

Introduction

What is the Local Plan?

The Government requires all Local Planning Authorities to develop a long-term plan which provides a positive vision for the future of their area and sets out how and where land can be developed over a minimum of the next 15 years. The purpose of this is to meet the growing needs and requirements of local people and businesses.

The Local Plan provides a platform for local people to shape their surroundings and sets out what and where development is acceptable, and once adopted, will govern how planning applications are assessed. The plan can also reflect local features and circumstances which give places their distinct identity.

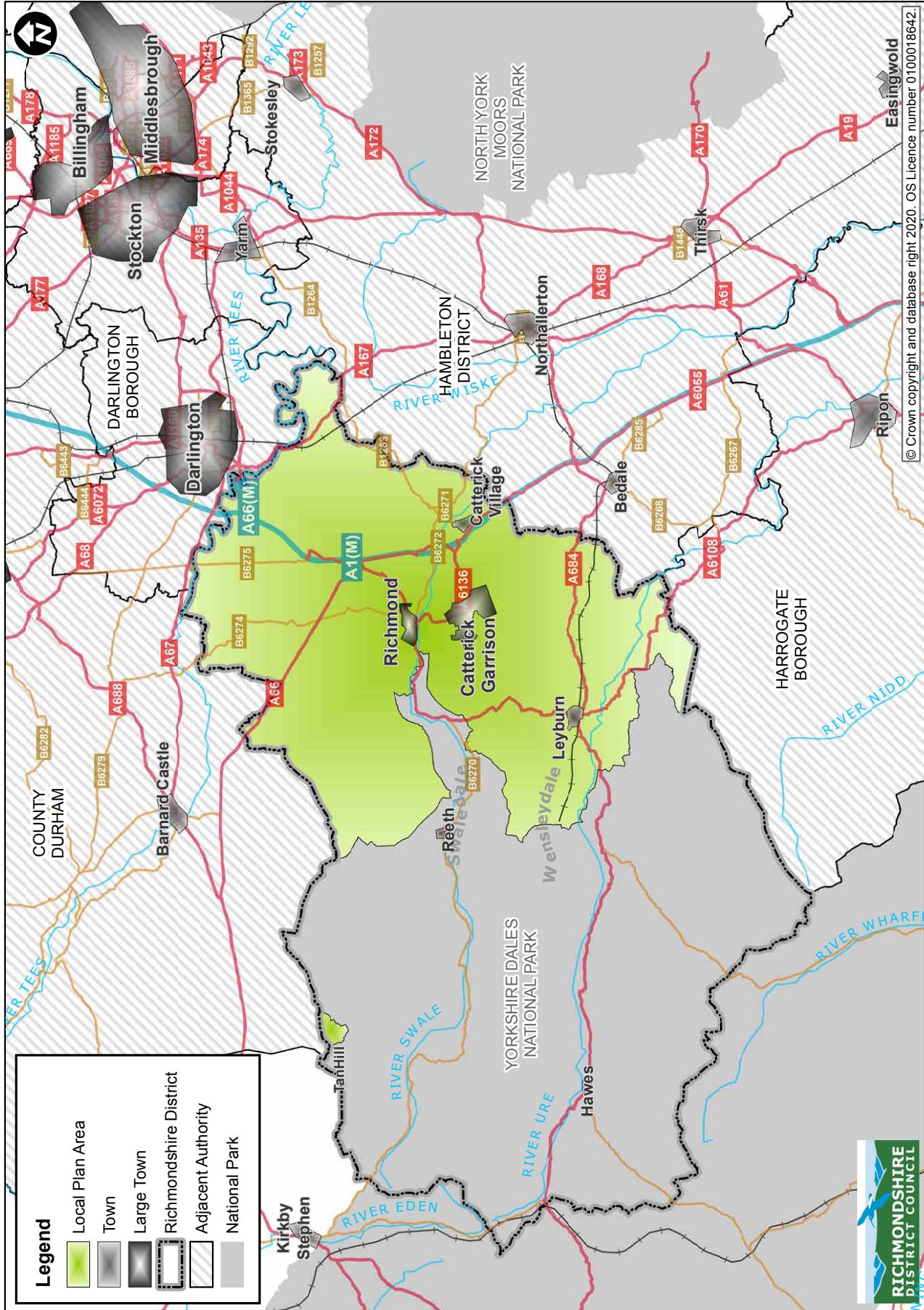
The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is the government policy on planning and this places Local Plans at the heart of the system. Local Plans enable Councils to pro-actively guide where, when and how new housing, employment and other development takes place so it is essential that they are in place and kept up to date.

Why are we reviewing the Local Plan Core Strategy (2012-2028)?

The current Local Plan for the part of Richmondshire outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP) is the Richmondshire Local Plan Core Strategy (2012-2028). This was adopted in December 2014 and is now in need of review. This is because the Government now requires us to review Local Planning policies at least once every five years and also over time the local context changes (for example, the announced military expansion at Catterick and completion of A1(M) upgrade). New evidence also comes to light (for example in relation to the population and economy) that local planning policies need to respond to in order to remain up to date.



Figure 1 - Richmondshire Plan Area



Richmondshire Local Plan (2018-2039)

The new Local Plan will result in a single revised Local Plan being adopted for the Richmondshire Plan Area (outside of the YDNP) for an extended period until 2039, replacing the Richmondshire Local Plan Core Strategy (2012-2028) and the saved policy from the Richmondshire Local Plan (1999-2006).

The revised Local Plan will include both strategic and detailed policies. It will set out a vision and a framework for the future pattern, scale and quality of development in the Plan Area. It will address needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure as well as providing a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places that contribute to healthy communities. A Masterplan for Catterick Garrison will be produced which will outline the strategy for both civilian and military growth in this area.

This Local Plan will seek to achieve sustainable development through spatial planning. Ultimately, this is concerned with making sure that the right development happens in the right places to encourage growth and supports local needs whilst not harming the local area. This reflects the common theme and the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the NPPF, which this Plan should be consistent with in all respects.

The Local Plan will also be an important vehicle for the coordination and delivery of several related strategies across the Plan Area - including Economic, Community and Health and Wellbeing Strategies, North Yorkshire County Council's Local Transport Plan and School Organisation Plan, health bodies' strategies and the Highways England programme. Central to these is the Richmondshire District Council Council Plan 2019-2023. The Council Plan guides activities to promote the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area and improve the quality of life for everyone. It focuses on

- Working with our Communities
- Helping Vulnerable People
- Providing a Healthy Environment
- Inclusive Growth

Richmondshire has many local growth issues and ambitions in common with its neighbouring districts. The York and North Yorkshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has created a strong focus on the key drivers to change and the resources required to secure them. This is captured in the LEP's four priorities

- Places and Infrastructure
- People and Communities
- Businesses and Innovation
- Landscape and Natural Capital

There has been ongoing engagement with neighbouring authorities throughout the development of the new Plan. The Duty to Cooperate Statement of Common Ground will be finalised after this Preferred Options consultation.

Local Plan Process and Timetable

The production of the revised Local Plan involves a number of stages which are outlined below (Figure 2). This is the second of three opportunities to be involved and have your say on its content prior to it being submitted for examination by an independent Planning Inspector where there will be further opportunities to provide comments to the Inspector.

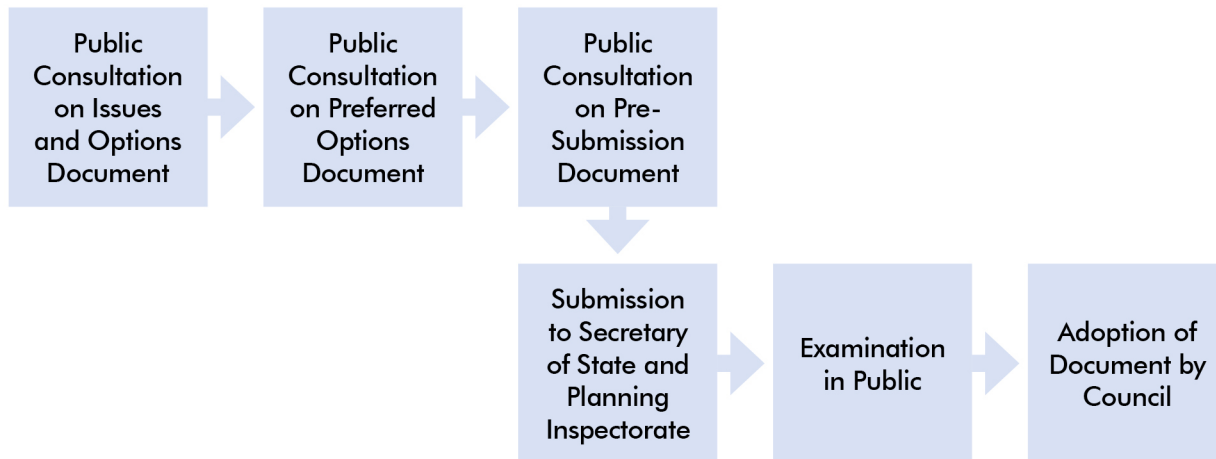


Figure 2 - Key stages in the preparation of Local Plan Documents

This will be the first opportunity to comment on all the policies proposed to be included in the new Richmondshire Local Plan, with the previous Issues and Options Consultation focusing only on the strategic policies and matters.

The Preferred Options Local Plan has been developed so that it is in accordance with national planning policy outlined within the revised National Planning Policy Framework (2019) and national planning legislation.

In order to be found 'sound' at examination by an independent Planning Inspector the revised Local Plan must satisfy a range of tests, which ensures policies are

Positively prepared - provides a strategy which as a minimum seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs, and agreements are in place with neighbouring areas to accommodate any unmet need.

Justified - an appropriate strategy taking in to account the reasonable alternatives and based on proportionate evidence.

Effective - deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working with neighbouring authorities and organisations on issues of joint interest.

Consistent with national policy - enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF.

Supported by a Sustainability Appraisal - demonstrating how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives, avoiding significant adverse impacts which are unavoidable.

The Richmondshire Local Development Scheme sets out the programme for the next stages in preparing the new Local Plan and is available to view on our website.

Scope of the Preferred Options Consultation

The development of the Preferred Options Local Plan is the second stage in the production of the new Local Plan and is the second opportunity for residents, businesses and other interested parties to help plan our future.

The Preferred Options Local Plan has been developed through engagement with the public and key stakeholders such as infrastructure providers, parish and town councils, residents groups, interest groups and the development industry. This has ensured the Preferred Options Local Plan and the evidence underpinning it have been shaped by an understanding of the key local issues.

The Council has already undertaken the Issues and Options consultation to seek views on the key strategic issues and opportunities the revised Local Plan should address. Preferred options and ideas for the strategic policies in certain areas such as the scale and location of housing were also identified. There was also a 'Call for Sites' exercise undertaken in 2017, a 'Call for Local Green Spaces' in 2019 and engagement with relevant stakeholders to inform the preparation of various evidence studies.

Sustainable Development is a key principle which underpins the planning system to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the three different objectives - economic, environmental and social.

A Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (2020) was completed in early 2020 following consultation with relevant statutory organisations including Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.

This reviewed relevant plans and programmes to identify the sustainability objectives that the proposed policies in this Preferred Options Local Plan have subsequently been appraised against. These are set out in the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal which incorporates a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and explains how it has influenced the identification of the preferred policies in this Local Plan. These documents are available to view as part of this consultation.

A Habitats Regulation Screening Assessment (2021) has been undertaken to screen the preferred policies to identify if they would have an impact and the level of significance of any impact upon Natura 2000 Designated Sites, including the areas of North Pennine Moors Special Protection Area and the North Pennine Meadows within the Plan Area. The Habitats Regulation Screening Assessment (2021) is available to view as part of this consultation.

An Equality Impact Assessment has also been undertaken with its purpose to systematically analyse the likely impact of the preferred Local Plan policies on different groups of people in the community and how the needs of such groups have been taken into account in relation to the development of policies. The Equality Impact Assessment is available to view as part of this consultation.

Evidence Base

When preparing and reviewing policies in the Local Plan we have to ensure they are informed by relevant and up to date evidence.

To support the preparation of the revised Local Plan we have produced and updated a range of evidence studies and will continue to add to the library of evidence until the Publication of the Pre-Submission Local Plan. The studies completed and updated so far have been published as part of this consultation.