

Local plan review FAQs

Local Plan Review

What is a local plan?

A Local Plan is a legal document that Councils are required to prepare, which sets out the future land use and planning policies for the Rugby Borough area over a set period of time.

Why are we updating our local plan already when it covers the period to 2031?

We are legally required to review our local plan at least every 5 years. Our current local plan was adopted in June 2019. In December 2022 the council concluded that, based on a review of policies, there was a need to update the local plan.

The new local plan will have an updated plan period, running to 2042.

We ran an 'Issues and Options' consultation between October 2023 and February 2024, which explored the different areas of policy that we thought should be addressed through the review, and invited feedback on the options that were presented. This was followed by the 'Preferred Option' consultation in spring 2025, which gathered feedback on a draft Local Plan document. The responses to both consultations have informed the Proposed Submission Local Plan which we are now consulting on.

What will happen to the current local plan during the process?

The current local plan remains the adopted policy position until the update is complete, and a revised plan is adopted by the Council.

When can people have their say on the new local plan?

Community and stakeholder involvement is extremely important in developing the new plan, it includes several opportunities for people to contribute at various stages of the process. We have run two public consultations so far – the 'Issues and Options' consultation from October 2023 to January 2026, and the 'Preferred Option' consultation from March to May 2025.

*We are now running a third public consultation on the 'Proposed Submission Local Plan'. You can give feedback on the 'Proposed Submission Local Plan' **between Friday 30th January and 5:00pm Friday 13th March 2026**. At this stage of consultation representations should be made on the [representation form](#), which follows the format specified by the Planning Inspectorate and poses specific questions. The [Statement of Representation Procedure](#) and [Planning Inspectorate Guidance notes](#) should inform your representation.*

What is the process for the local plan review?

There is a statutory process that the preparation and review of local plans must comply with. General guidance on plan-making is available on the government website [here](#).

What is the role of elected councillors in the local plan update?

Local councillors are responsible for making decisions on the new local plan at key stages, often at Full Council. Beyond this, councillors are engaged and briefed throughout the process so that they can play a key role in the process and in communicating with their communities.

Council voted on 27 January 2026 to consult on the proposed Submission Local Plan.

Will the plan update be affected by the proposed reforms to the planning system?

The government has made a number of recent changes to the planning system, including updating the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) most recently in December 2024, with further updates currently being consulted on. These changes are having an impact on the review of the local plan. For example, the NPPF has introduced a new standard method for calculating housing need that should be planned for. The Proposed Submission Local Plan reflects the latest standard method.

Changes to the preparation of local plans will take effect from 2027. The Rugby Borough local plan is currently anticipated to be submitted for examination in 2026, and as a result, it is expected that our local plan will progress under the existing plan-making requirements of the 2004 Act.

Proposed Submission Local Plan consultation

What is the Proposed Submission Local Plan?

The Proposed Submission Local Plan is the document which the Council intends to submit to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

It has been informed by the two rounds of public consultation and some of the content is therefore different to the Preferred Option version of the plan which was consulted on in spring 2025.

The Proposed Submission Local Plan is also the version the Council ultimately intends to adopt. This is subject to modifications recommended by the Planning Inspector during the examination.

Where can I view the Proposed Submission Local Plan and supporting documents?

You can view the Proposed Submission Local Plan and all supporting evidence and associated documents online here: <https://www.rugby.gov.uk/proposed-submission-local-plan> .

You can also review physical copies of the Proposed Submission and supporting documents at the following locations during the consultation period:

- *Rugby Borough Council's offices, Town Hall, Evreux Way, Rugby, CV12 2RR*
- *Rugby Library and Information Centre, Little Elborow Street, Rugby, CV21 3BZ*
- *Dunchurch Community Library, The Green, Dunchurch, Rugby, CV22 6PA*
- *Wolston Library and Information Centre, Warwick Road, Wolston, Coventry, CV8 3GX*

How can I have my say on the Proposed Submission Local Plan?

*You can give feedback on the Proposed Submission Local Plan during the consultation period which runs from **Friday 30th January to Friday 13th March 2026**.*

*Please submit your response by **5pm Friday 13th March 2026**.*

You should provide your feedback using the Representation Form document available to download from the Local Plan webpage [here](#). Hard copies are also available at the locations above where the Proposed Submission Local Plan can be reviewed.

Please refer to the [Statement of Representation Procedure](#) and the [Planning Inspectorate guidance notes](#).

Please send your completed Representation Form either:

- 1) By email to localplan@rugby.gov.uk with 'Preferred Option Consultation' in the subject line, OR
- 2) By post to:
Proposed Submission Consultation,
Development Strategy Team,
Town Hall,
Evreux Way
Rugby
CV21 2RR

You do not need to submit a physical copy of the form if you have sent one by email. The Planning Inspectorate guidance notes also suggest that where groups or individuals hold shared views, these would helpfully be included on a single representation rather than multiple representations making the same points. Such a representation should indicate how many people it is representing and how the representation has been authorised.

Please ensure you **include your full name and address** as we cannot accept anonymous responses.

The consultation process at this stage is different to the previous Issues and Options and the Preferred Option consultations which invited general comments and ideas for the plan. This consultation is more focused and is specifically looking for feedback on three key questions, as required by the Planning Inspectorate.

You should consider the following questions when filling out your Representation Form:

- Is the plan **legally compliant**? Does it comply with relevant legislation and regulations in the way it has been prepared and in its content?
- Is the plan **'sound'**? Has the plan been 'positively prepared'? Is it robustly justified and evidence-led? Will it be effective in what it sets out to achieve? Is it consistent with the latest regional and national planning policy?
- Does the plan **comply with the 'Duty to Cooperate'**? Has the Council engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies during the preparation of the plan?

Can I comment on other aspects of the Proposed Submission Local Plan outside of the three questions on the Representation Form?

You are free to complete your Representation Form in any way you wish; however, the format and questions on the form are decided by the Planning Inspectorate, and the consultation is

seeking feedback on these three points. Representations at this stage are also considered by the Planning Inspector who only examines the plan with regard to these three questions.

What will happen to my response after the consultation?

Each representation will be read and carefully considered. A summary of the feedback and the officer responses will be published after the consultation.

Consultation responses will be made available for public inspection and will be viewed by the Planning Inspector during the examination process. Your full name will be public but no other personal information will be shared. To view the council's development strategy privacy notice please visit: <https://rugby.gov.uk/w/privacy#development-strategy>

Anyone who submits a representation to the Proposed Submission Local Plan consultation has a right to speak at the hearing sessions held during the examination process. Please indicate on your form if you would like to be invited by the Planning Inspector to speak.

Development strategy

What is a development strategy?

A development strategy is the overarching strategy for achieving the vision and objectives of the plan. It considers where new development of different types should be delivered.

What other development strategies have been considered?

The Sustainability Appraisal sets out alternative options considered.

What about the infrastructure needed as part of the development strategy?

The development strategy has been prepared considering evidence available regarding existing infrastructure capacity. The strategy seeks to locate new housing in areas where existing infrastructure can be supported or improved.

The Local Plan is primarily a land use document and cannot make provision for infrastructure projects to address pre-existing requirements or shortfalls. Infrastructure proposals are therefore designed to mitigate impacts directly occurring from the plan's allocations.

All infrastructure expansions or enhancements needed as a result of new allocations are set out in the infrastructure schedule.

Identification of sites and proposed allocations

What is a call for sites?

A 'call for sites' gives landowners and agents the opportunity to let us know that they are interested in having some or all their land considered for development or redevelopment. This is important to the plan making process as we need to identify land to tackle some of the issues we have highlighted before.

We ran a 'call for sites' alongside the 'issues and options consultation'. All sites received, plus others identified by officers from other sources (as set out in the [Planning Practice Guidance](#)) have been assessed and considered – see below.

How have submitted sites been considered?

261 sites were considered as part of the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) which is published alongside the consultation.

Following the HELAA process - which eliminated sites that already have planning permission, are too small, are not available, or are subject to “showstopper” constraints - the number of sites under consideration was reduced to 112 potentially suitable sites.

These 112 sites were visited by officers and subject to more detailed transport, landscape, ecology, heritage and infrastructure analysis drawing on advice from Warwickshire County Council and external advisers. This process led to a shorter list of potential site options.

A HELAA addendum was produced following the Preferred Option consultation adding 11 further sites and updating the analysis for 5 previously assessed sites.

We have also undertaken an Urban Capacity Study to identify additional opportunities for brownfield development in the town centre. The study identified 20 sites as being suitable, (potentially/likely) viable, and available. 11 of these sites are allocated for development after further assessment.

How have the proposed allocation sites been selected?

Following the assessment process outlined above, the final list of potential site options was then used to identify options for growth scenarios. The reasonable alternative growth scenarios are detailed in the Sustainability Appraisal report which is published alongside the Proposed Submission Local Plan.

The proposed allocations are the sites we think best support the plan objectives and development strategy.

Why is more housing not proposed on brownfield/previously developed land?

The use of brownfield land is given substantial weight in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#), which encourages “..as much use as possible of previously developed or brownfield land” (paragraph 124).

We have increased our brownfield allocations since the Preferred Option consultation, and the Proposed Submission strategy incorporates 15 brownfield sites within the Rugby urban area, in addition to brownfield or partial brownfield sites at other settlements. However, there are not sufficient brownfield sites (based on the site assessment and selection outlined above) available to accommodate the amount of housing we must plan for up to 2042.

Why are sites in the Green Belt identified for housing allocations?

National policy advises that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified.

For housing, there were a relatively limited number of reasonable site options put forward/identified that could in combination deliver the necessary number of new homes.

It would be possible to deliver the necessary additional housing land outside of the Green Belt if land promoted at Lodge Farm between Dunchurch and Daventry, which could deliver 2,680 homes overall with an estimated 1,400 by 2042, were to be allocated. This option has not been taken forward for reasons set out in the evidence base.

Where possible, we have allocated development in the Green Belt on land which has been provisionally designated as 'Grey Belt' in line with the latest national policy.

Overall, in combination these factors constitute exceptional circumstances which justify alterations to Green Belt boundaries. For full details of the Green Belt exceptional circumstances, please see the topic paper [here](#).

Why are sites in the Green Belt identified for employment allocations?

The [Green Belt Exceptional Circumstances paper](#) addresses this question.

Neighbourhood planning and the local plan update

Will an adopted neighbourhood plan need to be updated once the new local plan is in place?

There will not be a requirement to do so. However, if neighbourhood plan policies conflict with updated local plan policies they may become out of date if they were adopted before the new local plan is adopted. Where this is the case, the most recently adopted plan takes precedence. This would not necessarily mean that the whole of the neighbourhood plan is out of date but may impact specific policies that are superseded by local plan policies.

Can a new neighbourhood plan come forward during the local plan process?

A new neighbourhood plan can be developed during the preparation of the new local plan. It is important that we work together closely with neighbourhood planning groups to ensure that there are no conflicts between neighbourhood plan policies and updated or additional policies in the revised local plan.

Existing neighbourhood plans could also be updated.

What happens after the Proposed Submission consultation?

After the Proposed Submission consultation, we will review all the feedback we receive.. We will produce a report summarising the representations made and our response.

The Local Plan document will then be submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government who will appoint an independent Planning Inspector to run the examination process.

The examination process can last around 12 months and will include hearing sessions held in public. Those who have submitted representations to the Proposed Submission consultation may be invited by the Planning Inspector to speak if they wish to do so.

If the plan is found sound and legal at examination, the Council will then vote on whether to adopt the document as the new Local Plan.

The anticipated timescales for the remainder of the plan-making process are set out in the [Local Development Scheme](#).