



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET MEMBER FOR PLANNING AND REGULATORY SERVICES DECISION MEETING – 12 SEPTEMBER 2024
Subject	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED REFORMS TO THE NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER CHANGES TO THE PLANNING SYSTEM
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Juliet Layton Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services Email: juliet.layton@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Jon Dearing – Interim Executive Director Email: jon.dearing@publicagroup.uk
Report author	Matthew Britton – Interim Forward Planning Lead Email: matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To approve the Council’s consultation response to the Government consultation on ‘Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system’.
Annexes	Annex A – Proposed draft response to the Government consultation on ‘Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system’
Recommendation(s)	That subject to the resolutions of Cabinet on 5 September 2024, the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services: <ol style="list-style-type: none">I. Approves the Council’s consultation response to the Government consultation on ‘Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system’ attached at Annex A, subject to any amendments that are agreed during the meeting.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responding to the Climate Emergency• Delivering Housing• Supporting Communities• Supporting the Economy
Key Decision	NO



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Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Strategic Housing Manager, Local Management Team



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Government is consulting on a series of proposed changes to national planning policy. This includes specific changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and broader reforms relating to planning fees, local plan intervention and the thresholds used for determining applications under the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) regime.
- 1.2** The consultation runs from 30 July – 24 September 2024 and the Government has indicated that a new version of the NPPF will be published later in 2024.
- 1.3** The purpose of this report is to provide the Council’s consultation response that will be submitted to the Government’s consultation (provided in Annex 1) so that it can be discussed and agreed at the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services Decision Meeting.
- 1.4** Since 2020, Cotswold District Council has been preparing a Partial Local Plan Update, primarily to make the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-31) ‘green to the core’. This has already undergone two Regulation 18 consultations, the last being between February and April 2024.
- 1.5** In January 2024, the Council also began a Local Plan Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-41). This will set new requirements for different types of development, green space, and supporting infrastructure, amongst other things. It will also set out how and where these requirements will be delivered. This Local Plan underwent its first Regulation 18 consultation between February and April 2024.

2. MAIN POINTS

- 2.1** Cabinet was notified about the national planning policy consultation proposals and the implications for Cotswold District during the Cabinet Meeting on 5 September 2024. Cabinet was advised that the consultation proposals would have significant implications for the district, if brought into force. Due to the short timescale to prepare and submit a consultation response, Cabinet was requested to delegate the submission of the Council response to the Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services.
- 2.2** The Government’s consultation comprises 106 questions on the various proposed changes to national planning policy. The Council’s consultation response largely welcomes the proposals, with 40 of the responses supporting the proposals; 18 of the responses not supporting the proposals but providing constructive feedback; and the remainder answering questions that did either did not require support or objection or where the Council did not have a view.
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- 2.4** The key points in the Council's consultation response include welcoming the proposal for increased social rented housing from new developments. This aligns with the Council's priority to deliver more affordable housing, particularly social rented housing. Concerns are raised, however, about the proposal to increase the number of homes needed in Cotswold District from 504 to 979 homes a year and the way this would be calculated; that no transitional arrangements are proposed to give Local Planning Authorities time to plan for an increased housing need figure; and that some consultation proposals may increase CO2 emissions and miss opportunities to improve health and wellbeing.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1** The Cabinet Member for Planning and Regulatory Services may choose not to approve the consultation response. However, it is open for the Cabinet Member to choose to approve the response, subject to amendments to be made by officers before submission which would address any queries raised.
- 3.2** Therefore, choosing not to approve the response as a whole is not recommended, given that the Council would lose the opportunity to submit a formal response to put forward the circumstances of the District within the consultation.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** Whilst the consultation response does not have any direct financial implications for the Council it is likely that additional work may be required to amend the Local Plan. The financial impact of such changes will be brought forward for consideration once the impact has been established.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The main legal implications concern the impact of the consultation proposals may have on the timetable for implementation of the new Local Plan and this is, as yet, unclear.

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1** The national planning policy consultation proposals have significant risks to the district, as set out in Section 2. For example, if brought into force, they could have a bearing on the timescales / production of the council's Local Plan; the amount of housing development required in the district; and the Council's ability to deliver plan-led development with the benefit of local democracy.

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT



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7.1 Not applicable.

8. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Delivering a Local Plan that is green to the core is a corporate priority in the Council's efforts to tackle the climate change and ecological emergencies and the consultation proposals may impact this.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [Proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system \(MHCLG, 30 July 2024\)](#)
- [National Planning Policy Framework: draft text for consultation \(MHCLG, 30 July 2024\)](#)
- [Outcome of the proposed revised method \(MHCLG, 30 July 2024\)](#)

(END)