

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Local Plan?

The Cannock Chase Local Plan is a document which sets out a development plan for the District over a period of at least 15 years upon adoption. All local planning authorities (LPAs) are required by the government to write a Local Plan. The plan sets out the development needs of the District for housing, employment and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation, and contains sites to meet these needs. The plan contains local planning policies which will be used in the assessment of planning applications.

What does Pre-Submission and Reg. 19 mean?

Local Plans are developed over a number of years and therefore are commonly referred to by a set of terms which relate to the stage of development they have reached. In this case the Local Plan has reached the point at which the Council consider the plan to be complete and so it may also be referred to as the 'final draft' or the 'publication' version.

Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 is a legal requirement for local authorities to consult on their local plan before submitting it to the Secretary of State, hence the term 'pre-submission'. The consultation must include the proposed submission documents and a statement of the representations procedure must be available to the public.



What is supporting evidence and how can I view it?

The Local Plan strategy and policies must be informed by evidence. Most of the evidence used to support the Local Plan has been commissioned by the Council over the past 6 years and produced by companies which specialise in relevant topics. All the evidence is available online using the following link: <https://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/residents/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-base>

Have you consulted on the Local Plan before?

Yes. The Council has held three separate consultations on the Local Plan at earlier stages of development, the last being held at Preferred Options stage in 2021.

Issues and Scope - 2nd July - 28th August 2018

Issues and Options - 13th May - 8th July 2019

Preferred Options - 19th March - 30th April 2021

If I made a comment at an earlier stage, do I need to comment again?

This depends on whether you consider your previous comment to have been resolved through consideration of the content of the Local Plan at this stage. Comments made at earlier stages have helped to develop this final draft of the local plan.

All comments made at this consultation will be provided to an Independent Inspector, appointed by the Planning Inspectorate to consider whether the local plan is sound and legally compliant. Comments from earlier stages are not likely to be considered and therefore you must make a representation at this stage if you want your views to be considered.

How will my comments be taken into consideration?

The Council will review all comments made and develop a summary of comments and the main issues raised, but will not respond individually to comments. Unlike earlier stages of consultation, the Council cannot make amendments to the Local Plan at this stage.

All representations received within the 6-week consultation period will be submitted to the Secretary of State, who will appoint an Inspector to carry out an independent examination of The Plan and the submission documents.

The Inspector may propose modifications to the Local Plan during the examination. If the plan is subject to any amendments during the Examination, the plan will be subject to an additional 6-week consultation at a later stage.

How long does the plan last?

The plan covers the years 2018-2040 referred to as the plan period. It may be necessary to review the plan earlier than 2040. In accordance with national policy guidance, policies in local plans and spatial development strategies should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every five years, and should then be updated as necessary.

Why do we need more development?

The general content of a Local Plan is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework National Planning Policy Framework - 3. Plan-making - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk). The Council must produce a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs over a minimum 15-year period. Having an up-to-date local plan in place which meets future development

needs, helps the Council to resist inappropriate development applications.

How do I see what sites are proposed for development?

All proposed sites for development are shown at the end of the Local Plan in the site allocations section. There are individual boundary maps for each site proposed for development in the Local Plan. A Policies Map is also available and can be viewed on the website and at the locations listed above. The Policies Map is a District wide map which helps for viewing the overall distribution of development but is not as detailed as the individual maps in the local plan.

I submitted land for development but it's not in the plan, where can I see how it was assessed?

The Council received many more site submissions than was necessary to meet the development needs of the District. Therefore, not all sites were selected for allocation in the Local Plan. The Council has published a number of documents on the evidence pages of the website which show how sites were considered. Please check the Site Selection Methodology and accompanying appendices for detailed assessment. Sites may also have been assessed in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment or Economic Land Availability Assessment, the Sustainability Appraisal or in specific evidence for certain types of sites such as Green Belt Assessments.

How do we consider Infrastructure and local services?

The NPPF requires developments to be sustainable and accessible. The Council works proactively with the organisations responsible for the delivery of local services and infrastructure to understand the local need created by developments. Contributions from new development will be sought to mitigate the impact of the development on infrastructure and local services. It should be noted that the Planning system can only provide for a need created by new development and cannot resolve existing issues unrelated to the development.

How does the Local Plan fit with Neighbourhood Plans?

The Local Plan is produced by Cannock Chase District Council, whereas Neighbourhood Plans are optional and usually produced by Parish or Town Councils (unless the area is unparished, where a Neighbourhood Forum must be established). There are only two 'made' (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans in the District for Cannock Wood and for Hednesford, although there are many in development. The two made Neighbourhood Plans are part of the Cannock Chase Development Plan and have equal status to the 2014 Local Plan in the assessment of planning applications.

What are the next steps?

There is a timetable for the Local Plan on the website, called the Local Development Scheme which sets out the next stages and predicted timescales. It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be formally submitted in Summer 2024, when it will then be for the Planning Inspectorate to appoint an independent inspector to examine the plan. The Council does not have control of the Examination timetable but it is hoped it would take place in Winter 2024/early 2025.

The examination comprises a set of public hearings where the inspector will ask questions of the Council and other parties to address identified issues with the Local Plan. If modifications to the plan are suggested by the Inspector to make the plan sound, the Council is required to consult on these amendments for a period of 6 weeks. Following the examination, the inspector will write a report which will either recommend adoption of the Plan by the Council or may assess the plan to be unsound. If the plan is found 'sound' then it is able to be adopted by the Council around Spring/Summer 2025.

How can I be kept informed?

You can request to be added to the planning policy consultation database to receive notifications and keep you up to date with progress on the local plan and other planning policy consultations.

You can update your preferences by emailing planningpolicy@cannockchasedc.gov.uk or writing to Planning Policy, Cannock Chase Council, Civic Centre, PO Box 28, Beecroft Road, Cannock WS11 1BG.

For further information see:

www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/PrivacyNotice

Alternatively please check the Planning Policy news pages on the Council's website for updates

[Planning Policy News | Cannock Chase District Council \(cannockchasedc.gov.uk\)](http://www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/Planning-Policy-News-Cannock-Chase-District-Council)

Once the Local Plan is submitted, an examination webpage will be created and a Programme Officer appointed to manage the day to day administration of the examination and ensure information is kept up to date.

What are the tests of soundness and legal compliance?

Local plans and spatial development strategies are examined to assess whether they have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether they are sound. These requirements are set out in the National Planning Policy Framework [National Planning Policy Framework \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/431424/NPPF_2019.pdf) and in legislation.

Plans are 'sound' if they are:

- a) **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs¹⁹; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- b) **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- c) **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; and
- d) **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in this Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

The Council has produced guidance to help understand how these terms apply when making representations and some general advice is provided below:

If you wish to make a representation seeking a modification to the plan or part of the plan you should set out clearly in what way you consider the plan or part of the plan is legally non-compliant or unsound, having regard as appropriate to the soundness criteria in Paragraph 6 above. Your representation should be supported by evidence wherever possible. It will be helpful if you also say precisely how you think the plan should be modified.

You should provide succinctly all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support your representation and your suggested modification. You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions. Any further submissions after the plan has been submitted for examination may only be made if invited by the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he or she identifies.

Where groups or individuals share a common view on the plan, it would be very helpful if they would make a single representation which represents that view, rather a large number of separate representations repeating the same points. In such cases the group should indicate how many people it is representing and how the representation has been authorised.

Please consider carefully how you would like your representation to be dealt with in the examination: whether you are content to rely on your written representation, or whether you wish to take part in hearing session(s). Only representors who are seeking a change to the plan have a right to be heard at the hearing session(s), if they so request. In considering this, please note that written and oral representations carry the same weight and will be given equal consideration in the examination process.

Please note, when submitting comments we are unable to treat your views confidentially although only your name, and (if applicable) the person or organisation you represent will be publicly attributable - see the Planning Policy Privacy Notice at www.cannockchasedc.gov.uk/PrivacyNotice or contact us if you need further information.