land to be protected/safeguarded (such as local green spaces, priority employment areas).
- Infrastructure provision to support the delivery of development such as a new school, road improvements, open space provision.
- A monitoring framework to review the plan's success.

The Kirklees Local Plan will set the planning policy framework for the district, guiding future growth and change over the period 2024-2043.

Why are we preparing an update of the Kirklees Local Plan

Kirklees has an existing Local Plan which was adopted in February 2019, but it is a legal requirement to review a Local Plan within 5 years from the date of adoption. For Kirklees, this process was required to be completed by February 2024. The Local Plan was reviewed over Summer 2023 and the outcomes of the review are set out in the Cabinet report 17th October 2023.

A summary of the reasons for updating the Kirklees Local Plan include:

- ✓ To ensure that our Local Plan is up to date as it forms the main tool for assessing planning applications.
- ✓ To develop more ambitious climate change policies to support the council's Climate Change Action Plan ambition of being net zero and climate ready by 2038.
- ✓ To deliver a vision for Kirklees up to 2043.
- ✓ To set out how and where development will be located together with associated infrastructure. **We must set out a strategy to deliver housing and employment requirements** to provide for the needs of our residents and businesses. This includes identifying a five-year supply of specific deliverable housing sites to meet the district's housing needs and land for employment to create job opportunities.
- ✓ To produce locally distinctive planning policies which support sustainable communities and places.
- ✓ **The plan must be in keeping with national planning policy.** This is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The government consulted on proposed planning reforms and changes to national planning policy from July – September 2024. The final outcomes are expected December 2024. More information on planning reforms can be found on the government's website.

- Introduction of a new, mandatory standard method for calculating local housing requirements.
- Take a brownfield first approach to the development of land and then release low quality grey belt land. This does not mean brownfield only; we will need to consider different locations for providing new homes.
- Changes to allow councils to prioritise the types of affordable homes their communities need on all housing development and that the planning system supports a more diverse housebuilding sector.
- Support economic growth in key sectors, aligned with the government's industrial strategy and future local growth plans, including laboratories, gigafactories, datacentres, digital economies and freight and logistics.
- Deliver community needs to support society and the creation of healthy places; and
- Support clean energy and the environment, including support for onshore wind and renewables.

Why are we preparing an update of the Kirklees Local Plan

The Kirklees Council Plan 2024-2025 sets out a vision for Kirklees:

“For Kirklees to be a district which combines a strong, sustainable economy with a great quality of life – leading to thriving communities, growing businesses, high prosperity and low inequality where people enjoy better health throughout their lives”.

The Kirklees Council Plan is supported by four key partnership strategies:



Kirklees Health and Wellbeing Strategy sets out our priorities for improving health and wellbeing and what we will do as partners to achieve those improvements. Through the strategy, partners are prioritising good mental wellbeing, connected care and support, and healthy places.

Inclusive Communities Framework

The Inclusive Communities Framework (ICF) is a partnership commitment to work better with communities on local issues. Through the ICF, partners are committing to take action showing our belief that communities have solutions to problems, promoting a good sense of belonging in communities, and caring about what communities care about.

Inclusive Economy Strategy

The Inclusive Economy Strategy will outline how the council and key partners across the district are working to build a more inclusive and sustainable economy.

Environment Strategy

The Environment Strategy: Everyday Life sets out our borough's commitment and ambitious vision for greater action on environmental issues, whilst also addressing the ecological and climate emergencies.

This early engagement will build on the partnership working and consultation that has already informed our Partnership strategies. Your views will help us consider:

- How our wider ambitions to support health and wellbeing can be linked to how we plan development to support and create healthy places.
- How our wider ambitions to have a resilient, sustainable and inclusive economy can be linked to how we plan development.
- How we can ensure that the Local Plan effectively delivers housing that meets needs of different groups in our communities.
- How we can ensure that the Local Plan supports a flourishing and sustainable Kirklees where consideration of the natural environment fosters healthy, happy and better-connected communities.
- How the district can grow sustainably to address climate and ecological emergencies and address the need for additional development, whilst protecting and enhancing the things we value in Kirklees.

The Local Plan must be justified and effective

For us to prepare locally specific policies to consider planning decisions in Kirklees, we must have up to date and robust evidence to support our planning policies.

To do this, we have been working across the council and with partners to identify issues and evidence to support them. We have also commissioned evidence on the following:

- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (including 10,000 household surveys, stakeholder survey and data collection to inform future housing needs).
- Travellers Needs Assessment.
- Employment Land Study to update evidence on employment needs, including the number of jobs and the land requirement.
- Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment. This is a statutory requirement and looks at the impact of the Local Plan when assessed against environmental, social, economic and ecological criteria.
- Retail Capacity and Leisure Study.
- Waste Needs Assessment.
- Minerals Evidence Base, including supply/demand assessments.
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

- Consideration of infrastructure to support the spatial strategy including transport modelling, viability evidence.
- Green Belt Parcel Analysis – this will form an update to the previous Green Belt Review work.
- Open Space Study.
- Air Quality Assessment.
- Playing Pitch Strategy.
- Landscape character and sensitivities.

How do we identify land for development or protection?

Our evidence will help to identify what land we need, where and for what purposes. We also have an ongoing Call for Sites process to inform the development of the Kirklees Local Plan. This is an opportunity for residents, community groups, business operators, landowners and developers to suggest sites to be considered as part of the preparation of the updated Local Plan. We want to look at as many options as possible and choose the most suitable sites for where new development goes.

Types of sites we are looking to include:

- Housing (this includes sites for market led housing, 100% affordable housing, self-build and custom housing and sites that can accommodate specialist accommodation for a group of people with specific needs, such as older person's housing and student housing).
- Gypsy and traveller sites.
- Travelling show people sites.
- Employment (offices, research and development, industrial processes, general industry and storage and distribution).
- Commercial uses (including, retail, leisure, hotel, and mixed commercial uses).
- Mixed use (for example a mix of housing and employment uses).
- Safeguarded land (land to be safeguarded for potential future development).
- Community uses.
- Minerals for example, extraction or processing.
- Waste for example recycling or processing.
- New public green space.
- Renewable energy and energy storage.
- Nature recovery and biodiversity net gain.

You can find more information on this process and how to submit a site at: [Call for sites | Kirklees Council](#) Please note that sites for development must have a willing landowner.

We are especially interested to hear about potential opportunities for the development, re-use or redevelopment of land, sites and buildings within towns and villages or on previously developed land /brownfield land.

Shaping the Local Plan vision

At the heart of National Planning Policy is a requirement to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This includes providing land for new homes and employment and supporting infrastructure. To do this, plan makers must consider three overarching objectives:

a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity.

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet current and future needs; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that support health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

At a local level, the council has started a number of conversations about place (this could be your street, neighbourhood or town) using a tool called the “[Place Standard](#)”. The Place Standard approach asks a series of questions based around 14 key themes. A full list of the Places that have participated and results can be found at: [Our places – How good is our place?](#) We will use these results as part of our Local Plan evidence.

When we plan for new housing and jobs, we need to think about economic, social and environmental outcomes in a way that takes account of Kirklees local circumstances including its character, local needs and builds on the strengths and opportunities of the district. We are seeking your views on the priorities for Kirklees and what you see as special to your area. This information will help us to shape a vision which is locally distinctive to Kirklees.

Delivering a sufficient supply of housing and the delivery of affordable and well-designed homes and places

The Local Plan is required to assess local housing need when preparing a plan and identify sites in their local plan that can deliver at least five years’ worth of housing. The government is committed to the delivery of 1.5 million new homes. As part of the proposed new planning reforms, the government is proposing a new standard method for assessing housing need

which would be mandatory. If this is introduced into national planning policy, this would increase our annual housing requirement from 1,730 to 2,043 dwellings per annum.

The challenge for us is how to deliver the required number of new homes, and plan for jobs in a sustainable way whilst ensuring that we protect and enhance the qualities which contribute to the character of our districts and places.

Making sure that the homes we provide meet local housing needs is very important. We are undertaking a Strategic Housing Market Assessment to help us with this task. This will look at key things impacting on the housing market, including the cost of renting and buying, affordability and the patterns of people looking to move. It will also consider the current housing available across Kirklees – its size, type, condition, and whether it's available to rent or buy. Information will be collected by surveying a large sample of households across Kirklees to find out more about their local housing needs and issues, talking to a range of stakeholders involved in housing and data collection.

Design

National planning policy requires developments to be visually attractive, sympathetic to local character and history, and establish a strong sense of place. Planning policies are also required to ensure sites are optimised to accommodate an appropriate amount and mix of development and create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible. We are interested in what you consider is a well-designed building or development.

Infrastructure

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development, and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner. Infrastructure may include contributions towards new educational facilities, improved opportunities for walking and cycling, road improvements, new open space provision etc.

Building a Strong, Competitive Economy

The government is proposing national planning reforms aimed at ensuring the planning system meets the needs of a modern and changing economy. They wish to make it easier to build laboratories, gigafactories, data centres and digital infrastructure, and the facilities needed to support the wider supply chain.

The role of the Local Plan is to identify suitable sites (of the right size in the right location), for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period.

The Local Plan should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors, including data-driven, creative or high technology industries, the storage and distribution sectors, supply chains, transport innovation and decarbonisation and additional

commercial sites should be considered positively when they are of local, regional or national importance, to further support economic growth and resilience.

Understanding our own employment requirements is essential to inform a new Local Plan.

The council is currently developing its Inclusive Economy Strategy which will form one of the four partnership strategies supporting the Council Plan. The new strategy will focus on aspirations to have a resilient, sustainable and inclusive economy.

We know that Kirklees is already home to many global leaders in manufacturing and textiles, it has a thriving university and a wealth of small and medium enterprises providing business and employment opportunities in our area.

We are seeing investment in the area through the Trans Pennine Route Upgrade, Penistone Line, the new Health Innovation Campus and the Station to Stadium Enterprise Corridor in Huddersfield, the Dewsbury Long Term Plan and investment in town and local centres through the council's town centre programmes.

Areas of existing employment land (Priority Employment Areas) are safeguarded for continued employment use and expansion.

The need to raise skill levels in the area is seen as opportunity to support higher paid jobs and bring new employment to the area.

To support the Inclusive Economy Strategy and to underpin the Local Plan update, an Employment Land Study is being produced to provide an understanding of the key strengths, weaknesses and growth opportunities in Kirklees, assess current employment land take up and assess future employment need.

Delivering community needs and promoting healthy and safe communities

Delivering community needs

National planning policy requires Local Plans to provide for the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs looking at the provision of services and guarding against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services.

Healthy Places

Planning policies should also aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places and buildings which promote social interaction, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy

lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs. For example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Our current Local Plan contains a range of policies to achieve these aims. However, to further increase the health impacts of planning policies, we are considering whether health can form a golden thread throughout the plan and in all policy considerations.

Promoting walking, cycling and access to public transport

The government requires the Local Plan to promote sustainable transport. This means focussing significant new development in areas which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. This can help to reduce emissions and improve air quality and public health. It also means looking at opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport. It does not preclude measures to support car use, and the Local Plan should identify where transport infrastructure is required to accommodate the scale of growth.

The government's planning reforms are considering a vision-led approach to transport planning where joint working is undertaken with the council, residents, and developers to set a vision for how we want places to be and designing the transport and behavioural interventions to help achieve this vision. This could support sustainable travel as well as promoting healthy lifestyles through walking and cycling. The council's emerging Transport Strategy will help shape the focus for transport priorities for the district.

The reforms consider that relying solely on advances in vehicle technology and increased uptake of electric vehicles will not be enough to address our climate change ambitions and that we need to make positive and sustainable changes to our travel choices, while understanding that different people and businesses have different needs and requirements.

Supporting climate change, green energy and the protection of the natural and historic environment

The council has committed to reducing carbon emissions to ensure residents have a good quality of life and that wildlife can thrive. Future policies on tackling climate change could require developments to be carbon neutral, comply with energy efficient standards and contribute to mitigating and adapting to climate change.

The council's Climate Change Action Plan identifies actions across a range of topic areas including buildings and transport that potentially could inform new Local Plan policies. One of the reasons for updating the current Local Plan was to strive for more ambitious climate change focussed policies.

The government's planning reforms set out a framework to support clean energy and the environment. This framework includes:

- Support for renewable deployment – proposals to direct decision makers to give significant weight to the benefits associated with renewable and low carbon energy generation, and proposals contribution to meeting a net zero future.
- A stronger expectation that authorities proactively identify sites for renewable and low carbon development, when producing plans, where it is likely that in allocating a site, it would help secure development.
- That renewables will need to be considered alongside other policy requirements and environmental designations.
- The availability of agricultural land for food production – food security and safeguarding the best and most versatile agricultural land (grades 1 – 3a) is considered an important consideration.

Further information:

For further information please contact: local.development@kirklees.gov.uk