



Planning Update Report

May 2021

1. B&NES Council News, Consultation & Policy

1.1 Local Plan Partial Update Options Consultation: All comments submitted as part of B&NES Council's consultation will be made available via the consultation portal, shortly after the end of the consultation period. B&NES Council is currently progressing towards the production of a Draft Plan.

There will be further opportunities to contribute ideas and comment on the content of the Local Plan Partial Update, as the update progresses towards becoming adopted (being official council policy). These are the stages to adoption:

Local Plan progress to adoption

Date	Action
Spring 2021	Formal consultation on Draft Partial Update (Regulation 19)
Autumn 2021	Plan submission for examination by a planning inspector, appointed by the Secretary of State (Regulation 21)
Winter 2021 to 22	Examination hearings
Spring 2022	Adoption

The timetable for **stakeholder engagement for the Milsom Quarter masterplan** is currently in progress by B&NES Council. It has been confirmed that Bath Preservation Trust will have a chance for consultation both as part of the public consultation on the Local Plan Review, and as part of stakeholder engagement as part of the masterplan evidence gathering.

1.2 Council Announces New Leader and Cabinet Roles: A new leader and cabinet members for B&NES Council were appointed on 4th May at the council's Annual General Meeting. The new nine-member team is made up of the new leader, Councillor Kevin Guy, supported by eight councillors responsible for seven portfolios, one of which - for Adults and Council House Building - will be subject to a job share.

The appointment of the new posts follows Councillor Dine Romero standing down as council leader and leader of the Liberal Democrat group in April.

The new cabinet and their portfolios are:

- Councillor Kevin Guy - Council Leader
- Councillor Richard Samuel - Deputy Council Leader, Economic Development and Resources
- Councillor Sarah Warren - Deputy Council Leader, Climate and Sustainable Travel
- Councillor Alison Born and Councillor Tom Davies (Job Share) - Adults and Council House Building
- Councillor Dine Romero - Children and Young People, Communities and Culture
- Councillor David Wood - Neighbourhood Services
- Councillor Manda Rigby - Transport
- Councillor Tim Ball - Planning

Two cabinet assistants were also appointed. Councillor Matt McCabe will support the Deputy Leader for Climate and Sustainable Travel and the cabinet member for Planning. Councillor Jess David will support the cabinet member for Neighbourhood Services.

In addition to the cabinet roles the AGM appointed a new Chair of the Council, Councillor Lisa O'Brien. The new Vice-Chair is Councillor Shaun Stephenson-McGall.

The full Annual General Meeting can be viewed via the council's Youtube channel:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JLec1p4yEa4&t=401s>

1.3 Cleveland Pools Project: On 6th May, the Cleveland Pools project was officially launched, with works beginning to restore the historic pools in Bath, following a 17-year community campaign to save the Grade II* listed site. Machinery, building materials and equipment required to carry out the major refurbishment work on-site will have to be loaded up at the nearby Avon Rugby Club, which is being used as a base, and carried up-river on a pontoon pushed by a barge fitted out for the purpose, as the site is only accessible for vehicles by river. Among the work to be carried out is the restoration of two pools - the crescent-shaped main pool for adults and a smaller, shallower pool for children. There will also be refurbishment of the largely unaltered Grade II* listed buildings, the central cottage upgraded to be used as a main entrance and pay point, with the first floor to become a caretaker's flat. Works are set to finish by summer 2022.

The overall project costs for the period 2019 to 2025 are now just over the £8 million mark with the Cleveland Pools Trust needing to raise a further £400,000 over the next 18 months to deliver all outcomes.

1.4 Climate Emergency Centres: High street shops in England and Wales are being repurposed as climate emergency centre. Dozens of familiar high street retail units across England and Wales, including Homebase, River Island and William Hill have been converted into climate emergency centres - community hubs "for the benefit of people and planet" - after changes in shopping habits or the Covid pandemic left them sitting empty. Owners of vacant premises have the option to reduce their business rates payments by up to 100% through leasing the property for community benefit to a not-for-profit or charitable organisation, such as a climate emergency centre. The sustainable centres are run by

communities themselves and offer a range of activities that focus on both addressing the climate emergency and bringing people together. So far, five physical centres have been established, with climate emergency centre groups set up in over 33 towns and cities across the UK.

You can find out more information via their website:

<https://climateemergencycentre.co.uk/cec-uk-network-2/>

Discussions are ongoing regarding the possibility of forming a group to set up a Climate Emergency Centre in Bath's city centre, using a vacant shop unit for a wide range of activities and projects aimed at supporting people to develop resilience and share green ideas and resources. An initial meeting was held on 5th May, at which the Bath Preservation Trust was represented.

1.5 Improving Air Quality - Parking Permits Consultation: A consultation was launched on 27th April for proposals to base residents' parking permit charges on vehicle emissions and changes to move long stay visitor parking to off-street car parks. The proposals have been developed by B&NES Council to improve air quality ensuring a safer environment for pedestrians by reducing the risks to them posed by air pollution, while also meeting the council's wider transport policy aims. The purpose of emissions-based parking permits is to encourage residents to switch to low-emissions vehicles and to improve air quality.

Under the proposal the base price of a residents' parking permit would remain at £100 a year with a second permit costing £160 where the most polluting vehicle on the permit emits less than 131g/km of CO₂. Charges for higher polluting vehicles would increase by five per cent for each subsequent emissions band. Diesel vehicles would be subject to an additional 25 per cent surcharge in order to reduce NO₂ emissions in the shortest possible time.

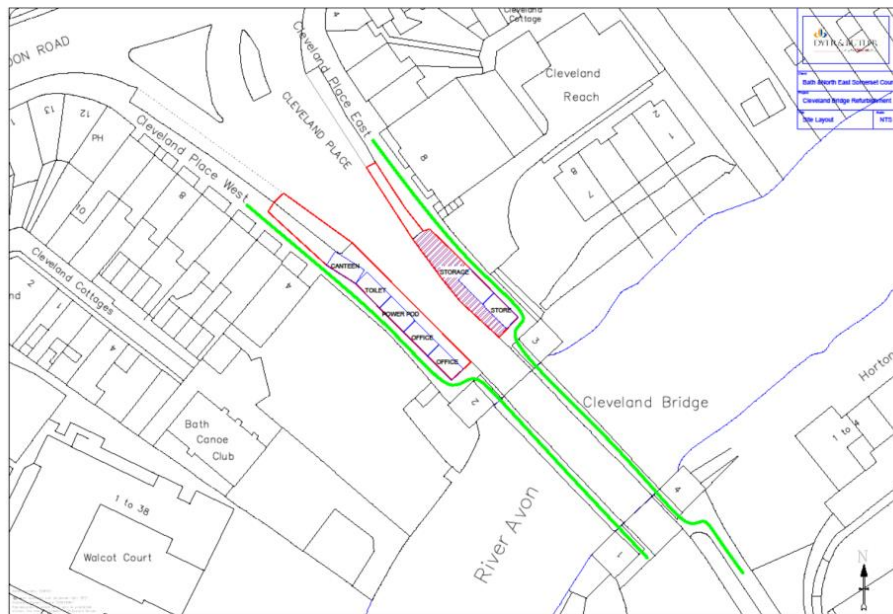
Other proposed changes include:

- Residents' parking visitor permit charges to be increased by 50p a day in year one with subsequent rises of 25p a day in years two and three.
- A review of hotel, guest house and holiday let permits - to reallocate the parking to car parks and to include the introduction of digitised permits.
- A review of medical permits - to include the introduction of digitised permits to counter misuse and an increase to bring the charge in-line with residents' permits.
- An increase in trade permit charges.
- The introduction of half day paper visitor permits to support vulnerable residents unable to access the financial savings offered by digital permits.

Public consultation closes on 25th May. All consultation documents can be accessed via the council's website: <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/parking-permits-consultation-april-2021>

1.6 Cleveland Bridge: Preparatory works for major structural repairs to Bath's historic Cleveland Bridge began on 4th May with scaffolding erected ahead of the start of the £3.8 million scheme. Traffic control will be in place at Bath's Cleveland Bridge from May 4 for four weeks while the scaffolding is put up and traffic will be reduced to one lane with traffic signals in place. A full bridge closure will start in the week beginning May 31 when the major structural repair scheme begins, with diversion routes in place for motorists.

The drawing below shows the site layout with the green line detailing the pedestrian access route. This route and the road layout will change over the course of the project depending on the works being undertaken. We will inform you of these changes prior to them taking place.



The works compound area will also require the temporary suspension of a number of existing parking bays, we have kept this to a minimum in order to ensure that nearby businesses still have space for deliveries and access.

Traffic diversions can be viewed via the council's website:

<https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/cleveland-bridge-renovation-project/cleveland-bridge-renovation-project-0>

BPT's senior curator Dr Amy Frost spoke on BBC Radio Bristol on 4th May about the historical significance of Cleveland Bridge and its future:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sounds/play/p09f2szf>

1.7 Green Park Station: Part of Green Park Station has been temporarily closed by the Ethical Property Company following concerns with the structural stability of the glass roof, after a panel of glass came loose on 8th April. The area has been deemed unsafe and repairs are to go ahead whilst access is restricted to the public, but the majority of the site remains open, and businesses are still trading as usual. B&NES Council has been working with Bath Farmers' Market Committee to temporarily relocate the market to the former coach station in Avon Street from 1st May whilst repairs are ongoing.

You can read updates via their website: <https://www.greenparkstation.co.uk/>

1.8 B&NES Free Tree Giveaway: Two free tree giveaways were held at Radstock Depot on 24th April and 1st May. B&NES residents were able to collect up to three trees per household to plant in their private gardens as part of an incentive to improve their local environment. The scheme is aimed at extending valuable tree cover in hard-to-reach areas across B&NES by providing species of limited size, that are characteristic of the suburban environment with the majority shown to be beneficial to air quality. Residents were able to choose from a range of species including birch, alders, snake bark maple and mountain ash.

You can read the full press release via the council's website:

<https://newsroom.bathnes.gov.uk/news/free-tree-giveaways-increase-bath-and-north-east-somerset-green-canopy>

You can read the council's latest actions in response to the Climate Emergency via the council's website: <https://www.bathnes.gov.uk/climate-emergency>

1.9 Land Rear of 89-123 Englishcombe Lane: A controversial planning application by B&NES Council for the development of 37 homes on a rare tufa field is to be withdrawn. Cllr Kevin Guy released a statement after being elected leader at the Council meeting on 4th May in which he stated that following significant backlash from local residents, the application for development on the land to the rear of Englishcombe Lane will be withdrawn with immediate effect. The council will be maintaining the land and will not be selling it on to developers.

You can watch Cllr Kevin Guy's statement via the council's Youtube channel:

<https://twitter.com/CllrKevinGuy/status/1389654176410607618>

1.10 Bath Abbey Footprint Project: Works on the Footprint project are visibly finishing up as the hoardings along the north side of the Abbey are being taken down.



The Abbey has hit its £500,000 target for the Brownsword Matchfund Challenge; this sum will be doubled by the Brownsword Charitable Foundation and will provide significant help towards the cost of fulfilling the Footprint project.

One of six grants across the country offered by the National Archives with the theme of 'addressing representation in archives' has been awarded to explore Bath's links to the transatlantic slave trade and the history of a Black presence in the city by studying digital archives of the Bath Chronicle. The Abbey is working in partnership with Bath Preservation Trust (specifically Beckford's Tower Museum) and the Bath Records Office.

1.11 ‘Corona Captured’ A Year On: Bath Record Office is renewing its appeal to residents and businesses from across B&NES to help document life in the pandemic. The ‘Corona Captured’ project aims to record the extraordinary times we are living through and the impact Covid-19 has had on individuals and communities to provide valuable information for future generations. The Record Office has already received hundreds of photos and videos, sketches, cartoons, and diaries, but is keen to expand the collection.

Digital content can be uploaded to the archive electronically:

<https://www.batharchives.co.uk/node/add/corona-captured?destination=node/2971>

The ‘Corona Captured’ gallery is free to access online:

<https://www.batharchives.co.uk/corona-captured-gallery>

1.12 Bath Record Office Accreditation: Bath Record Office has achieved Archive Service Accreditation, the UK quality standard which recognises good performance in all areas of archive service delivery. The official Accreditation shows that Bath Record Office meets national standards relating to management and resourcing, the care of its unique collections, and the service provided to its users. The award comes as the Record Office reopened on 4 May after a period of closure due to the national lockdown followed by collection moves in April.

2. Planning Applications, Development and Bath Matters

2.1 The Royal Mineral Water Hospital: Applications [21/01752/FUL](#) & [21/01753/LBA](#) have been submitted, following online [public consultation](#) in March, for the change of use of the Mineral Hospital to a hotel with a new three storey extension to the rear. These application follow on from refused applications 19/04933/FUL & 19/04934/LBA. The proposed rear extension would be a T-shaped structure in Bath stone ashlar with a standing seam zinc mansard roof, with the roof plant integrated into the ground floor at a loss of four bedrooms. The glazed link to the historic west wing has been reduced in size and would be a glazed ‘passage’ between the first floors. Green walling would be used to clad the ground floor plant room and cycle store, and improve outlook from neighbouring properties. A two storey roof terrace (not for public use) on the south elevation would allow for a break up in height and reduction in perceived massing.

2.2 Old King Edward’s School: Applications [21/00692/VAR](#) & [21/00695/LBA](#) for change of use from school to hotel with restaurant and bar on ground floor, with associated internal and external material alterations. **UPDATE** - Historic England has submitted its comments to the scheme, highlighting the benefits of omitted harmful works previously permitted, such as the removal of the internal hoists. However, it maintains that the proposed internal works, some of which were previously permitted such as the subdivision of the first and second floors to provide bathrooms and bedrooms, would result in continued or additional harm to the listed building. On balance, Historic England concludes that the proposed changes would not increase the harm to unacceptable levels, and may be an improvement on the previous permitted scheme due to reduced levels of overall harm.

Abbey Residents Association have objected to the scheme on grounds of the removal of Condition 21 of the previous planning permission (see [13/02136/REN](#)), restricting the customer capacity of the rear courtyard. There is concern that a large number of drinkers in the outside space would be detrimental to local residential amenity.

2.3 Bath Press: Application [20/04760/EFUL](#) for the residential-led redevelopment of the Former Bath Press site on Lower Bristol Road with 286 residential units and ground floor commercial space behind the retained historic façade. **UPDATE** -Some landscape amendments have been made with regards to the species selected for planting along the southern boundary. ‘The revised planting mix seeks to create the right balance between providing amenity value and biodiversity value.’ Where previously further parking spaces for Bath Press use had been allocated, the connection with the southern townscape has been improved with a pedestrian and disabled access created from the South View Road car park.

2.4 The Scala: Application [20/00552/FUL](#) for the mixed-use redevelopment of The Scala site including the demolition of existing extensions and new extensions to improve retail store at ground floor level, provision of residential and student accommodation, and a new dance centre. **UPDATE** - The application went to Planning Committee on 5th May. The planning officer recommended the scheme be permitted, on the basis that the benefits of the scheme, such as the retention of the Co-op store and provision of residential housing, would outweigh harm and adequate site mix would be achieved. BPT spoke against the application on grounds of the excessive height of the central courtyard building and in-principle opposition to speculative PBSA. Councillors were concerned regarding the construction of PBSA within an area of high student HMO concentration, harm to residential amenity, and access concerns. It was additionally felt that the proposed green landscaping was inadequate. It was felt that refusal on grounds of student accommodation would not be defensible at appeal, given the recent Plumb Centre decision, and **Councillors voted 7-2 to refuse the application** on grounds of the excessive scale, height, massing, and design of the central courtyard building resulting in overdevelopment and loss of amenity.

2.5 Dick Lovett Site: Application [20/03071/EFUL](#) for the mixed-use redevelopment of the Dick Lovett car dealerships to provide residential and student accommodation. **UPDATE** - The Urban Design officer is satisfied with the reduction in maximum height across the site from 8 to 6 storeys. The Landscape officer maintains an objection on grounds of continued harm to the OUV of the WHS and continued detriment to townscape character. The proposed tree planting plans along the Lower Bristol Road elevation is not felt to be practical due to the lack of space to allow for mature trees to thrive, and therefore there are concerns that green landscaping plans will not be realised on the site.

2.6 Regency Laundry: Application [20/03166/FUL](#) for the redevelopment of the Regency Laundry to provide co-living accommodation. **UPDATE** - The application previously proposed no affordable housing on the basis that ‘co-living’ constitutes Sui generis use and would not trigger Policy CP9; average rooms would cost approx. £800-840 a month, and large studio rooms would cost approx. £840-920 a month. Following council negotiations, an affordable housing percentage of 14% (roughly 22 of 155 rooms) is proposed at 80% Open Market Rent.

2.7 Homebase: Application [20/00259/FUL](#) for the redevelopment of the Homebase site to provide a new care community. **UPDATE** - Appeal inquiry [APP/F0114/W/21/3268794](#) is scheduled to begin on 22nd June, running through 25th June, 28th-30th June, and 2nd July, with final inquiry evidence due by 25th May. BPT have submitted initial written representation and have registered to speak against the appeal.

The main issues in this case are likely to relate to:

- The effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding area, having particular regard to the City of Bath World Heritage Site (WHS) and special regard to the settings of a Grade II* listed building, 8-18 Norfolk Crescent, and the Bath Conservation Area (BCA).
- The effect on the living conditions of occupants of residential dwellings on Albert Crescent, Western Terrace and The Mews with regard to privacy and outlook.

The Inspector has additionally flagged concerns regarding:

- Consideration of ‘[Shimbles v City of Bradford MBC \[2018\] EWHC 195 \(Admin\)](#)’, ‘[Bedford BC v SoS \[2012\] EWHC 4344 \(Admin\)](#)’, and ‘[Barnwell Manor Wind Energy Ltd v East Northants DC, English Heritage, National Trust and SSCLG \[2014\] EWCA Civ 137](#)’ judgements and any others in relation to how harm to heritage assets and their settings should be weighted.
- The potential impact of proposed lighting on a Special Area of Conservation.
- Whether a financial contribution for local green space would be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.
- Whether the personal care definition within the s106 would preclude C3 use.

2.8 Holburne Park: Appeal [APP/F0114/W/20/3256285](#) (application 19/03838/FUL for 70 new homes on the Holburne Park site) and appeal [APP/F0114/W/20/3256292](#) (application 19/04772/FUL for 8 additional homes on the Holburne Park site). **UPDATE** - Both appeals have been dismissed, on the basis that permitted applications 20/02926/FUL & 20/02921/FUL provide a higher level of affordable housing with very little change in material benefit. The inspector concluded that “In my view the submitted viability information and reported impacts of COVID-19 do not justify that either the originally proposed commuted sum or a nil upfront contribution is appropriate in this instance.”

2.9 Bath Cricket Club: Permitted application [17/04338/FUL](#) for mixed-use development of purpose-built student accommodation with communal and ancillary facilities, replacement indoor cricket facility, new car parking, and landscaping. **UPDATE** - Works ongoing. The steel frame to the building is complete, metal decking has been completed on all floors above the cricket school, and concreting started on 15th March. Works on the structure of the student accommodation are due to start April 2021.

Recent development updates are available via their website:

<https://www.bathcricket.com/news/development-update-22nd-march/>

2.10 Stadium for Bath/The Rec: Application [21/00962/VAR](#) for the extension of permission for the temporary eastern stand until 30th May 2022. **UPDATE** - Application 21/00962/VAR has been withdrawn. Councillors have lodged objections to the scheme on the grounds that the continued presence of the stands would hinder the use of the grounds

by local residents for alternative sports and leisure. The exceptional circumstances that led to the stand being retained through 2020 are argued to no longer apply due to the loosening of pandemic-related restrictions.

Bath Rugby Club has released an update on the progress of the Stadium for Bath, in which the under-stadium car park will be omitted from all future iterations of the stadium as it is no longer felt to be appropriate to base the sustainability of the stadium on large-scale parking facilities in the city centre, in light of the Climate Emergency. As a result, the stadium would be dropped in height and alternative flood defence measures have been found that would be appropriate for the retention of playing surfaces in good condition. However, it has not been officially confirmed whether this would definitely result in a reduction in height of the stadium design. The club has been granted leave on all grounds of appeal in relation to a recent judgment regarding the 1922 Covenants. Bath Recreation Limited has also been granted permission to join the appeal proceedings. The appeal hearing is due to be heard in autumn 2021. In the meantime, the club will continue to operate its temporary stadium facilities at the Recreation Ground.

Caroline Kay released the following statement on behalf of the Bath Preservation Trust:

“Bath Preservation Trust welcomes the statement from Bath Rugby concerning the plans for a stadium on the Rec.

In particular we welcome the removal of proposals for a large car park under the pitch; partly for environmental reasons as car parking encourages car travel and partly because we assume this removal will enable there to be a reduction in the overall height of any new stands.

We are concerned that a reduction of height is not made explicit in the statement and will work constructively with Bath Rugby and Bath Recreation Ltd to help find an acceptable solution for the heart of the World Heritage Site while hoping to retain the historic vibrancy of Rugby on the Rec.

We note that the next step is a legal appeal; BPT has not engaged with either side on the issue of the Rec covenants and will await the outcome of the Court process.”

You can read the full press release here: <https://www.bathrugby.com/club-news/stadium-for-bath-update/>

2.11 Sulis Down: Following an informal open market tender process, Savills has secured the freehold sale of Sulis Down, a significant residential development site in Bath, to UK leading mixed-tenure developer, Countryside. Countryside’s acquisition of the scheme on the southern edge of the City of Bath, marks its first site purchase in the South West. 171 homes are to be delivered on the site, of which 40% will be affordable, in line with existing planning permission 17/02588/EFUL. Construction is due to begin in summer 2021.

2.12 Land Between 16 And Bypass, London Road West: Application [21/01336/FUL](#) for the erection of nine dwellings on an undeveloped grassland site adjacent to the bypass. **UPDATE** - Additional documentation has now been submitted, including an Ecological Assessment, Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, and Light Impact Assessment. 6m tall 3000k (‘Soft Bright White’) 1000lm LED street lights are planned to be installed across the site; assessment is focused on the restriction of light around the north-east tree buffer to avoid

disturbing habitat, but there is no consideration of wider lighting impact on night time landscape views.

Bathampton Parish Council have expressed concerns regarding the high visibility of the development from across the valley and the lack of landscape impact assessment information, particularly in relation to views from the south side of the valley. The Parish Council share concerns with BPT regarding the number of houses on this site and potential light spill, as well as the need for further archaeological investigation.

2.13 Water Refill Units, City Centre: Applications [20/04732/FUL](#) & [20/04734/FUL](#) for water refill units on Bog Island and High Street. **UPDATE** - Following permission being granted, work has gone ahead for the installation of water refill units in the city centre to reduce the use of single-use water bottles. The High Street unit has now been installed (pending public use), and works at Bog Island continue under an archaeological watching brief.

3. National Developments and News

3.1 Changes to Permitted Development Rights for Electronic Communications

Infrastructure: Technical Consultation: This consultation seeks views on proposed planning reforms that will allow the deployment of telecoms equipment to be quicker whilst ensuring that there are appropriate environmental protections and safeguards in place. Proposals being consulted on include:

- Enabling the deployment of radio equipment housing up to specified limits and allowing greater flexibility for installing equipment cabinets in existing compounds. to support 5G deployment and incentivise the use of existing sites for site sharing
- Strengthening existing masts by permitting alteration or replacement and increases in width and height up to specified limits to enable sites to be upgraded for 5G and for mast sharing.
- Enabling the deployment of building-based masts up to specified limits, including masts located nearer to highways, to support deployment of 5G and extend mobile coverage, subject to prior approval and specified limits.
- Enabling higher new masts to deliver better mobile coverage and mast sharing, subject to specified limits.

Proposals would not apply to Article 2(3) land, aside from proposals for the limited increase in width of existing ground-mounted masts without the need for Prior Approval. Public consultation closes on 14th June. All consultation documentation is available via the government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/changes-to-permitted-development-rights-for-electronic-communications-infrastructure-technical-consultation>

3.2 ‘Help to Build Scheme’: On 24th April, Robert Jenrick announced new plans to make it easier and more affordable for people to build their own homes, supported by over £150 million in new government funding. The ‘Help to Build’ scheme will ensure that self and custom home building can become a realistic option to get onto the housing ladder through lower deposit mortgages. Lowering the required deposit will free up capital, so

people can build the home that they want and need whether it's a commissioned, made to order home, or a new design from scratch. The scheme will provide an equity loan on the completed home, similar to the Help to Buy scheme. The scheme is part of the government's wider Plan for Jobs as the new plans will also benefit small building firms.

The government has also announced £2.1 million in funding to help communities have a greater say in how their local area is developed. The fund will boost neighbourhood planning by giving additional support to local authorities in under-represented areas.

A further £330,000 is also available to councils wishing to pilot this approach to neighbourhood planning.

You can read the press release in full via the government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/over-150-million-funding-to-kickstart-self-building-revolution>

3.3 The Town and Country Planning (Consultation) (England) Direction 2021: A Direction under the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No 595) and came into force on 21 April 2021. It requires local planning authorities in England to consult the Secretary of State before granting planning permission for certain types of development.

The Direction applies to the following types of development:

- Inappropriate Green Belt development.
- Large-scale development outside of town centres not in accordance with the parameters of the development plan.
- Development which would have an adverse impact on the OUV of a World Heritage Site or its setting, including its buffer zone.
- Playing field development.
- Flood risk area development.
- 'Commemorative object' development which would include/consist of the full/partial demolition of a monument, memorial, plaque, or statue in situ for over ten years.

You can read the new Direction via the government website:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/979435/Consultation_Direction_2021.pdf

3.4 Neighbourhood Planning Pilot and Bidding Fund: MHCLG has established two funds to support neighbourhood planning in more towns and cities. The first fund will allow local authority led pilots to test a simpler approach to neighbourhood planning. The pilot is seeking 10 local authorities to work in partnership with their communities to help establish and explore the idea of a simpler kind of neighbourhood planning that works alongside or as a precursor to a full Neighbourhood Plan. The aim of this pilot is to test whether a simpler form of neighbourhood planning could empower more communities to play a direct role in shaping their neighbourhoods, particularly those in urban and deprived areas.

The second fund will provide direct financial support to local authorities to support neighbourhood planning in under-represented areas, with a total pot fund of £330,000

made available in the 2021-22 financial year targeted to 10 local planning authorities to enable them to work collaboratively with MHCLG and three or more groups within their area. Grants of up to £30,000 will be available to successful local authorities

The application deadline is the 31st May. All application documentation can be accessed via the government website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/neighbourhood-planning-two-funds-to-support-greater-uptake/two-funds-to-support-the-uptake-of-neighbourhood-planning>

3.5 Picturing England's High Streets: Historic England has launched a major commission that will see six artists undertaking residencies at high street locations across England. The selected photographers will work with local communities to create a contemporary portrait of England's high streets between now and 2024. The three-year project will deliver six photographer-in-residence programmes at six high street locations across England, as well as artist mentoring and a digital nationwide mass participation project. The Photoworks commission is part of the High Streets Heritage Action Zones Cultural Programme, led by Historic England.

Applications are now open for four photographer-in-residence programmes:

- Prescot (with [Open Eye Gallery](#))
- Chester (with [Open Eye Gallery](#))
- Coventry (with [GRAIN Projects](#))
- Stoke-on-Trent (with [GRAIN Projects](#))

You can read the full press release via their website: <https://historicengland.org.uk/get-involved/high-street-culture/picturing-high-streets/>