



# Planning Bulletin January 2025

This monthly note highlights some of the recent and forthcoming developments in the world of planning, from a heritage perspective. Please note that this is not necessarily a complete review of matters and is not intended to provide any legal advice on the issues raised. Unless otherwise stated, it does not comprise the formal position of Historic England on these matters.

## Legislation and Matters Arising

This section provides a summary of updates to emerging legislation in the last month. Further information on what the emerging legislation covers can now be found in [Appendix I](#).

### Emerging Legislation

#### The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill

- The [Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Bill](#) passed second reading on 7 January. The committee stage is due to start on 3 February in the House of Lords.

#### Great British Energy Bill

- The [Great British Energy Bill](#) is currently at committee stage, which began on 3 December. The report stage is due on 11 February.

#### The Crown Estate Bill

- The [Crown Estate Bill](#) passed second reading on 7 January a date for committee stage is yet to be announced.

### Secondary Legislation

#### Increasing Planning Fees

- On 13 January, the Government laid [The Town and Country Planning \(Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications, Requests and Site Visits\) \(England\) \(Amendment and Transitional Provision\) Regulations 2025](#) before parliament.
- The regulations will increase the fees payable for applications for householder development, applications for prior approval and applications for the approval of details reserved by condition. The regulations also introduce a new three-tier banded fee structure for applications to vary or remove a condition, with separate fees for householder, non-major (other than householder) and major development.



- The accompanying [explanatory note](#) provides further context and details of the changes. This includes confirmation that there will continue to be no fees for applications related to listed buildings, demolition in Conservation Areas and works to protected trees at this time but the Government “will keep this under review”.
- The new fees come into force on 1 April.

## Policy and Guidance

### Protected Landscape Guidance

- On 16 December, Defra published new [guidance for relevant authorities on seeking to further the purposes of Protected Landscapes](#).
- This guidance reflects changes brought forward via [Section 245 \(Protected Landscapes\)](#) of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, which amended the duty on relevant authorities in respect of their functions which affect land in National Parks, National Landscapes (previously known as AONBs), and the Norfolk and Suffolk Broads in England (collectively known as Protected Landscapes).
- Relevant authorities must now ‘seek to further’ the statutory purposes of Protected Landscapes. This replaces the previous duty on relevant authorities to ‘have regard to’ their statutory purposes. The Defra guidance sets out how the Protected Landscapes duty is intended to operate and provides broad principles to guide relevant authorities in complying with it.

## Committees

### Built Environment Committee

- The [Built Environment Committee](#), in the House of Lords, has two inquiries open:
  - The [High Street in Towns and Small Cities Inquiry](#) is looking at how high streets can be regenerated and become more resilient and attractive. On 28 November, the Committee published its report, [High Streets: Life beyond retail?](#) A summary of the Report’s findings is available on the [Built Environment Committee’s Website](#). A response by the Government is due by 28 January.
  - The [Grey Belt Inquiry](#) is looking at what Grey Belt land is, how it can contribute to housing targets and what sustainable Grey Belt development looks like. On 18 December, Matthew Pennycook gave oral evidence to the Inquiry. All [oral and written evidence](#) submitted can be viewed online.

## Culture, Media and Sport Committee

- The [Culture, Media and Sport Committee](#) currently has five inquiries open, including:
  - The [Protecting Built Heritage Inquiry](#), which opened on 16 December. The inquiry will examine issues with funding and whether current finance models are suitable and accessible. It will also engage with how the Government can tackle practical and regulatory challenges, such as the availability of skilled practitioners, the managed decline of assets on publicly-owned land, and policy issues arising from net zero targets and planning policy. Alongside this, MPs will highlight the importance of built heritage for economic regeneration and to community identities, as well as how those communities can be empowered to manage their local built heritage assets. The deadline for submitting evidence to the inquiry is 3 February.

## Energy Security and Net Zero Committee

- The [Energy Security and Net Zero Committee](#) currently has four inquiries open, including:
  - [Retrofitting homes for net zero](#), which opened on 19 November. The Committee will invite two stakeholder panels to consider the policy changes needed to deliver low carbon heating and energy efficient homes.
  - [Unlocking community energy at scale](#), which opened on 11 November. The inquiry will consider, amongst other things, how reforms to the planning system, grid connections and the energy market could support the growth of community energy at scale.
  - [Workforce planning to deliver clean, secure energy](#), which opened on 11 November. The Inquiry will consider how to build the workforce that is needed to deliver the policies and infrastructure for the UK's clean, secure energy mission.

## Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

- The [Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee](#) has six inquiries open including:
  - [Inquiry into the Work of Defra and its arm's length bodies](#), which opened on 6 November.
  - [The future of farming](#), which opened on 6 December.

## Environmental Audit Committee

- The [Environmental Audit Committee](#) has five inquiries open, including:
  - [Environmental sustainability and housing growth](#), which opened on 18 November. The Inquiry is seeking views on how the Government's proposed reforms to national



planning policy and housebuilding targets might affect environmental protections and current approaches to sustainable development. The terms of reference are available at the [Committee's evidence portal](#).

- [Governing the marine environment](#), which opened on 16 December. The Inquiry will focus on the UK's environmental obligations under marine treaties and how the UK is delivering on them, as well as the Government's strategy for marine planning and protection in its domestic waters.
- [Flood resilience in England](#), which opened on 10 December. The inquiry focuses on how flood resilience can be strengthened in response to increasing risks from extreme weather, rising sea levels, and evolving flood hazards.

## Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

- The [Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee](#) has four inquiries open, including:
  - [Delivering 1.5 million new homes: Land Value Capture](#), which opened on 22 January. The inquiry looks at how land value capture policies - which seek to capture the value uplift on land when it is granted planning permission - can contribute to the delivery of the Government's house building plans and help fund affordable housing and public infrastructure. The deadline for submitting evidence is 5 March.

## Public Accounts Committee

- The [Public Accounts Committee](#) has 31 inquiries open, including:
  - [HS2: Update following Northern leg cancellation](#), which opened on 31 October.

## Transport Committee

- The [Transport Committee](#) has three inquiries open, including:
  - [Managing the impact of street works](#), which opened on 6 December. The Inquiry will look at the effects of street works on surface quality and maintenance costs, and how well local authorities are able to manage disruption for road and pavement users.

## Government Planning Letters

### Letters to Chief Planning Officers

MHCLG regularly writes [letters to Chief Planning Officers](#) of local planning authorities in England, providing guidance on planning.



## Planning Newsletter: 19 December

- The [19 December Planning Newsletter](#) references:
  - The [Development and Nature Recovery Working Paper](#).
  - [Updated Criteria Document for Improving Planning Performance](#).
  - A reminder to update Brownfield Land Register data on local authority websites.
  - Grant Funding Available for Implementing NPPF Policy Changes.
  - Update on [Annual Local Authority Planning Capacity Survey](#).

## Advice

All [Historic England planning advice](#) is available on our website, and Appendix II includes a list of all Good Practice Advice notes (GPAs) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs).

## Training

Historic England provide webinars and e-learning courses. Visit [Historic England's training webpages](#) for information and booking, or keep up-to-date on new courses and training news by signing up to receive [Historic England's bi-monthly Training Newsletter](#).

## Apprenticeships Networking Session

- To celebrate National Apprenticeship Week 2025, the [Local Authority Heritage Community](#) is hosting an Apprenticeships Networking Session for Local Authority Heritage Teams. Join Ellie Davis, Heritage Apprenticeships and Qualifications Adviser at Historic England, for an online drop-in session from 12.30-13.30 on Tuesday 11 February. We want to hear your thoughts and experiences, and offer a space to network, ask questions, celebrating apprenticeships and their value for the public sector, as well as exploring the barrier to entry. Visit <https://khub.net/group/laheritage> for event details and more discussion

## Training Needs Analysis

- Historic England is currently designing its training programme for the next 2 years and wants to refresh its understanding of sector training priorities. Feedback on what the focus of Historic England's training should be is welcome via the [Historic England Training Needs Analysis Survey](#). The survey is short and should take around 10 minutes to complete.



## Infrastructure Planning

### Infrastructure Planning and Judicial Review Reform

- On 23 January, Sarah Sackman, Minister of State for Justice, made a statement on [Infrastructure Planning and Judicial Review Reform](#). The statement confirmed that the Government will reform the NSIP judicial review process. Legal challenges will have just one attempt rather than three to challenge a development consent decision in future. The Government will also introduce non-mandatory case management conferences to NSIP judicial reviews; formally designate NSIP judicial reviews as significant planning court claims; and work with the judiciary to introduce target timescales for NSIP judicial reviews in the Court of Appeal and in the Supreme Court.

### 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy Working Paper

- On 26 January, HM Treasury published the [10 Year Infrastructure Strategy Working Paper](#) setting out the government's plan for its 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy. The 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy seeks to reduce uncertainty by bringing together a long-term plan for the country's social, economic and housing infrastructure. The Strategy will also set out an institutional framework to support its implementation, including setting out the role of public financing institutions such as the National Wealth Fund and how the Strategy will support other strategies such as the industrial strategy.

## Other Items

### Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme

- On 22 January, Heritage Minister, Chris Bryant announced that the [Government's Listed Places of Worship Grant Scheme will be extended](#) for 2025/26. The scheme, which was due to end on 31 March, gives grants towards VAT paid on repairs and renovations to the UK's listed sites of worship, such as works to the foundations, masonry and monuments integral to the buildings.

### Local authority planning capacity and skills survey: 2023 findings

- On 9 January, MHCLG published the findings from its [first annual survey of planning capacity and skills in local authorities in England \(2023\)](#). Amongst other results, the survey found that:
  - Nine out of 10 planning departments reported some difficulty with recruitment.
  - Almost all (97%) planning departments reported some planning skills gaps.



- For those reporting any gaps, the most commonly reported gaps (selected from a list) were in ecology and biodiversity (72%) and masterplanning and design codes (63%), with over half reporting gaps in urban design and architecture (54%). Around a third of planning departments (30%) reported gaps in conservation and heritage.

## Current Consultations

### Government Consultations

#### Planning Reform Working Paper: Planning Committees

- On 9 December, MHCLG published the [Planning Reform Working Paper: Planning Committees](#) inviting views on how the government could reform planning committees to support a plan-led system and ensure appropriate democratic oversight. The paper sets out three proposals:
  - a national scheme of delegation – bringing clarity and consistency on which applications are decided by officers and which by committees;
  - dedicated committees for strategic development – allowing a dedicated and small group of councillors to dedicate energy to the most significant projects; and
  - training for committee members – requiring that councillors undertake appropriate training before they can form part of a planning committee.

#### Planning Reform Working Paper: Development and Nature Recovery

- On 12 December, MHCLG published the [Planning Reform Working Paper: Development and Nature Recovery](#) inviting views on proposals for a new approach to how housing and infrastructure development can meet its environmental obligations and contribute to nature recovery. The paper sets out three proposals:
  - Moving responsibility for identifying actions to address environmental impacts away from multiple project-specific assessments in an area to a single strategic assessment and delivery plan. This will allow action to address environmental impacts from development to be taken strategically, at an appropriate geographic scale, rather than at the level of an individual project – while recognising the importance of protecting local communities' access to nature and green space.
  - Moving more responsibility for planning and implementing these strategic actions onto the state, delivered through organisations with the right expertise and with the necessary flexibility to take actions that most effectively deliver positive outcomes for nature.



- In turn, allowing impacts to be dealt with strategically in exchange for a financial payment that helps fund strategic actions, so development can proceed more quickly. Project-level environmental assessments are then limited only to those harms not dealt with strategically.

### Compulsory Purchase Process and Compensation Reforms

- On 19 December, MHCLG published [the Compulsory Purchase Process and Compensation Reforms consultation](#). The consultation seeks views on a range of proposals aimed at implementing technical reforms to the compulsory purchase process. The consultation closes on 13 February.

### Planning Reform Working Paper: Streamlining Infrastructure Planning

- On 26 January, MHCLG published the [Planning Reform Working Paper: Streamlining Infrastructure Planning](#) inviting views on further action the government could take through the planning system to streamline the development of critical infrastructure, in particular Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs), across England. The paper set out a number of options, including:
  - reviewing National Policy Statements (NPSs) on a more regular basis and making it easier to update them in the interim;
  - protecting the role of consultation in the consenting process but reviewing how it can be improved
  - supporting delivery of infrastructure post-consent;
  - allowing for appropriate flexibility in the process applied to projects where this is merited; and
  - strengthening statutory guidance to ensure clarity over what is and is not required.

### Historic England Consultation Responses

- Historic England [responses to recent consultations](#) are available on our website. This includes:
  - [Historic England's response to the MHCLG Brownfield Passports: Making the Most of Urban Land Working Paper](#).





## Calendar

### January 2025

28 January – The Government’s response to the [High Street in Towns and Small Cities Inquiry](#) is due to be published.

### February 2025

3 February – The deadline for submitting evidence to the [Protecting Built Heritage Inquiry](#).

11 February - [Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Bill](#) committee stage is due to start.

Apprenticeships Networking Session 12.30-13.30pm

13 February - [The Compulsory Purchase Process and Compensation Reforms consultation](#) closes.

### March 2025

5 March – The deadline for submitting evidence to the [Delivering 1.5 million new homes: Land Value Capture](#) Inquiry

### April 2025

1 April - New [Planning Fees](#) are due to come into force.

## Planning Bulletin Notifications

If you did not receive this edition of Planning Bulletin direct from Historic England, you can sign up for notifications when a new edition is issued by emailing: [governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk)

If you no longer wish to receive Planning Bulletin, or have received this in error, please email [governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk](mailto:governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk) and we will remove you from the mailing list.



# Appendix I: Progress of Emerging Legislation

## Government Bills

The [King's Speech](#) (2024) introduced 40 bills, including the **Planning and Infrastructure Bill**. More information on the proposed contents of these and other bills can be found in the [King's Speech 2024: background briefing notes](#) (summarised below).

### Planning and Infrastructure Bill

- The [Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#), which Government has stated will be introduced in Spring 2025, proposes to:
  - Streamline the delivery process for critical infrastructure, including simplifying the consenting process for major infrastructure projects.
  - Enable relevant, new, and improved National Policy Statements to come forward, establishing a review process that provides the opportunity for them to be updated every five years.
  - Further reform compulsory purchase compensation rules to ensure that compensation paid to landowners is fair but not excessive where important social and physical infrastructure and affordable housing are being delivered.
  - Improve local planning decision making by modernising planning committees.
  - Increase local planning authorities' capacity, to improve performance and decision making, providing a more predictable service to developers and investors.
  - Use development to fund nature recovery where currently both are stalled.

### English Devolution Bill

- The [English Devolution Bill](#), not yet laid before Parliament, proposes to:
  - Make devolution the default, with a standardised devolution framework.
  - Provide greater powers to mayors over areas including strategic planning.
- Ahead of the bill, on 16 December 2024, Government published the [English Devolution White Paper](#) which provides further detail including a proposed devolution structure and local government re-structuring.



## Great British Energy Bill

- The [Great British Energy Bill](#) establishes Great British Energy, a new, publicly owned energy production company which will own, manage, and operate clean power projects. On 3 September, DESNZ published the [Great British Energy Bill Overarching Factsheet](#). The House of Commons Library has also published on 3 September a [Research Briefing on the Great British Energy Bill](#).

## Holocaust Memorial Bill

- The [Holocaust Memorial Bill](#) was carried over from the previous Parliamentary session and has already passed the House of Commons and its first and second reading in the House of Lords. The Bill will enable the Government to deliver on a long-term commitment to build a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre next to the Houses of Parliament by allocating funding and removing restrictions on development in Victoria Tower Gardens. A date for committee stage is yet to be announced.

## High Speed Rail (Manchester to Crewe) Bill

- The [High Speed Rail \(Manchester to Crewe\) Bill](#) was carried over from the previous Parliamentary session. The Bill enables powers to deliver rail infrastructure in the north of England.

## Crown Estate Bill

- The [Crown Estate Bill](#) seeks to change aspects of how the Crown Estate operates including widening investment powers and granting the power to borrow. This will support delivery of offshore energy, as the Crown Estate is the owner of the seabed, as well as regeneration and housebuilding given its extensive property portfolio. On 20 December 2024, Government published a [Research Briefing on the Crown Estate Bill](#).

## Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill

- The [Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Bill](#) require persons with control of certain premises or events to take steps to reduce the vulnerability of the premises or event, and the risk of physical harm to individuals arising from, acts of terrorism; to confer related functions on the Security Industry Authority; to limit the disclosure of information about licensed premises that is likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism; and for connected purposes. On 5 December 2024, Government published a [Research Briefing on the Terrorism \(Protection of Premises\) Bill](#).



## Appendix II: Historic England Planning Advice

### Good Practice Advice Notes (GPAs)

The GPAs provide information on good practice, particularly looking at the principles of how national planning policy and guidance can be applied. They are the result of collaborative working with the heritage and property sectors in the [Historic Environment Forum](#), and have been prepared following public consultation:

- [GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans \(March 2015\)](#)
- [GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment \(March 2015\)](#)
- [GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets \(December 2017\)](#)
- [GPA4: Enabling Development and Heritage Assets \(June 2020\)](#)

### Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs)

The HEANs include detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance. They have been prepared by Historic England following public consultation:

- [HEAN 1: Conservation Areas: Designation, Appraisal and Review \(Second Edition\) \(February 2019\)](#)
- [HEAN 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets \(February 2016\)](#)
- [HEAN 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans \(October 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 4: Tall Buildings \(Second Edition\) \(March 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 5: Setting up a Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement \(November 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 6: Drawing up a Local Listed Building Consent Order \(November 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 7: Local Heritage Listing \(Second edition\) \(January 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 8: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment \(December 2016\)](#)
- [HEAN 9: The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings \(October 2017\)](#)
- [HEAN 10: Listed Buildings and Curtilage \(February 2018\)](#)



Historic England

- [HEAN 11: Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment \(Second Edition\) \(April 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 12: Statements of Heritage Significance \(October 2019\)](#)
- [HEAN 13: Minerals Extraction and Archaeology \(January 2020\)](#)
- HEAN 14 has been superseded by HEAN 18 and has been withdrawn
- [HEAN 15: Commercial Renewable Energy Development and the Historic Environment \(February 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 16: Listed Building Consent \(June 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 17: Planning and Archaeology \(November 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency \(July 2024\)](#)