



COTSWOLD
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET - 4 JULY 2022
Report Number	AGENDA ITEM 11
Subject	LOCAL PLAN UPDATE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND AND PLANNING REFORMS
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Cllr Rachel Coxcoon, Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Forward Planning Email: rachel.coxcoon@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officers	James Brain, Forward Planning Manager Email: james.brain@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Note feedback report on the recent Local Plan consultation;• Note planning reforms and expected consultations later this year;• Approve the Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground; and• Note progress on the Local Plan and related projects to date.
Annexes	ANNEX A – Local Plan consultation summary report ANNEX B – Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill – summary ANNEX C – Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground ANNEX D – Local Plan Milestones ANNEX E – Cirencester Projects
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) notes findings from the Local Plan Issues and Options consultation set out in ANNEX A;

	<p>b) notes proposed changes in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill as summarised in ANNEX B;</p> <p>c) approves the Draft Statement of Common Ground set out in ANNEX C;</p> <p>d) notes Local Plan milestones presented at ANNEX D; and</p> <p>e) notes Cirencester Projects update at ANNEX E.</p>
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the Local Plan green to its core; • Responding to the challenges presented by the climate crisis; • Providing good quality social rented homes; and • Rebuilding trust and confidence in the Council by promoting a culture of openness and transparency.
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	<p>Internal consultation with the following departments and lead officers:</p> <p>Head of Climate Action; Sustainable Transport Lead; Development Management (planning applications) Manager/Team; Heritage and Design Manager; Strategic Housing Manager; Economic Development Lead; Finance; and Local Management Team.</p>

I. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council has committed to update partially the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 - 2031) ("the Local Plan") to make it green to the core¹.
- 1.2 Within Gloucestershire, local councils and the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership are developing a strategic planning framework to coordinate better the delivery of homes, jobs and infrastructure and responding to cross cutting issues such as mitigating and adapting to climate change and improving nature.
- 1.3 The Government is reforming the English Planning system.

2. ISSUES AND OPTIONS CONSULTATION – SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

- 2.1 During February and March 2022 the Council invited local communities, organisations and businesses to participate in making the Local Plan green to the core. This is the first formal consultation stage on the route to updating the Local Plan and it sets out the main issues and possible options across eighteen planning topics.
- 2.2 A summary of the consultation feedback is provided at ANNEX A. The report includes an executive summary, a summary of findings for each of the eighteen topics and an evaluation of the communications plan. Final typographical checks will be made by the Forward Planning Manager prior to the document being published on the Council's website.
- 2.3 As part of the Government's drive to improve digital engagement (Proptech Fund), the Council was able to procure and trial new consultation software called Commonplace. This was supplemented and supported by an active social media campaign run by Publica's Communications team, new branding to improve awareness, and more engaging digital content such as videos and animation. It resulted in a notable increase in the number of people subscribing to the Local Plan mailing list.
- 2.4 There was a significant shift in people (including Town and Parish Councils) choosing to submit comments online, which has meant less time has been spent transposing information from letters and emails onto the consultation system. The only exceptions are the planning and development industry and some statutory organisations who continue to prefer email and prospectus style submissions. Headline engagement statistics are provided in Figure 1.
- 2.5 There is broad support from respondents on the need for the local planning system to respond better to climate change and put in place stronger measures to improve ecology and health and wellbeing. However, those opposed and neutral to suggested options often raised concerns about the cost of interventions on household budgets, the impact on development viability and the creep of unnecessary bureaucracy.

¹ <https://meetings.cotswold.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=1136&MId=1788&Ver=4>

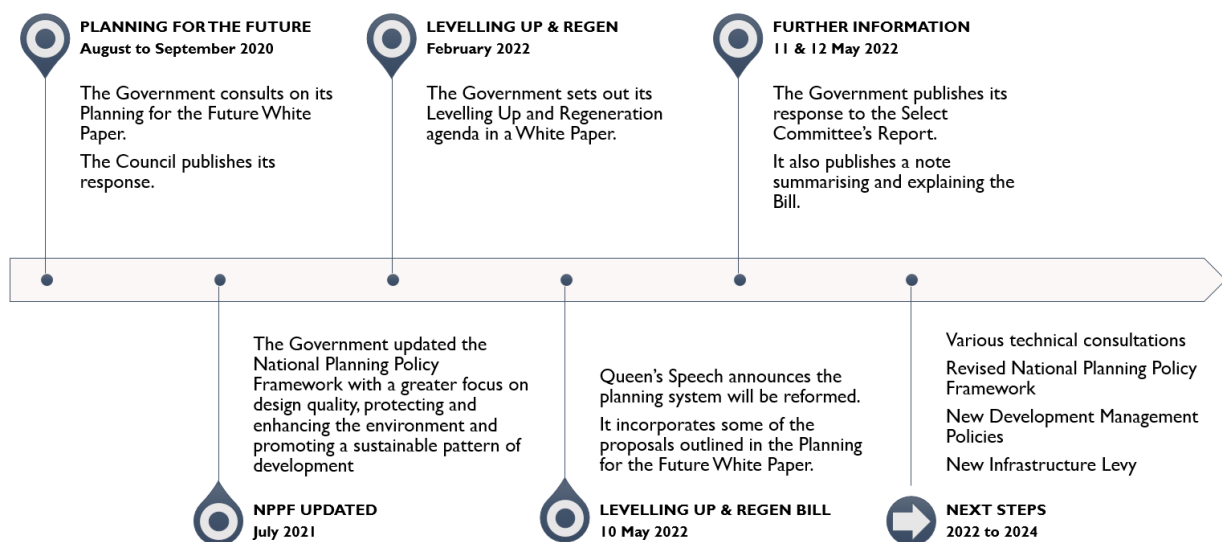
- 2.6 The age of respondents was skewed to those over 55+ age, with the 65 to 74 age group representing over 30% of comments compared to under 15% of the population. This will need to be borne in mind when using feedback to justify new and /or updated policy. For example, younger people, who on average are more affected by the affordability housing issue, did not engage as strongly as older people who are generally more financially secure. This bias in the age-range of respondents is not a phenomenon unique to Cotswold District but it nevertheless is a matter that needs, if possible, to be addressed in the next phase of update preparation.
- 2.7 Various respondents questioned the Council's decision to prepare a partial rather than a full Local Plan update. Commentary is set out in the report (Annex A – chapter 20). Officers have invited the Planning Inspectorate to carry out an early stage review of the project to update partially the Local Plan and a response is awaited. This is all part of good project management. Such reviews are recommended by the Planning Inspectorate as they help to identify and address problems – including any procedural issues such as the tipping point where a partial update may become a full Local Plan review - as early in the process as possible.
- 2.8 Officers will now begin the process of considering and evaluating responses to the consultation with a view to preparing amendments to the adopted Local Plan. This work will include drafting any new policies that may be needed to ensure the Local Plan remains up to date. This process will also establish whether additional evidence is required to justify and support any new and/or amended policies.

Figure 1: Summary of how people, organisations and businesses engaged with the Local Plan consultation.



3. LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION BILL

- 3.1 The Queen's Speech (May 2022) announced a new Levelling up and Regeneration Bill² ("the Bill"). It contains extensive planning reforms and confirms that the Planning Bill announced in last year's Queen's Speech³ will be incorporated within this Bill albeit in an amended form.
- 3.2 Government papers summarising the Bill, titled *Further Information*⁴ and *Explanatory Notes*⁵, were published on Wednesday 11 May 2022 which coincided with the Bill's first reading in the House of Commons.
- 3.3 The Government has also published its response to the Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Select Committee report on The Future of the Planning System in England⁶. This contains useful commentary on technical aspects of the planning system, the possible direction of policy and timescales.
- 3.4 The Government has announced a series of technical consultations and updates alongside the Bill which includes updating the National Planning Policy Framework and the introduction of new Development Management policies. It is proposed that these new Development Management policies will be imposed at national level, obviating the need for Local Plans to include similar policies.
- 3.5 Figure 2. Timeline of the Government's intention to reform the planning system since August 2020.



² <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0006/220006.pdf>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/queens-speech-2021>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information>

⁵ <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/bills/cbill/58-03/0006/en/220006en.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-the-planning-system-in-england-government-response-to-the-select-committee-report/government-response-to-the-levelling-up-housing-and-communities-select-committee-report-on-the-future-of-the-planning-system-in-england>

- 3.6 The Queen's Speech explained the purpose of the Bill is "...to give residents more involvement in local development."⁷ The Secretary of State's often cited BIDEN mnemonic⁸ means in technical planning terms:
- **B**eauty through requiring binding design codes;
 - **I**nfrastructure through the new levy and the duty for utility providers to engage;
 - **D**emocracy through reducing speculative development in the first 5 years of the plan,
 - **E**nvironment through the Environment Act 2021 provisions and its new Environmental Outcomes Reports; and
 - **N**eighbourhoods through giving neighbourhood plans formal status in the development plan.
- 3.7 The Bill aims to replace wholesale the existing legal requirements on plan making. The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) argues this is "a decisive shift of power to Whitehall"⁹.
- 3.8 The law will change in at least two important ways:
- 1) The central requirement would be to take a determination in accordance with national development management policy and the local plan (and any conflict between the two would be resolved in favour of the national development management policies); and
 - 2) For material considerations to indicate taking a different decision, they would have to **strongly** "indicate otherwise".
- 3.9 What this means in practice is that it makes explicit the relationship between local and national policy but does so by departing from the "local plan first" approach. It also means the Government is setting the bar higher if, for example, a local authority wanted to reject planning permission on a site allocated in its local plan¹⁰.
- 3.10 Various planning commentators point to the benefits of the proposed system, in particular welcoming faster and more consistent plans; removing duplicative policies (particularly regarding development management), improved transparency on the relationship with national and local policy.
- 3.11 However, the devil is in the detail. Quite a few aspects of the Bill are yet to be determined and will form part of revised and new regulations. Understanding what constitutes "locally specific matters" for Local Plans and what are matters for National Development Management Policies will dictate the scale of the shift of power.

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/queens-speech-2022>

⁸ <https://policyexchange.org.uk/were-seeing-a-shift-under-gove-in-housing-policy-from-quantity-to-quality/>

⁹ https://tcpa.org.uk/the-levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-a-decisive-shift-of-power-to-whitehall/#_ftn2

¹⁰ See DHLUC Director's answer to question 7 <https://www.planoraks.com/posts-1/ask-a-planorak-10-simon-gallagher-director-of-planning-at-the-dluhc>

3.12 The Government has indicated that it will provide further information on proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in July 2022 and consult on the update NPPF and new National Development Management Policies later this year.

3.13 In broad terms the changes to planning procedures will begin to take place from 2024 once the Bill has Royal Assent and associated regulations and changes to national policy are in place.

3.14 A summary of the proposed changes contained within the Bill is provided at ANNEX B.

4. GLOUCESTERSHIRE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND (GSoGC)

4.1 It has been recognised for some time that a better coordinated approach to long term spatial planning in Gloucestershire would be beneficial. Cotswold District Council has therefore been working with neighbouring Gloucestershire local authorities and the Local Enterprise Partnership to develop a strategic planning framework for future co-operation.

4.2 In July 2019 Cabinet resolved to support the development of a broad Strategic Planning Framework for Gloucestershire to 2050 and beyond, through the preparation of a Statement of Common Ground, to be prepared by the six local planning authorities, Gloucestershire County Council and the Gfirst LEP¹¹.

4.3 An initial Draft GsoCG (May 2020) was produced by a Strategic Planning Coordinator for the County, appointed by the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC). Since May 2020, various revisions to the document have been subject to further discussions at a Leaders Board set up to progress strategic planning co-ordination across Gloucestershire and at GEGJC.

4.4 The GsoCG, which is provided in ANNEX C, has secured the support of all Strategic Planning portfolio holders and Chief Strategic Planners in all of the Gloucestershire local planning authorities.

Summary of Statement of Common Ground

4.5 The GsoCG is intended to be a non-statutory document subject to regular updates which captures progress in working together.

4.6 The purposes of the statement include:

- identify and demonstrate where common ground exists between the parties;
- identify and agree an action plan on the strategic spatial planning matters in Gloucestershire that require collaborative working between the parties;

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<https://meetings.cotswold.gov.uk/Data/Cabinet/201907011800/Agenda/2bLf93ROMiL7xl1UXnpS9324Gc4ZS.pdf>

- identify, in principle, the potential response to addressing the strategic spatial planning matters; and
- provide the basis for a 'live' document to allow for regular updates which capture progress against responding to the strategic spatial planning matters, acknowledging that responding to the Climate emergency will be the "Golden thread" that runs through the strategic planning activities and the outputs of this GsoCG.

4.7 The GsoCG includes a series of 34 high level agreements dealing with a broad range of environmental issues and land use matters including addressing the climate and ecological emergencies, housing and economic needs, transport provision and infrastructure delivery.

4.8 Reaching agreement on how to address these strategic planning matters is the start of the SoCG process. Action needs to be taken to address the matters arising from these agreements. The GsoCG proposes therefore that an Action Plan is developed to identify the actions to be taken, those responsible for taking actions, and a timeframe and budget to address the actions.

4.9 The long term intention is to explore the potential for the production of a Gloucestershire Spatial Development Strategy but at this stage, whilst the essential purpose of the GsoCG is to promote joint action in addressing strategic issues, nothing in the GsoCG removes the roles and responsibilities of the individual participating organisations in making decisions according to their statutory roles.

GsoGC: Next Steps

4.10 Stroud District Council has already endorsed the SoCG and Gloucestershire County Council Gloucester, Tewkesbury, Cheltenham and Forest of Dean Councils are due to consider endorsement during the spring and summer months, if not already.

4.11 Assuming all signatory bodies endorse the GsoCG the intention is that an action plan will be developed and reported to GEGJC on a regular basis. Progress on joint working will be reflected in future iterations of the GsoCG which should be kept up-to-date. Any proposals for changes to current strategic planning arrangements or changes to the GsoCG will be reported for decisions to Cabinet to other meetings of this Council, as appropriate.

4.12 This GsoCG helps to discharge this Council's current responsibilities under the Duty to Cooperate. However, additional or supplementary SoCGs will be required between the District Council and neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies as part of the examination of the Cotswold District Local Plan Partial Update, which is scheduled in 2023.

5. STRATEGIC PLANNING PROJECTS

5.1 These projects broadly fit into two main categories: Local Plan and supporting evidence and Cirencester projects.

Local Plan Update and supporting evidence

- 5.2 A timeline showing key milestone over the next 18 months is provided at ANNEX D. It shows the next formal consultation stage and submission to the Secretary of State is scheduled for 2023.
- 5.3 There are various studies and evidence that are required to support a Local Plan Update. A schedule of those can be seen in Table I. Over the next six months officers will be looking to commission or prepare an updated Cotswold Design Code, a Site Allocations Study (including an updated Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment), Viability assessment, Infrastructure Delivery Plan, Gypsy Site Assessment and Water Cycle Study.

Cirencester Projects

- 5.4 This can be categorised into two main elements: the Town Centre Framework Master Plan and transport projects. ANNEX E provides an outline of the projects and key milestones.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 This section is split into two sections: Local Plan project spend and the Levelling Up & Regeneration Bill.

Local Plan Update

- 6.2 The financial implications associated with preparing a partial update to the adopted Local Plan were set out at the Council meeting held on 3 June 2020. To recap, the costs can be attributed to several discrete parts, principally:
- updating the evidence base; policy writing;
 - undertaking consultations (formal regulations and informal);
 - preparation of the publication / submission plan;
 - examination;
 - adoption; and
 - potential legal challenge.
- 6.3 Expected costs for the Local Plan update are considered as part of the Council's future budget setting process and details were provided at a Cabinet meeting on 2 November 2020.
- 6.4 An update on the project is provided in Table I which revises figures presented to Cabinet on Monday 6th December 2021.

Table 1: Local Plan project expenditure at 1 June 2022

Project / Study	Committed funding	Project started	Spend to date
Integrated Impact Appraisal (Sustainability Appraisal)	£35,000	Yes	£11,000
Habitats Regulation Assessment	£10,000	Yes	£5,217
North Meadow Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Mitigation Strategy	£1,000	Yes	£0
Carbon Audit / Climate Change Risk Assessment	£35,000	No	£0
Play Pitch Strategy	£15,000	Yes	£4,482
Cirencester Town Centre Masterplan	£95,000	Yes	£23,090
Gloucestershire-wide Economic Needs Assessment	£3,012	Completed	£3,012
Gloucestershire-wide Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment; and Site Identification Study	£10,000	Yes	£2,825
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Levels 1 & 2)	£30,000	Yes	£8,074
Preparation of a Sustainable Transport Strategy	£75,000	Yes	£0
Kemble to Cirencester Public Transport Options	£65,000	Yes	£0
Contribution to Stratford to Honeybourne railway reinstatement strategic outline business case	£4,000	Yes	£4,000
Public Consultation / Engagement (including design work, digital content and adverts)	£25,000	Yes	£44,301*
Cotswold District Design Code	£40,000	No	£0
TOTAL SPEND UP TO 1 JUNE 2022			£106,001
TOTAL INCOME TO JUNE 2022			-£128,193*

* The Council has secured external funding. £65,000 to investigate options to connect better Kemble Train Station to Cirencester Town Centre and £63,193 to trial new digital engagement software and approaches.

- 6.5 In November 2021, the Council was awarded £63,193 from the Government's Proptech Digital Engagement Fund to trial new technology to increase digital engagement with early stage local plans. The Council procured a new consultation system supported by a range of

digital content designed to increase engagement. The funding was also used to secure a fixed term part time post to lead the PropTech project for 12 months.

- 6.6 The Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee awarded £65,000 to examine public transport options between Kemble train station and Cirencester town centre. Further details can be found in ANNEX E and via Gloucestershire County Council's website.¹²

Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill

- 6.5 Proposed Planning Reforms are likely to have financial implications but at this stage there is insufficient detail in the Bill to quantify them. The Government recognises that council Planning departments would benefit from additional resources to implement the Government's reforms. It has announced that it will increase planning application fees. It intends to increase planning fees for minor and major applications by 25% and 35% respectively. It also includes the doubling of fees for retrospective applications. This will be consulted on in the summer before changes are made through secondary legislation following the consultation.¹³

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground - approving this non-statutory document helps to meet (in part) the requirements placed on Local Planning Authorities from the National Planning Policy Framework to discharge the statutory 'Duty-to-Cooperate' as part of their local plan preparation. The document is 'live' and subject to regular review. The duty to co-operate is not a duty to agree and there may be times where local planning authorities disagree on matters. If there are, these will be noted in a GSoCG and measures may be sought to mitigate its impact.
- 7.3 Save from the above there are no legal implications arising directly from other aspects of this report.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 The adopted Local Development Scheme¹⁴ includes an assessment of measures that have been or can be taken to mitigate identified risks of partially updating the adopted Local Plan.
- 8.2 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill may represent a risk to the Council's ambition to update partially the Local Plan. It is difficult to quantify the scale of the impact at this stage but it will be prudent to review the project as details become apparent. A key milestone will be

¹² Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee decisions 17/11/21

<https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?&RP=0K=0&DM=725C&HD=0&DS=0&Next=true&H=1&META=GEGJCDecisions&V=1>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-the-planning-system-in-england-government-response-to-the-select-committee-report/government-response-to-the-levelling-up-housing-and-communities-select-committee-report-on-the-future-of-the-planning-system-in-england>

¹⁴ Cotswold Local Development Scheme (2021-2024)

<https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/fmtasbps/local-development-scheme-may-2021.pdf>

the Government's consultations on a revised National Planning Policy Framework and new National Development Management Policies expected later this year.

- 8.3 The Planning Inspectorate has been invited to review the project to update partially the Local Plan. This will establish how matters and issues might be mitigated. As the Local Plan Update progresses to its more formal phases it will be prudent to obtain advice from Counsel on specific matters. The Local Plan Programme Board will be appraised of such instances and matters arising.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 9.1 Local Plan Update – An interim Integrated Impact Assessment¹⁵ has been prepared to support the recent Local Plan consultation.
- 9.2 Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground – An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required because the Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground does not establish specific policies or procedures but only broad areas for seeking future agreement.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 There are no significant implications arising from this report. The Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground does not establish specific policies or procedures but only broad areas for seeking future agreement. However, statutory local plans are required to be subject to Sustainability Appraisal (included within the Integrated Impact Assessment) which will include assessing the contents against a range of environmental objectives.

11. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 11.1 Cabinet could choose not to endorse the Gloucestershire Statement of Common Ground. While the Statement is a non-statutory requirement the Council has a duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities. This Statement discharges this duty. By not endorsing the Statement it may make it more difficult for the Council to secure an Inspector's Local Plan report that confirms legal compliance and soundness. It could also affect the Council's reputation with neighbouring authorities and raise concerns about its commitment to respond to and actively deal with cross boundary matters.

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 12.1 None

(END)

¹⁵ Interim Integrated Impact Assessment (2022) <https://www.cotswold.gov.uk/media/15sfh0a2/11-1-3-interim-ia-report-for-issues-and-options-consultation-feb-2022.pdf>

ANNEX B: THE LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION BILL - SUMMARY

The Government explains that Planning is critical to its ambition to level-up the country. The new system will be based on the principles of: beauty, infrastructure, democracy, environment and neighbourhood engagement. Much of the technical detail is deferred to later stages in the reform process.

This paper provides a summary of the main headlines only and their implications are best considered once technical details become available. In addition to the main headlines below there are various online resources that offer a summary of the proposed changes and further insight. For example:

- The Government's detailed summary of changes;¹⁶
- Planning Resource – A planning journal and website;
 - *23 ways in which the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill would change planning*¹⁷
 - *Gove issues correction over suggestion that new NPPF will be published next month*¹⁸
- The Planner – A planning journal and website
 - Infrastructure Levy¹⁹; and
 - Five Year Housing Land Supply²⁰.
- Town and Country Planning Association²¹ – the views of the Director of Policy;
- Planorak Blog²² – A Planning Barrister's view;

MAIN HEADLINES

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- The New National Development Management Policies will contain policies and the National Planning Policy Framework will be re-focused on setting out the principles to be taken into account in plan-making.
- NPPF will be re-focused on setting out the principles to be taken into account in plan-making, whilst also streamlining national policy, making it more accessible and user friendly.
- New National Development Management Policies will have the same weight as a Local Plan.

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information>

¹⁷ <https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1755675/23-ways-levelling-up-regeneration-bill-change-planning> (please note this article is behind a paywall and requires a subscription)

¹⁸ <https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1789805/gove-issues-correction-suggestion-new-nppf-will-published-next-month> (please note this article is behind a paywall and requires a subscription)

¹⁹ <https://www.theplanner.co.uk/news/ministers-set-to-stagger-introduction-of-infrastructure-levy>

²⁰ <https://www.theplanner.co.uk/news/government-scraps-five-year-supply-of-housing-land>

²¹ https://tcpa.org.uk/the-levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-a-decisive-shift-of-power-to-whitehall/#_ftn2

²² <https://www.planoraks.com/posts-1/all-change-please>

Local Plan process

- Local Plan will be simpler and must not take more than 30 months to prepare. This will still include two formal rounds of public consultation but these will be longer than the existing six weeks.
- New PINS Gateways – these will be mandatory PINS checks through the plan making process;
- The Council will be required to keep its Local Plan up to date and will retain the flexibility to carry out partial updates. It will also be able to adopt new 'Supplementary Plans' as part of the development plan for its area.
- The Government will provide time to transition to the new system and will be setting out further details shortly²³.
- New Local Plan Commissioners may be deployed to support or ultimately takeover plan-making if the Council fails to meet its statutory duties.
- Required to prepare a Design Code covering the district.
- The scope of a Local Plan would be limited to "locally specific" matters, with "issues that apply in most areas" to be covered by national policies.
- The 'duty to co-operate' will be repealed and replaced with an 'alignment test'.
- Faster and slimmed down Local Plans delivered within 30 months and reviewed every 5 years.
- Environmental Outcomes Reports replace Sustainability Appraisals.
- Groups of authorities can collaborate to produce a voluntary spatial development strategy

Development Management

- Increased planning application fees.
- Changes to the Planning Application process to increase certainty.
- 'Loopholes' preventing planning enforcement would be closed.
- Registered parks and gardens to get the same level of planning protection as Listed Buildings.
- New duty for infrastructure providers to engage in the process.

Infrastructure

- A new Infrastructure Levy would replace the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 Agreements (almost) and there would be a new right to require.
- The Council would have to prepare an Infrastructure Delivery Strategy.

Neighbourhood Planning

- Neighbourhood plans will be given greater weight in planning decisions – parity with a Local Plan and Supplementary Plans.

²³ (paragraph 15) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-the-planning-system-in-england-government-response-to-the-select-committee-report/government-response-to-the-levelling-up-housing-and-communities-select-committee-report-on-the-future-of-the-planning-system-in-england>

- Simpler 'Neighbourhood Priorities Statement' can be prepared by parish councils which the council will be obliged to take into account when preparing its Local Plan.
- New 'street vote' powers, allowing residents on a street to bring forward proposals to extend or redevelop their properties in line with their design preferences.

Additional / altered powers

- The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) system would be changed.
- Urban development corporations' planning powers would be revised, and a new type of corporation introduced.
- The Council would get the power to instigate auctions to take leases on vacant high street properties.
- A council tax premium on second homes would be introduced.
- A new route would be created for upper tier councils to combine without the consent of lower tier authorities in their areas.
- More transparency on land ownership.
- The Secretary of State would gain new powers to control changes to street names.

Next Steps - The Government will invite the Council, businesses and members of the public to engage with forthcoming consultations later this year that will set out in detail the nature and impact of the proposed changes to national planning policy. Specifically this will include:

- Technical consultations on the detail of the Infrastructure Levy and changes to compulsory purchase compensation.
- A consultation on the new system of Environmental Outcomes Reports.
- Proposals for changes to planning fees.
- A vision for the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), detailing what a new Framework could look like, and indicating, in broad terms, the types of National Development Management Policy that could accompany it. The Government will also use this document to set out its position on planning for housing, and seek views on this, as well as consulting on delivering the planning commitments set out in the British Energy Security Strategy.
- Subsequently, it will consult on the proposed suite of National Development Management Policies, as well as the revised National Planning Policy Framework.
- The Government will publish further details of its plans for transition, but in broad terms changes to planning procedures will begin to take place from 2024 once the Bill has Royal Assent and associated regulations and changes to national policy are in place.

ANNEX D – LOCAL PLAN MILESTONES



ANNEX E – CIRENCESTER PROJECTS

There are several town planning, infrastructure and feasibility projects that are ongoing in and around Cirencester. These projects all have an influence on one another and critically help to guide the preparation of Cotswold District Council's (CDC) Local Plan update, Cirencester Town Council's (CTC) Neighbourhood Plan and the Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan. The latter is a joint CDC and CTC project.

The paper provides a brief overview of the projects and their key milestones.

Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan (FMP)

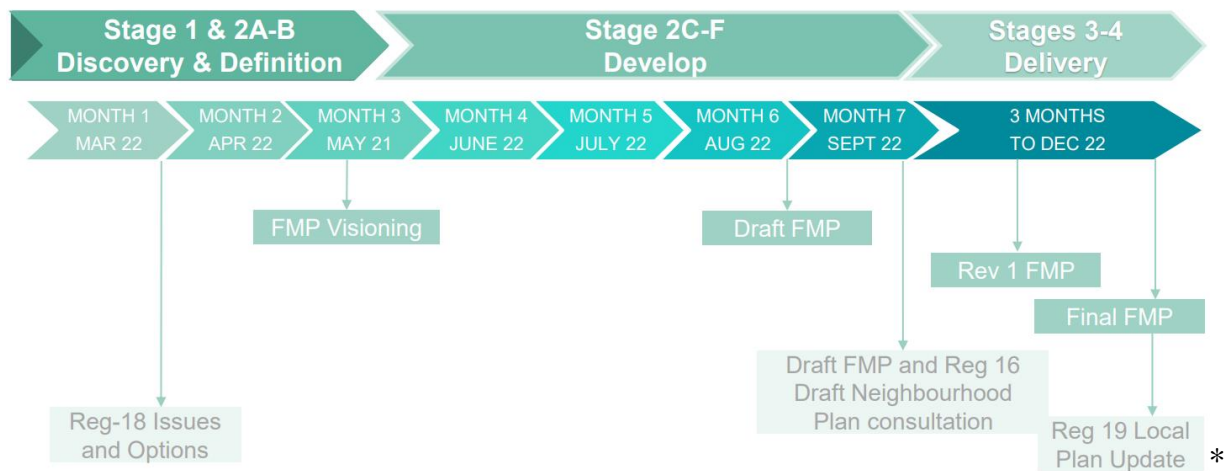
Mace, an urban design consultancy, were appointed in April 2022 to prepare a Framework Masterplan for Cirencester Town Centre. The FMP is intended to serve as an urban design framework for the town centre. It will fulfil a number of functions, including those described in summary below.

- Describe and illustrate how planning and design policies and principles should be implemented across Cirencester town centre.
- Include a vision and development objectives for the town centre as a whole, establishing a context for proposed and potential interventions. This should be informed by the historic fabric, movement and connectivity in the Town Centre (and the role they play in place shaping) and Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan engagement to date.
- Take opportunities to progress CDC's Corporate Priority to respond to the challenge posed by climate change, ensuring all development proposals and principles in Cirencester work towards the target of achieving Net Zero carbon emissions across all sectors by 2045.
- Address the allocated sites and other potential areas of change within the town centre, which are likely to be developed at different times by different developers.
- Coordinate the phased delivery of more detailed design instructions and guidance (e.g. development briefs or master plans) for specific sites within the town centre, as and when the need for them arises. This will include identifying front runner opportunities.
- Identify aspects of the Local Plan, particularly Policy S3, which may require an update to respond to the FMP and its supporting evidence.

The FMP is a nine month programme of work that ends in December 2022, which includes consultation with the public, businesses and organisations. This aligns with the Local Plan partial update project and the Cirencester Town Council Neighbourhood Plan.

It will be a concise, multi-coloured document. It will be heavily illustrated with two-dimensional plans and diagrams, addressing known structuring issues. It will also include 2D and 3D graphics, illustrating how frontrunner options could help in reshaping the town centre. It will be visionary and provide an urban design framework for subsequent detailed work on individual sites.

The project is split into four stages. Stage two will see the emergence of a draft FMP for public consultation in September 2022, which will need to be aligned with Cirencester Town Council's Neighbourhood Plan.



Corrections: Month 3 should read May 22. At Month 7 it should read Reg. 14 draft Neighbourhood Plan consultation.

Mace has identified additional items of work that may benefit the FMP project but these would come at additional cost, in particular transportation assessments, additional 3D modelling and financial / viability modelling of options. Their significance will come into focus as the project progresses through stages one and two.

It is likely that some degree of desktop and/or site survey work will be required to assess the archaeological constraints. The Council will be very much guided by Historic England on such matters and costs and the degree of work will become clearer as the project progresses. Officers will explore if there are opportunities to access Historic England funding / grants.

Associated Transport Projects

Alongside the FMP there are several related and dependent transport projects that the District Council has commissioned or is supporting other organisations to deliver the projects. These broadly fit into six categories:

- A) Active travel (cycling and walking);
- B) Kemble to Cirencester Connections;
- C) Cirencester multimodal interchange (bus hub);
- D) Traffic regulation order;
- E) The Steadings; and
- F) Decarbonising transport.

A summary of the projects are provided below.

Project	Project Outline	Timelines
Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Project	GCC are preparing a prioritised plan for walking and cycling infrastructure improvements in and around Cirencester. It will assist in identifying, prioritising and securing funding.	Due June 2022
Kemble / Cirencester Connections project 1: Active Travel	GCC has commissioned Sustrains to carry out a feasibility study to assess pedestrian and cycle routes between Kemble Station and Cirencester Town Centre. It will Identify preferred route and costs. This evidence will feed into the Steadings, local plan evidence studies and future funding bids.	Due June 2022
Kemble / Cirencester Connections project 2: Very Light Railway	A proposal to reopen the former railway line between Kemble and Cirencester. The Cirencester Community Rail Partnership propose a Very Light Railway (VLR). The partnership is working up a business plan to access a Government Restoring Your Railway fund	Ongoing - awaiting DfT feedback from initial high level business case.
Kemble / Cirencester Connections project 3: Public Transport Options Study	CDC has appointed ITP consultants to prepare a comparator study that will assess the VLR against other options. It will assess route options. The project will support the Bus Service Improvement Plan, FMP, the Steadings S106 alignment and funding bids.	Due July 2022
Cirencester Multi-modal Interchange (bus hub)	CDC has appointed ITP to assess locations for a new interchange hub in Cirencester Town Centre. Options include Forum, Brewery, Sheep Street and Waterloo.	July 2022
Cirencester Town Centre Traffic Regulation Order (TRO)	GCC are looking to implement legal changes to how roads are accessed in the Town Centre to resolve residual issues in town centre. Further review and modelling of potential town centre highways may require additional TROs / alterations.	Consultation ended early April. Implementation in Summer 2022.
The Steadings Highways S106	Definition and implementation of S106 transport obligations - road, Public Transport, cycle, pedestrian, etc. To ensure obligations are delivered and align with current aspirations. The work requires cooperation between CDC, GCC and Bathurst Development Limited.	Next steps will focus on internal layouts, highways scheme approvals, Public Transport service plans and Travel Plan.

Project	Project Outline	Timelines
		Delivery over the next 5 years.
Cotswold Sustainable Transport Plan	CDC is preparing a future transport plan that seeks to establish a pathway and strategy for decarbonisation, with a specific focus on Cirencester. This will align with GCC's Local Transport Plan and CDC's Local Plan	Next steps are to commission carbon baseline, forecast and reduction scenarios. Project is scheduled to be delivered by March 2023.

Cirencester Neighbourhood Plan

The Town Council is supported by a Neighbourhood Steering group made up of local professional volunteers and supported by a Town Planning consultancy. The Steering Group is charged with preparing a draft Neighbourhood Plan for consultation expected in the autumn 2022.

CDC is a member of the Neighbourhood Steering Group and equally CTC are a member of the District Council's Masterplan Programme Board.

Further details about the project can be found on CTC's website - <https://cirencesternp.org/>

Communications

Councillors and members of the public will be offered various opportunities to engage with these projects. Officers will seek to keep Councillors and members informed through the following mediums.

A) Masterplan Project Board Meetings

These meetings will be held at key points in the FMP project and transport projects. The Board has no executive powers and its purpose is to oversee and scrutinise the various projects from a project management perspective. For example, officers will brief members on progress of tasks and key milestones, raise risks and necessary mitigation and provide an update on costs.

The Board helps to ensure project outputs are on track and it acts as a useful sounding board between officers and members. Members of CTC are invited to attend as per MOU arrangements. A reciprocal arrangement is in place for CDC officers and member to attend CTC's Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group meetings

Dates for the next meetings need to be arranged with and confirmed by the Chair, Cllr Rachel Coxcoon. Indicative dates are provided below

- 15 June 2022 Mace have invited all CDC, CTC and relevant GCC Councillors to a workshop to establish objectives, priorities and visions for the town centre. This will build on work already done to date and interviews with technical stakeholders that were held in late April and early May.
- 27 June 2022;
- Mid-September 2022 (Projects update and draft FMP for public consultation); and
- Early January 2022 (Final FMP document).

B) A digital homepage for the Masterplan and associated projects

The recent purchase of the Commonplace digital engagement system provides the ability to create a new landing page for the FMP and associated projects. This will be prepared and go live in the summer months.