

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW: PREFERRED APPROACH

1. Purpose

To approve documents and processes with regard to the *Local Plan Review Preferred Approach*.

2. Context

- 2.1 The Local Plan for the Peak District National Park (PDNP) (Core Strategy, 2011 and the Development Management Policies Document, 2019) is currently being reviewed with the intention that all planning policies will be contained in one document. The revised Local Plan will contain planning policies for the PDNP to 2045.
- 2.2 The *Local Plan Preferred Approach* ('Preferred Approach') is the next step in the review process. The document (available to view as a Background Paper) sets out draft planning policies or policy directions for statutory (Regulation 18) public consultation. Draft policies clearly set out detailed requirements. Policy directions indicate aspiration and content not detailed requirements.
- 2.3 It follows the first statutory Local Plan consultation (on *Issues and Options*) that took place in Autumn 2024 and takes into account responses and other evidence commissioned by the Authority to support the review; on housing need, the local economy, design, and viability in plan-making. The *Report of (Issues and Options) Consultation* is at Appendix 1 and the evidence is in consultants reports which can be accessed from the Authority's Local Plan Review webpage.
- 2.4 A Sustainability Appraisal of the *Preferred Approach* is being carried out by consultants and an updated Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement is being prepared by Authority Officers and these will also be subject to public consultation.
- 2.5 At the time of writing two further evidence commissions are ongoing: a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and a Settlement Landscape Sensitivity and Capacity Assessment (for 23 key settlements).
- 2.6 Following consultation and on receipt of outstanding consultants' reports the final draft Local Plan will be written and brought back to Authority Committee. If approved, the final draft Local Plan will be subject to a further public consultation in Summer 2026 (under Regulation 19) and submitted with consultation responses and other prescribed documents to the Secretary of State in advance of the December 2026 Government deadline.
- 2.7 The *Preferred Approach* has been researched, developed and written by the Policy and Communities Team with oversight from the Head of Planning and the Local Plan Review Member Steering Group, in accordance with Standing Orders.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 The *Preferred Approach* sets out Spatial Objectives, the strategic housing provision and draft policies or policy directions for 10 local plan themes. The aim and justification (in summary) for each policy/policy direction are also set out.
- 3.2 The justification for our *Preferred Approach* will also be set out in a series of Topic Papers. This helps to keep the consultation document shorter and more accessible, and gives space to set out more complex evidence, analysis and reasoning, for example with regard to housing and settlements. Topic Papers are currently in draft but will be available to view throughout and following the consultation.

3.3 A high-level overview of the *Preferred Approach* for each local plan theme is set out below.

Core Policies:

- Retain the link to National Park purposes
- Set new criteria for sustainable development, development management, design and enhancement in a National Park, and propose designation of Local Green Spaces.
- Prioritize landscape character and Special Qualities with additional guidance on conversions in the open countryside and settlement limits, and additional protection for the Natural Zone.
- Carry forward the current development strategy principles, directing development away from the open countryside and towards settlements, but additionally include all settlements and specify the scale of development.

Biodiversity, Nature Recovery and Geodiversity Policies:

- Establish new principles that maximize the contribution of development to nature recovery, including by requiring 20% Biodiversity Net Gain.
- Continue to protect important sites and species but give additional protection to ecological corridors and networks.
- Strengthen the protection given to irreplaceable habitat, trees, woodland, hedgerows and walls.

Cultural Heritage Policies:

- Are carried forward, with clarification regarding the process for determining whether a building or structure is a non-designated heritage asset.

Recreation and Tourism Policies:

- Retain the principles that facilities must not harm valued landscape character or Special Qualities, prioritize the re-use of existing buildings and direct development to settlements and their edge.
- Describe Recreations Hubs where in principle improved or expanded visitor facilities are acceptable.
- Retain the principles relating to hotels, bed and breakfast and self-catering accommodation but remove the restriction on change of use of entire farmsteads, enable the conversion of non-traditional buildings in some circumstances and provide clarity regarding hotels on brownfield and enhancement sites.
- Ease the requirement regarding removal of holiday occupancy conditions so that only a local occupancy is required.
- Retain the principle that touring caravan and camping sites are acceptable but that permanent structures are not except for wooden pods or shepherd's huts in specific locations, and set detailed criteria for these exceptions.

Climate Change, Flood Risk and Sustainable Drainage Policies:

- Set new standards for energy efficiency and generation in buildings by linking to the Building Research Establishment certification.
- Retain the support for small-scale low carbon and renewable energy development.

- Update the approach to flood risk and sustainable drainage.

Housing Policies:

- Retain the approach that links delivery of new homes to local need (including rural workers), or the conversion of heritage assets.
- Establish new opportunities for key workers through tied accommodation.
- Establish a primary residence clause.
- Set out clear expectations for the delivery of affordable homes on brownfield land and when buildings are converted.
- Set out clear expectations regarding the mix and size of homes to be provided to meet local need.
- Speed up the 'occupancy cascade' so that homes are not left empty.
- Set clear guidelines regarding outbuildings, alternations, extensions, replacement dwellings and residential gardens.

Rural Economy Policies:

- Set out the scope for business development:
 - On safeguarded employment sites
 - On existing employment sites
 - Within existing buildings or brownfield land within settlements
 - On greenfield land on the edge of settlements.
 - On operational farms to support farm diversification
 - Through sensitive conversion of a heritage asset
 - Homeworking of an appropriate scale and operation
- Set detailed conditions regarding change of use, to maintain a strategic supply of well-located business sites over the long-term.
- Retain support for agriculture and forestry operational development and farm diversification.

Shops, services and Community Facilities Policies:

- Continue to support the provision and retention of community services and facilities.
- Continue to support the provision of shops, professional services and related activities, with additional protection for Bakewell Town Centre and village high streets.

Minerals and Waste Policies:

- Continue to resist new mineral extraction (other than fluorspar and building and roofing stone) except in exceptional circumstances.
- Support an appropriate supply of fluorspar by underground mining, with appropriate environmental protections.
- Support building and roofing stone proposals where there is a need that cannot be met, with appropriate environmental protections.

Travel and Transport policies:

- Continue to resist transport developments that increase the amount of cross-Park traffic or have other negative impacts on the Park's Special Qualities
- Set design standards and give appropriate scope for local road improvements and business, residential and visitor parking.
- Safeguard routes for walking, cycling and horse-riding

Utilities Policies will:

- Resist new or expanded reservoirs
- Set out an approach that protects valued landscape character and Special Qualities when new or upgraded infrastructure is developed.

4. Recommendations

1. That the ***Local Plan Preferred Approach*** consultation document (Appendix 1) be approved for public consultation under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, and that any minor changes may be made by the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Local Plan Review Steering Group.
2. That approval of the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal (currently being prepared by consultants) and the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement (to be prepared by the Landscape and Nature Team) be delegated to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Local Plan Review Steering Group, and that these documents are subject to public consultation with the ***Local Plan Preferred Approach***.

5. Corporate Implications

a. Legal

Section 19(1b) - (1e) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that each local planning authority must identify their strategic priorities and have policies to address these in the development plan. The National Planning Policy Framework states policies in local plans and spatial development strategies, should be reviewed to assess whether they need updating at least once every 5 years, and should then be updated as necessary.

Sections 1-3 of Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations require the Authority to consult with specified bodies or persons on the subject of a local plan which the local authority is proposing to prepare, and invite them to make representations. Consultees are specific or general 'consultation bodies', residents or other persons carrying on business in the planning area.

In undertaking a plan review the Authority must also:

- prepare a report to appraise the sustainability of the proposals. This is required by numerous Acts including Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.¹ All the requirements will be satisfied for this

¹ Also the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No. 1633) as amended by The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations

part of the plan-making process by the preparation of a Sustainability Appraisal Report of the *Preferred Approach* as set out in paragraph 2.4. A full Sustainability Appraisal Report will be prepared alongside the draft plan.

- carry out an assessment to test if a plan or project proposal could significantly harm the designated features of a European site in accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended. This requirement will be satisfied for this part of the plan-making process by the preparation of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Statement of the *Preferred Approach* as set out in paragraph 2.4. A full HRA will be prepared alongside the draft plan.

b. Financial

The costs associated with plan review will be covered by the £230k Government Plan Making Grant that was awarded to the Authority.

c. National Park Management Plan and Authority Plan

The Authority Plan delivery under the 'Planning' objective is to 'review and adopt updated Local Plan.' Management Plan Objective 10 under the Thriving Communities aim has as a headline delivery target 'By 2028 we will have a Local Plan that enables people with local roots to live in or return to the National Park and help families to remain together in mutual support.'

d. Risk Management

The current local plan will continue to exist as the legal development plan for the PDNP until it is replaced. The risks associated with challenge to policies is small because of our focus on national park purposes and the review process is well advanced.

e. Net Zero

Addressed in the *Preferred Approach* report.

6. Background papers (not previously published)

Regulation 18 (Issues and Options) Consultation Statement.

[Document Authority Meeting 26 September 2025: 2025rCMS | Peak District Peak District National Park](#)

7. Appendices

Appendix 1: Local Plan Preferred Approach

Report Author, Job Title and Publication Date

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Responsible Officer, Job Title

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