

Local Plan Site Promotion

The Covid-19 crisis has changed the timeline for local plan preparation/ adoption in many areas, due to understandable practical difficulties in making formal decisions, carrying out consultation under Regulation 18 and 19, and undertaking examination hearing sessions. In some places, there has been an inevitable diversion of resources away from plan making. The aftermath, in the form of economic recession and subsequent desire for recovery, may also change the landscape for plan making – strengthening the need to grapple with future economic needs in future evidence-base work.



Lockdown challenges

- Current Local Plan examinations suspended
- Delays in plan making due to uncertainty on consultation and formal decision making
- Shortages of planning staff
- Delays to surveys and site work for evidence base

For more information please contact your local Lichfields Office.

Getting ahead

Local plan cycles are long-term and MHCLG is encouraging all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to progress with plan-making during the crisis; this in the context of a December 2023 deadline for all LPAs to have an ‘up-to-date’ plan. While short term delays in plan making are inevitable in many places, plan-making will continue, examinations will in due course restart, and Government will look to the development sector to help restart the economy; boosting housing delivery back on its trajectory to 300,000 new dwellings per annum. Meanwhile, the Government has indicated its commitment to further planning reform during 2020, including a new standard method for housing need and revisions to the NPPF.

Once the immediate lockdown is over, LPAs will be under pressure to be proactive. Committees will be able to make decision remotely, and many LPAs will both want and need to be looking for solutions now to meet their future needs and address the land use implications of the economic downturn, whilst grappling with the requirements of the new NPPF.

Those with sites should horizon-scan the plan making environment and revisit the prospects and timescales for securing an allocation in light of any delays or changes in circumstance.

How can Lichfields assist?

Lichfields is assembling a picture of how individual LPAs are responding to the Covid-19 crisis, including in respect of plan making. This insight can dovetail with our wider services for plan promotion so that we can support you with an effective approach to promoting interests through the local plan process. Specific services include:

- Planning promotion strategy
- Using our network of contacts to engage with Council officers and other stakeholders
- Revisit evidence-based case for proposed allocation
- Vision statements and development prospectus documents
- Participating in Local Plan Examinations

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