



LOCAL PLAN for Buckinghamshire





Introduction

Buckinghamshire Council is asking its residents, businesses and interested groups for their views on a new Local Plan for the county. The Local Plan will set out how new housing and employment requirements will be met to 2045, accommodating a huge increased level of housing and other development to meet the new national targets set by central government. The Local Plan will also provide detail on the design and quality of new development and secure the infrastructure to support it.

Delivering this high level of development will not be easy, we want to hear your views so we can bring forward the best options for residents and workers in Buckinghamshire.

This document sets out parts of the draft Local Plan that have been prepared to date, which includes:

- **Part A:** The Local Plan vision, key planning issues facing Buckinghamshire and associated objectives, spatial strategies for housing and employment, and ways to meet travelling communities accommodation needs
- **Part B:** Development Management Policies.

Consultation

We will be consulting on parts of the Local Plan that have been prepared to date from 17 September to 29 October 2025.

To have your say, please visit: <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/draft-local-plan>

Vision Summary

The Local Plan's vision is to preserve Buckinghamshire's rural character and historic environment while accommodating growth. We want to: create sustainable communities supported by well-designed housing, infrastructure, and employment opportunities; prioritise the development of brownfield and grey belt land first; protect and enhance our valued green spaces; revitalise town centres; and strengthen the county's role in creative, space, and high-tech industries.

Key Planning Issues and associated Objectives Summary

Natural and Built Environment

Buckinghamshire's landscapes, biodiversity, and heritage assets face pressure from growth. The plan seeks to protect the Chilterns National Landscape, Green Belt, and historic sites while enhancing green and blue infrastructure.

Objective 1: Conserve and enhance natural, historic, and built environments; protect valued landscapes; improve biodiversity and water quality; and support regeneration.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

With 51% of emissions from transport, the plan promotes measures to mitigate and adapt to climate change by 2050 through sustainable travel, renewable energy, and climate-resilient development.

Objective 2: Support net zero carbon transition; direct growth to sustainable locations; improve energy efficiency; and promote active travel and flood resilience.

New Housing

Buckinghamshire must deliver a huge increased level of new homes by 2045. The plan addresses housing requirements, including affordable, specialist, and key worker housing.

Objective 3: Provide a range of housing types and tenures; support self-build and accessible homes; and ensure high-quality, low-carbon design.

New Towns

New settlements are proposed to meet housing demand, requiring significant infrastructure and careful integration with existing communities.

Objective 3: Ensure new housing supports community cohesion and infrastructure needs.

Quality of Place

Some areas suffer from deprivation and poor public realm. The plan aims to create attractive, safe, and inclusive places that reflect local character.

Objective 4: Deliver high-quality design; create walkable, connected neighbourhoods; and improve public spaces and safety.

Community Health and Wellbeing

Health inequalities and ageing populations challenge service provision. The plan promotes healthy living environments and improved access to healthcare and leisure.

Objective 5: Support health through inclusive design, green spaces, and collaboration with health providers.

Infrastructure

The amount of new growth required will require major infrastructure investment to avoid worsening existing issues in areas like transport, education, and healthcare.

Objective 6: Ensure infrastructure is delivered in the right place and time; support connectivity, flood mitigation, and utility provision.

New Jobs

Economic growth requires land for employment, especially in high-tech sectors. The plan supports diversification and local job creation.

Objective 7: Grow the economy by supporting key sectors, protecting employment land, and linking jobs with housing and transport.

Transport, Physical and Digital Connectivity

Congestion and limited east-west links hinder mobility. The plan promotes sustainable transport, digital infrastructure, and reduced car dependency.

Objective 8: Improve connectivity through strategic transport schemes, active travel, public transport, and digital access.



Housing Spatial Strategy Summary

Buckinghamshire has a requirement to provide 95,000 new homes (which includes a 5% buffer), which is set by central government and represents a 43% increase on what we had been planning for previously. The Housing spatial strategy outlines seven approaches for how new housing could be accommodated:

Key



Existing towns
and villages

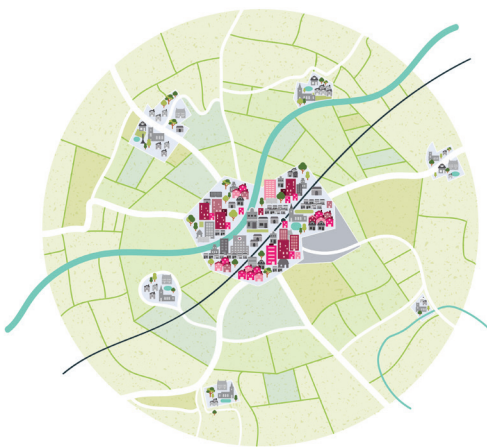


New
developments



Business
hubs/clusters

The maps below are for illustrative purposes only.



1. Brownfield Sites in Towns and Villages

Focuses on regenerating underused urban land
(potential to deliver 1,500–2,500 homes).

2. Growth on the Edges of Existing Main Towns

Large-scale urban extensions around sustainable towns,
(potential to deliver 23,000–28,000 homes).

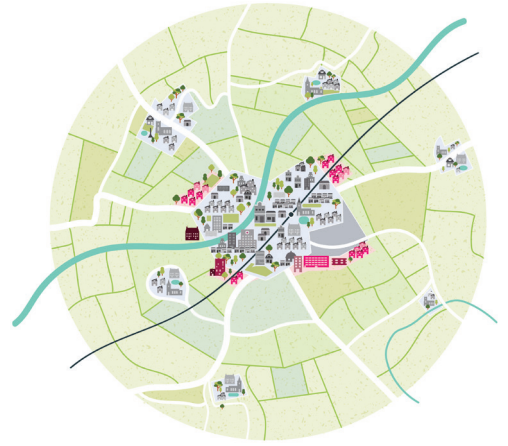


3. New Towns

Standalone settlements with full infrastructure,
(potential to deliver 11,000–13,000 homes).

4. Development at Transport Hubs

Housing near high-quality public transport,
(potential to deliver 16,000–19,000 homes).



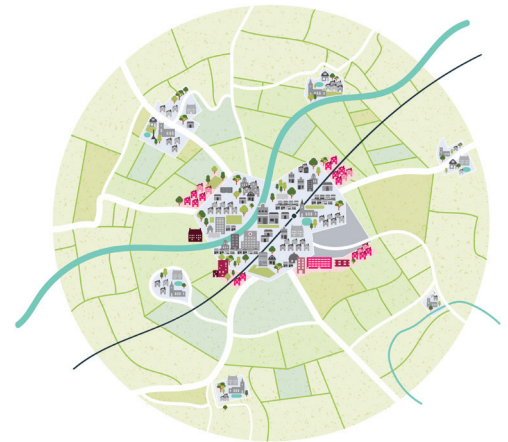
5. Expansion Near Key Employment Areas

Housing close to strategic employment zones,
(potential to deliver 5,000–6,000 homes).



6. Limited Expansion of Villages

Modest growth in sustainable villages
(potential to deliver 13,000–15,000 homes).



7. Expanding Urban Areas on the Edge of Buckinghamshire

Extensions into neighbouring urban areas
(potential to deliver 6,000–7,000 homes).



Meeting Travelling Communities Accommodation Summary

Buckinghamshire's Local Plan identifies a need for 681 pitches for Gypsies and Travellers and 38 plots for Travelling Showpeople by 2045, based on the 2025 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). This includes households meeting the planning definition and those likely to qualify.

To comply with national policy (PPTS), the plan must allocate deliverable sites for the first five years and developable sites or broad locations for years 6–15—at least 516 pitches and 30 plots over the first ten years.

To meet this need, the council will explore options including:

- Intensify and expand existing sites
- Consider temporary sites and unauthorised sites for allocation of permanent pitches
- Use vacant pitches
- Reclaim pitches used by non-travellers
- Call for sites for gypsy and traveller use
- Review past planning refusals
- Review outstanding allocations
- Additional supply from pending planning applications

This approach supports a fair, inclusive, and sustainable response to the accommodation needs of travelling communities.



Employment Spatial Strategy Summary

The strategy aims to support Buckinghamshire's economic growth by planning for the right types and locations of employment land and premises through to 2045.

Total employment land required: **219.4 hectares**

offices, research,
and development

33.5 ha

Industrial, warehousing,
and distribution

185.8 ha

Net new land needed: **45.9 hectares**

Strategic Economic Focus

The strategy supports key growth sectors including high-performance, space, film, life sciences, and medical innovation. It also addresses national needs for data centres and logistics, with the south Buckinghamshire area identified as a prime location due to its proximity to the Slough–Hayes corridor.

Employment Site Strategy

To meet employment needs, 6 different approaches have been identified, and all approaches are very likely to be needed:

- Expansion at Strategic Employment Sites (Silverstone, Westcott and Pinewood and continued delivery of employment growth at Woodlands)
- New employment within urban expansions and new settlements
- Small-scale employment sites promoted through the 'calls for sites'
- Modern Economy uses including datacentres
- Intensification and expansion at existing 'key employment sites'
- Utilising town centres to support regeneration

Supporting Rural and Local Economies

The strategy promotes rural diversification, tourism, and local business growth, while supporting skills and employment initiatives to address labour shortages and foster inclusive development.



Development Management Policies Summary

The Local Plan includes development management policies in the following areas to ensure that if development does occur, it is held to high standards to protect and reflect the unique character of the county. Further refinement and additional policies will be prepared during development of the Local Plan.



Housing

These policies ensure a mix of housing types, affordability, accessibility, and provision for specialist and community-led housing needs.

- HO1 Housing Mix
- HO2 Affordable Housing
- HO3 Accessible Housing
- HO4 Self and Custom-Build Housing
- HO5 Houses in Multiple Occupation
- HO6 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Provision
- HO7 Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Policy
- HO8 Specialist Housing
- HO9 Rural Exception Sites
- HO10 Windfall
- HO11 Residential Annexes



Economy

These policies support economic growth, protect retail areas, and promote business development in key hubs and rural locations.

- EC1 Strategic and Key Employment Sites
- EC2 Other Employment Sites
- EC3 Skills and Local Employment
- EC4 Data Centres
- EC5 Silverstone Circuit and Silverstone Park Enterprise Zone
- EC6 Westcott Venture Park Enterprise Zone and Strategic Employment Site
- EC7 Pinewood Studios
- EC8 Rural Diversification
- EC9 Tourism
- EC10 Retail Hierarchy
- EC11 Development within Buckinghamshire's Centres
- EC12 Development for Main Town Centre Uses Outside Buckinghamshire's Centres



Natural Environment

These policies protect biodiversity, water quality, green infrastructure, and manage pollution and impacts on sensitive natural areas.

- NE1 Water Quality
- NE2 Watercourses and Associated Corridors
- NE3 Protection and Enhancement of Sites of High Biodiversity and Geodiversity Importance
- NE4 Protection and Enhancement of Notable Species
- NE5 Biodiversity Gain and Nature Recovery
- NE6 Green Infrastructure
- NE7 Resisting the Loss of Existing Green Space
- NE8 Trees, Ancient and Veteran Trees, Woodlands, Orchards
- NE9 Ecological Enhancements
- NE10 Mitigating Light Impacts
- NE11 Colne Valley Regional Park
- NE12 Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar Sites
- NE13 Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)
- NE14 Gateway Sites
- NE15 Little Marlow Lakes
- NE16 Protection of the Green Belt
- NE17 Development in the Countryside Outside the Green Belt
- NE18 National Landscapes and their Setting
- NE19 Landscape Character
- NE20 Pollution, Air Quality, Visual Amenity and Contaminated Land



Infrastructure

These policies ensure essential infrastructure is delivered in step with new development to support growing communities.

- IN1 Infrastructure Delivery
- IN2 Water Infrastructure
- IN3 Telecommunications Infrastructure



Transport

These policies support sustainable transport, infrastructure improvements, and safeguard key rail and aviation corridors.

- TR1 Transport Requirements in New Developments
- TR2 Transport Improvements
- TR3 Parking Standards
- TR4 Public Rights of Way
- TR5 Freight and Logistics
- TR6 Aviation Development
- TR7 East West Rail
- TR8 High Speed Two
- TR9 Former Bourne End to High Wycombe Railway Line



Built Environment

These policies promote high-quality design, protect heritage assets, and safeguard residential amenity through national standards and local character.

- BE1 Sense of Place
- BE2 Space Standards
- BE3 Conservation Areas
- BE4 Heritage Assets
- BE5 Residential Amenity
- BE6 Design of Developments



Social Environment

These policies support health and wellbeing by encouraging active lifestyles, access to healthy food, community facilities, and pollution control.

- SE1 Health Impact Assessment
- SE2 Fast Food Outlets and Takeaways
- SE3 Community Food Growing
- SE4 Community, Sport and Leisure Facilities
- SE5 Sport, Leisure and Recreation



Climate Change

These policies require flood risk management through a sequential approach, promote Sustainable Drainage Systems, and set high water efficiency standards.

- CC1 Flood Risk
- CC2 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- CC3 Water Efficiency Standards

Evidence Base Documents

The following evidence base documents have been prepared to date to inform the preparation of the Local Plan policies. Further evidence will be prepared during the course of the Local Plan process.

Needs Assessments:

- Draft Local Housing Needs Assessment
- Employment Land and Retail Study
- Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment

Transport, Infrastructure and Social

- Baseline Infrastructure Assessment
- Baseline Transport Assessment
- Settlement Review
- Wider Sports Study
- Community Facilities Study
- Health and Wellbeing Study

Environmental

- Renewable Energy Report
- Net zero carbon study
- Water Cycle Study Stage 1 and Water Cycle Study Stage 1 addendum
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1

Design

- Urban Potential Study

Core docs to support consultation

- Sustainability Appraisal
- Habitats Regulation Assessment Scoping Report
- Habitats Regulation Assessment of the Draft Plan
- Equality Impacts Assessment
- Health Impacts Assessment
- Health Impact Assessment Guidance tool kit

Other

- Vision and Objectives Consultation Statement



What's Next?

The Council is seeking public feedback until 29 October 2025. We will then review and consider all the feedback that we receive to help us further shape the development of a full version of the Local Plan.

There will be an opportunity to provide comments on the full version of the Local Plan once it has been prepared (anticipated in July 2026).

