Basildon Borough Local Plan 2023-2043

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Regulation 18 Part 3

Basildon Borough Council

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Basildon Borough Council

What is a Local Plan?

- It is the role of the Local Planning Authority (Basildon Council) to produce a Local Plan, showing how an area will develop in the future and provide policies that will guide decisions on whether planning applications are granted. A Local Plan sets out policies and proposals in an area that address needs and opportunities for housing and employment, whilst ensuring that infrastructure is adequately provided for a growing population. Policies will also cover safeguarding the environment, adapting to the effects of climate change, and achieving well-designed neighbourhoods. Local Plans are the starting point for guiding local planning decisions regarding development proposals and planning applications.
- It is a legal requirement for councils to develop a Local Plan. Without a plan, we have much less control over the quality and location of development. With a Local Plan in place, we will be more able to protect what's important to us, direct development to appropriate locations and deliver local priorities and aspirations.

What is the current Local Plan?

- The current adopted development plan is the Basildon District Local Plan Saved Policies 2007. The Saved Policies, from the Basildon District Local Plan 1998, represent the local planning policies currently applied by the Council to inform the determination of planning applications and enforce planning control. The saved policies have been reviewed against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 to assess the level of compliance each saved policy has with the 2024 iteration of NPPF.

What stage are we at?

- This is the third phase Regulation 18 consultation for the new Local Plan. This consultation seeks to notify people that the Council are advancing the Local Plan for Basildon Borough, by asking for comments on draft policies and allocations, on matters relating to new evidence and changes arising from the recently published National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (December 2024).

What comes next?

- Once the consultation has closed, we will consider all comments received and publish a Statement of Consultation report, providing a summary of the main issues.
- The responses we receive during the consultation will be analysed and used to inform a revised Draft Local Plan. This will then be subject to a Regulation 19 publication. This is version of the Local Plan Basildon Council proposes to submit to be examined by an independent Planning Inspector.
- Regulation 19 is the final stage before the plan is sent to examination. We will be seeking your views on whether you feel the local plan is 'legally compliant' and meets the test of 'Soundness' as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.
- Once Regulation 19 is complete, an updated draft Local Plan is then submitted to the Secretary of State. They will then appoint an independent Planning Inspector to undertake a 'public examination' of the draft Local Plan and to make recommendations to further improve it.
- During the examination process, the Secretary of State and the independent Planning Inspector will use the National Planning Policy Framework and comments submitted during the Regulation 19 consultation to determine whether a Local Plan is sound and legally compliant.
- The latest Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the timetable for the new Local Plan:

Basildon Borough Local Development Scheme: 2025 to 2026

Stages	Estimated Timescale
Regulation 18 – Preparation of a Local Plan (including three consultations)	First Draft Local Plan Consultation 18/11/2024-12/01/2025 Second Focused Draft Local Plan Consultation 3/3/25-14/4/25 Third Draft Local Plan Consultation November 2025 – January 2026
Regulation 19 – Publication of a Local Plan (including consultation)	Q1 2026
Regulation 22 – Submission of a Local Plan to the Secretary of State	Q2 2026
Regulation 24 – Independent Examination	Q2 2026
Regulation 25 – Recommendation from the Independent Examiner	Received Q3 2026
Regulation 26 – Adoption of the Local Plan.	Adoption Q4 2026

How will my views be taken into account?

- Councils are required by law to make the comments you send about the plan publicly available, including your name. Your comments will be made available for the public to read in council offices and online as part of the Local Plan preparation process. Your telephone number, postal address, email address, and signature will not be published. Please note that we cannot provide anonymity or accept comments marked 'private' or 'confidential'. Comments that include offensive, racist, discriminatory, threatening and other non-relevant statements will be destroyed.
- To ensure that the consultation reaches all members of our community we will also ask you to provide information about yourself, such as your age, sex and ethnicity, and any accessibility requirements. This information is optional and will not be published.
- Every submitted comment will be considered and the results of this consultation will be published in a report that will give a detailed analysis of the results. This detailed analysis will be taken account of in the preparation of the new Local Plan.

Can you help me understand the terms used?

- Yes, a glossary of terms can be found on our consultation portal under 'Document Library'.

What is the status of the sites included in the Draft Local Plan consultation?

- The sites proposed in the Draft Local Plan are not yet allocated for development.
- The current consultation is a draft document to hear the views of residents, businesses, public bodies and other stakeholders.
- Sites were initially suggested by landowners during early stages of plan-making and have since been refined using consultation feedback and evidence, such as technical studies and site assessments. After this consultation, we will carry out another round of investigation to assess the suitability of these sites. Your comments will help us decide which site allocations can be brought forward to Regulation 19.

Why have alternative sites been removed from the Regulation 18.3 Draft Local Plan?

- The previous Regulation 18 presented four alternative sites. Basildon Council has considered both the responses to these consultations and the Local Plan evidence base and recommended the following:

Previous AS1	Part of the previous AS1, now identified as H31 (Land at Mountnessing Road), is provisionally identified as suitable for around 15-25 homes.
Previous AS2	AS2, now identified as H32 (Potash Road), is provisionally identified as suitable for around 75-100 homes.
Previous AS3	AS3, now identified as H33 (Land East of Bowers Gifford) is provisionally identified as suitable for 800-850 homes.

Previous AS4	It is recommended that this alternative site is not identified for housing.

- In addition, it is recommended that the following draft allocations, which were included in the previous Regulation 18 consultation, are not identified as sites to for housing.
  - H5 - Land adj to Laindon Common Road
  - H14 - Land South of London Road, Basildon
  - H16 - Fairmead Plotlands

Why do we need housing?

- In 1998 when the current Local Plan was adopted the average home is Basildon cost 3.57 x the average local wage. This has now increased to 10.27 x the average local wage. Meaning that many local residents are priced out of affording their own home.
- In 2023 Basildon Borough delivered only 35% of the minimum number of homes needed. This puts Basildon Borough in the lowest 10 local authorities for housing delivery.

How do we calculate the minimum number of homes needed?

- The Council is required to determine the minimum number of homes needed using the Standard Method in National Planning Practice Guidance which can be viewed here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments
- From 2025 the standard method calculation starts with a baseline 0.8% of the existing housing stock in Basildon Borough. This is 642 homes.
- Next the minimum number of homes is increased if the average local home costs more than five times the average local full time wage. For Basildon Borough this adjustment is 2.0013. This gives us a minimum annual local housing need figure of 642 x 2.0013 = 1,285 dwellings per annum
- Finally, a buffer of 20% is added to reflect that over the last three years the number of homes built is significantly less that the

minimum needed and to ensure choice and competition in the market for housing land.

- This gives a minimum of 1,542 dwellings per annum
- The Draft Local Plan covers the period 2023-2043. Housing need over this whole period has been calculated as follows:

Local plan period	Minimum number of homes required
1/4/2023-31/3/2025	2,494
1/4/2025-31/3/2029	7,710
1/4/2029-31/3/2043	16,705
Total	**26,909**

Why does the Local Plan propose to provide land for more than the minimum number of homes?

- The Local Plan makes provision for a maximum of around 28,250 homes. This is because over the whole twenty year plan period, sites may deliver fewer homes than predicted or cease to be available for development. We need to plan for sufficient land to be provided to deliver a buffer in the available supply of homes. The number of homes built will be assessed annually to monitor performance and determine whether any action is required to improve delivery rates. This will be reported in the Authority Monitoring Report.

What is windfall allowance and how have we calculated the requirement?

- “Windfall development” is the term used for the development of land which has not been specifically identified as available in the local plan process. Windfall sites typically comprise previously developed sites or infill sites which become unexpectedly available.

- Given the age of the current Local Plan (adopted 1998) most of the housing it planned for has already been built. This means that most new housing in Basildon Borough is delivered on windfall sites.
- It is expected that this will change when the plan is adopted and the majority of new homes will be delivered in the planned for locations.
- However the Local Plan covers a period of twenty years and towards the end of this period some housing would be expected to begin to be delivered as windfall. For example land which is currently being used for shops or offices may fall out of use and be redeveloped for housing. For this reason a small allowance for windfall housing (estimate 378 homes) has been allowed for after 2040.

What about the infrastructure?

- A new local plan needs to be sustainable, and an important part of this will be the ability to improve infrastructure capacity across the Borough. One of the most effective ways of delivering new infrastructure is through the Local Plan process.
- The Council has prepared a document called an Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), which identifies the borough's infrastructure requirements including transport, schools, health, green infrastructure and utilities. This IDP is intended to provide a high-level assessment of the infrastructure that will be required to deliver the proposed planned distribution of growth across the borough. The document is based upon on a detailed assessment of existing infrastructure capacity, current identified needs for additional provision and how these may change in the future.
- The IDP preparation process is iterative, and further feedback will be obtained through Regulation 18 consultation responses. This will be used to prepare an Infrastructure Schedule, setting out what is needed, where it is needed when it is needed and how it could be delivered and funded. for the Regulation 19 version of the emerging Basildon Local Plan. All new developments in the borough must contribute to the delivery of

appropriate infrastructure. This can be by directly building it or through financial contributions. This is secured by legal agreements.

Can brownfield land provide all the new homes that are needed?

- The Council has undertaken a review of all available urban land in Basildon Borough and considered potential to increase density in highly sustainable locations such as Basildon Town Centre. The Council has also engaged with other Essex Local Authorities to establish is growth can be accommodated elsewhere.
- Basildon Council is required to set out a supply of sufficient deliverable land to meet housing need for at least 5 years. This is not possible without altering the green belt boundaries.

What is the Green Belt?

- The designation and protection of Green Belt is controlled by national policy and the fundamental aim is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.
- National planning policy sets out five purposes for including land within a Green Belt:
    - To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
    - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
    - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
    - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
    - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- Once designated, inappropriate development is restricted in the Green Belt unless there are very special circumstances.

Can Green Belt boundaries be changed?

- National Policy states that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances that are fully evidenced and justified, through the preparation or updating of Local Plans. The Council is required to demonstrate that it has examined fully all other reasonable options for meeting its identified needs for development before releasing land from the Green Belt.
- The Council has commissioned a Green Belt Study which has informed the development of the Local Plan. The 2025 Green Belt Study supersedes the previous Green Belt studies.

What does it mean if an area is identified as grey belt?

- In December 2024, the NPPF introduced the concept of grey belt. Grey belt are parts of the green belt that are already built up or low quality, and subject to meeting necessary criteria, might be ok to develop. Local authorities are encouraged to consider the development of grey belt land if it would not significantly undermine the purposes of green belt (see five purposes under 'What is the Green Belt?').

How does this relate to the neighbourhood plan my community is preparing?

- A Local Plan provides the strategy and policies for the entire local authority area, and a neighbourhood plan must generally conform to this. Once made, neighbourhood plans form part of the overall development plan and are used to inform planning decisions within that neighbourhood area.
- Neighbourhood planning groups will be kept informed as the Local Plan progresses. If a neighbourhood plan is made before the Local Plan is adopted, neighbourhood planning groups will need to consider whether aspects of the neighbourhood plan would require review once the new Local Plan is adopted.

I'm having difficulty with the consultation portal, or I have more questions about the consultation; how do I contact you?

- If your question is not answered in this FAQ, you can contact us via the following ways:
    - Email: LocalPlan@basildon.gov.uk
    - Telephone: 01268 533333
    - Post: Planning Policy Team, Basildon Borough Council, Basildon Centre, St Martin's Square, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1DL

How can I understand the planning system better?

- To find out more about planning you can read the NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) which provide robust information and guidance concerning planning.
- Additionally, to view our Local Plan news, please look at our webpage: https://www.basildon.gov.uk/article/9107/Local-Plan-Latest-news-and-updates

What is the timescale for the consultation?

- The Council is consulting on the Draft Local Plan between 28th November 2025 and 16th January 2026. All responses must be received no later than 23:59 on 16th January 2026.

Why does it take so long to produce a Local Plan?

- We are required by law to ensure that the Local Plan goes through defined consultation stages and that specific evidence is commissioned and completed to justify the plan's approach. The development of the new Local Plan is a detailed and resource intensive piece of work and must account for local views, national policy and legislative changes.