

Luton Local Plan Review

Engagement Strategy – Scoping Consultation

(May 2026)

(Regulation 20)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are producing a new Local Plan for Luton. A Local Plan is a land use or spatial plan that responds to issues and needs. It will identify appropriate areas and sites for development, such as for new homes, offices, shops, and community facilities. It must be informed by evidence, community engagement, and cooperation with partners and organisations.
- 1.2 This is a consultation document setting out Luton Council's strategy for how we propose to engage with the community and other key stakeholders in the preparation of Luton's new Local Plan. It identifies the key matters and priorities for the Local Plan we think at this stage we need to discuss with key bodies and organisations and processes to ensure effective participation including using digital tools.
- 1.3 Our Luton 2040 vision sets out a shared vision for the future of Luton, enabling the town to be a fairer, healthier, and more sustainable place where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty.
- 1.4 We are asking you to tell us how we should engage with you in the preparation of the Local Plan. Further information on how to make comments is set out in Section 5 of this document.
- 1.5 We have also produced a separate document for consultation seeking views on what our Local Plan should contain which is available here www.luton.gov.uk/newlocalplan. These form part of a Local Plan Scoping Consultation which is taking place between May and July 2026.

2. Background

- 2.1 Luton Council previously started its Local Plan review process in 2024. The government has now introduced a new way of producing Local Plans.
- 2.2 As part of the initial work for the Local Plan we consulted on an Issues and Options Paper which covered key issues the council had identified. We consulted with a range of stakeholders including; residents, community groups, statutory bodies, developers, landowners, business owners, infrastructure providers and neighbouring Local Planning Authorities. The consultation ran between 12 December 2024 and 7 February 2025.
- 2.3 The consultation we have undertaken for the Local Plan has already helped us identify those individuals and stakeholders that are interested in the Local Plan. They have been added to our database and will be notified of consultations when they occur where this has been requested.
- 2.4 The Duty to Cooperate placed a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils and prescribed bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation. Under the new system for producing Local Plans, the Duty to Cooperate is replaced.

2.5 Under the Duty to Cooperate the Council engaged with the following bodies and organisations:

Neighbouring and Nearby authorities:

- Central Bedfordshire Council
- North Hertfordshire District Council
- Hertfordshire County Council
- Dacorum Borough Council
- St Albans City and District Council
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Stevenage Borough Council
- Bedford Borough Council
- Milton Keynes City Council

Prescribed bodies

- Natural England
- Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (Historic England)
- Environment Agency
- Mayor of London
- Civil Aviation Authority
- Homes and Communities Agency (Homes England)
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (Integrated Care Boards such as the Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board)
- National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHS England)
- Office of the Rail Regulator (Office of Rail and Road)
- Highways Agency (National Highways)
- Transport for London
- Highways Authorities (Hertfordshire County Council, Central Bedfordshire Council)
- Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership.

3. Our approach to engagement

General Approach

- 3.1 Government Planning policy and legislation explains how engagement should take place for Local Plans. The main regulations are the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 and the Requirement to Assist with Certain Plan Making (Prescribed Public Bodies) (England) Regulations 2026. Further information is available in government planning guidance.
- 3.2 The ‘requirement to assist’ relates to engagement with other authorities and Spatial Development Strategies (which are Plans which will cover sub-regional areas) will seek to enable strategic planning across boundaries in the future.

- 3.3 The Regulations set out the bodies and organisations the Council must consult with for a Local Plan, the arrangements for undertaking consultations and making outcomes available. They include 'general consultation bodies' that the Council considers appropriate and 'specific consultation bodies' the Council considers may have an interest in the preparation of the new Local Plan.
- 3.4 The Public Sector Equalities Duty 2011 requires consideration when proposing to conduct planning consultations to identify and assess who will be most impacted by resulting changes and what the impact(s) will be.
- 3.5 The majority of planning policy documents will require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out at least prior to public consultation and adoption. Generally, an IIA is required to be carried out at the beginning of any project, policy or strategy to work out whether the work will have any negative impacts on the protected characteristics and to avoid direct or indirect discrimination. It also helps to ensure that any new policies and other proposed policy changes support the Council's corporate plan and vision. Further equalities impact assessments may also be incorporated into planning policy evidence base documents, such as a sustainability appraisal.
- 3.6 Questionnaires, surveys and representation forms will also include equalities monitoring questions to enable us to keep track of whether certain groups are under-represented in consultation responses. Anyone with an account on our consultation portal will also be able to update their information there. We will ensure that documents made available on our website will be 'perceivable, operable, understandable and robust'.
- 3.7 The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 requires any material which is defamatory or likely to incite racial hatred or contempt, to be marked 'confidential' and not disclosed to the public. The Equalities Act 2010 makes it unlawful for anyone to induce or attempt to induce another person to discriminate on the grounds of race or any of the protected characteristics they may have or are alleged to have.
- 3.8 A racist representation is one which includes words, phrases or comments which are likely to be offensive to a particular racial or ethnic group; be racially abusive, insulting or threatening; apply pressure to discriminate on racial grounds and stir up racial hatred or contempt. Where a representation is wholly racist, and contains no material planning consideration, the representation is unlawful and cannot be considered or disclosed, its receipt will not be identified in any committee report to Executive.
- 3.9 The Luton 2040 vision sets out a shared vision for the future of Luton, enabling the town to be a fairer, healthier, and more sustainable place where everyone can thrive and no one has to live in poverty. The vision sets out a number of priorities, and the Council is committed to working collaboratively with the public, the community, voluntary sectors and other organisations to achieve the vision.

- 3.10 The vision aspires to be a meaningful voice for all residents to shape the vision and direction of the town – with everyone in Luton having a part to play in shaping its future. This target outcome incorporates aiming to increase engagement and participation. While planning outcomes are intended to support all of the key priorities, that of having a “strong and empowered community supporting fairness, equality and local pride and speaking with a powerful voice” is particularly relevant to this document and community involvement in planning.
- 3.11 This is further emphasised in our Fairness Strategy, which explains that we must encourage and enable citizens’ active involvement, contribution and responsibilities in the development of the town and its future.

Local Plan Key Stages

- 3.12 Our Local Plan will take about 3 years to produce and there are a number of key stages (Table 1). A stage that involves formal stakeholder and public consultation is identified in blue and further information on each of these stages is identified in the table below. Each key stage of consultation, including officer proposed responses to representations and observations, submission for formal examination and adoption will be considered by Council Members.

Table 1: Plan-making stages

Stage	Governance	Detail	When
Publish local plan timetable (this document)	Approval by Members	The timetable sets out the dates for key plan-making stages and must be followed and kept up to date.	May 2026
Publish notice of intention to commence local plan preparation	Approval by Members	Publication of notice so that stakeholders are aware of the intention to produce the Plan.	May 2026
Consultation: Publish Notice of Scoping consultation	Approval by Members	Publish Scoping consultation on what the plan should contain and how the Council should engage with stakeholders and the public.	May 2026
Call for Sites	Undertaken by Officers	An opportunity for landowners and developers to submit sites for consideration in the Local Plan.	May 2026
Comments received to Scoping Consultation and call for sites	Reported to Members	The date when comments to the scoping report must be received by the Council.	July 2026

Gateway 1: self-assessment of readiness	Approval by Members	Publication of a self-assessment document setting out details of how the Council have got ready for plan-making and the anticipated content of Plan, marking formal commencement of plan-making.	October 2026
Publish Summary of Scoping Consultation	Approval by Members	A summary of Scoping Consultation responses and Council response	October 2026
Consultation: Publish Notice of proposed local plan content and evidence consultation	Approval by Members	Minimum 6-week consultation on the proposed local plan content and evidence.	May 2027
Final Call for Sites	Undertaken by Officers	An opportunity for landowners and developers to submit sites for consideration in the Local Plan.	May 2027
Comments received to proposed local plan content and evidence and call for sites	Reported to Members	The date by comments to the proposed local plan content must be received by the Council.	June 2027
Gateway 2: Seek Observations and advice	Reported to Members	Observations and advice from the Planning Inspectorate to support the early resolution of potential soundness issues with the Plan.	August 2027
Publish Summary of consultation on proposed Local Plan content	Reported to Members	A summary of consultation on proposed Local Plan content and evidence and Council response	August 2027
Consultation: Publish Notice of proposed local plan	Approval by Members	Minimum 8-week consultation on the proposed local plan and its supporting documents.	November 2027

Comments received to proposed local plan	Reported to Members	The date by comments to the proposed local plan must be received by the Council.	January 2028
Publish Summary of consultation on proposed Local Plan	Approval by Members	A summary of consultation on proposed Local Plan and evidence and Council response.	February 2028
Gateway 3: Seek Observations and advice	Reported to Members	Planning Inspectorate to check the Plan has met the 'prescribed requirements' and can proceed to examination.	February 2028
Submission of Local Plan	Approval by Members	Submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary for State for examination.	June 2028
Examination	-	A public examination of the local plan against the tests of soundness set out in national policy.	June to October 2028
Adoption	Approval by Members	Publication of the local plan and adoption statement.	December 2028

Who are we engaging with

- 3.13 The planning policy team manages a consultation database on Objective Keyplan. This is a live database, which means that stakeholders and interested parties can ask to be added or removed at any time. Due to the size of the database an exhaustive list of consultees has not been included within this document.
- 3.14 We will ensure that relevant groups and organisations are included in planning consultations, including groups representing the protected characteristics. The Regulations define general consultation bodies as:
- (a) voluntary bodies, some or all of whose activities benefit all or part of the planning authority's area;
 - (b) bodies which represent the interests of persons in the planning authority's area who share a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010
 - (c) bodies which represent the interests of persons carrying on business in the planning authority's area;
- 3.15 For the Local Plan we will be engaging with:

The public / residents; Local government (e.g. councillors / council committees); Area committees and ward forums; Local groups, clubs, organisations; Local forums / partnerships including neighbourhood forums; Environmental groups; Seldom heard groups; Landowners / house builders / planning agents; Local and regional service providers; National government National and regional organisations

- Council officers/departments including:
 - Housing Strategy
 - Housing Needs
 - Development Management
 - Social Justice
 - Neighbourhood Operations
 - Policy, Strategy and Partnerships Luton 2040
 - Bereavement Services
 - Environmental Protection
 - Operational Compliance and Support / Licencing
 - Property and Infrastructure
 - Public Health
 - Business Development
 - Economic Growth and Skills
 - Heritage
 - Private Sector Housing
 - Adult Social Care
 - Landscape and Ecology
 - Parks
 - Climate Change
 - Lead Local Flood Authority
 - Transport
 - Emergency Planning
 - Business Intelligence

3.16 Some of the Council's departments represent the consultation bodies below that are required to be consulted.

Specific Consultation Bodies

3.17 The preparation of the local plan is in its early stages. Joint working and engagement around evidence base work has been taking place with our neighbouring authorities.

3.18 The draft NPPF (December 2025) states that Plan-making authorities should engage proactively and regularly with infrastructure providers, neighbouring and other relevant plan-making authorities (where there are strategic interdependencies across boundaries) and other relevant bodies to identify and address cross boundary matters that need to be addressed in their plans. We will need to do this particularly in relation to needs that cannot be met within our boundary and in relation to infrastructure. The specific consultation bodies we

have identified to engage with are outlined below. We have identified key matters and priorities for the Local Plan at this stage and the consultation bodies we expect to engage with on them. This is summarised in Table 2. These matters are further discussed and developed in our Community Involvement Scoping Document.

- 3.19 As the local plan progresses, there will be a significant degree of contact and communication between the council and the consultation bodies. This could comprise; meetings, workshops and email exchange. These communications will be recorded as part of the preparation of the local plan. We will also be seeking to complete Statements of Common Ground to demonstrate that relevant cross-boundary matters have been addressed.

Neighbouring authorities that share administrative boundaries with Luton Council

- Central Bedfordshire Council
- North Hertfordshire District Council
- Hertfordshire County Council

Other nearby authorities that do not share an administrative boundary with Luton

- Dacorum Borough Council
- St Albans City and District Council
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Stevenage Borough Council
- Bedford Borough Council
- Milton Keynes City Council

Prescribed bodies

- Active Travel England
- The Civil Aviation Authority
- Sport England
- The Environment Agency
- The Forestry Commission
- Highways Authorities (Hertfordshire County Council, Central Bedfordshire Council)
- Historic Buildings and Monument Commission for England (Historic England)
- Homes and Community Agency (Homes England)
- The Mayor of London
- Natural England
- Network Rail
- The Office for Rail and Road
- Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership (as lead for local nature recovery strategy)
- Transport for London
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (Integrated Care Boards such as the Bedford, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board)
- National Health Service Commissioning Board (NHS England)
- Affinity Water

- Anglian Water
- Thames Water
- UK Power Networks
- National Grid
- Integrated Transport Authority (Luton Borough Council)
- The Office for Nuclear Regulation
- The Office for Rail and Road
- Lead Flood Local Authority (Luton Borough Council)
- Luton Borough Council (Education)

3.20 The specific consultation bodies that are specified in the regulations, but which we do not consider to be applicable to the Luton context are as follows:

- Canal & River Trust
- The Coal Authority
- The Forestry Commission
- The Marine Management Organisation

Key Matters for the Local Plan

Housing Needs

3.21 The current Local Plan sets out how housing needs identified in the 2018 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) could be accommodated in Luton, however, Luton could not meet all of its needs within its boundaries. Local Plans for North Hertfordshire and Central Bedfordshire seek to meet this unmet need through the identification of sites in their authority areas. The east of Luton site in North Hertfordshire and sites in Central Bedfordshire have yet to come forward. We continue to work with our neighbours, including to try to ensure development proposals are well connected to Luton and the necessary infrastructure is in place.

3.22 We will be producing evidence to establish our housing needs, including examining the type and mix of new homes needed, and our housing requirement. We may need to ask neighbouring authorities to help meet our housing needs. We will need to involve neighbouring authorities in discussions around the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise. Those bodies involved in infrastructure and service provision may also have an interest in the level and location of housing proposed in the Local Plan.

Gypsy and Travellers

3.23 A new study for Luton has been commissioned and its production has involved consultation with surrounding local planning authorities. It will provide up to date information and consider current government policy, and this updated information will be used to inform the needs of the travelling community in a

new local plan. We will need to involve neighbouring authorities in discussions around the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise.

Employment Needs

- 3.24 The Council has produced a new Economic Growth Strategy which will inform the new Local Plan. Going forward, we will also commission a Housing and Economic Needs Assessment. This study will provide detailed information on demand across the sectors. Luton's reach as a location to work extends beyond its borders into neighbouring authorities, therefore cooperation will be required with a wide range of neighbouring local authorities and other bodies. We will need to involve neighbouring authorities in discussions around the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise.

Leisure and Retail

- 3.25 Luton has a network of Town, District and Neighbourhood centres which form the heart of local communities. Luton's current Local Plan defines Luton as a regional shopping centre which also faces competition from other regional competitors such as Milton Keynes and Watford.
- 3.26 At the time of the current Local Plan's adoption, it was found that most of the existing District and Neighbourhood Centres were serving their local communities well and complemented the Town Centre. It also identified their potential to accommodate more community uses as well as the potential for the establishment of an additional new Neighbourhood Centre at Chaul End Lane or Dallow Road.
- 3.27 Cooperation with neighbouring authorities is important as current and future populations will likely not shop exclusively in their own areas but may travel to others. We will need to involve neighbouring authorities in discussions around the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise. The council is currently commissioning consultants to undertake a borough-wide Retail and Town Centre Study to inform the preparation of the new Luton Local Plan.

Green Belt

- 3.28 While Luton is a predominantly an urban borough, 3% of the town's total land area is green belt, spread over 6 areas. As well as serving the functions of the green belt as set out in the NPPF, Luton's green belt also provides for other beneficial uses such as amenity and outdoor recreation. There are competing priorities for land use within Luton, and we will be establishing if there is any 'grey belt' in Luton.

Mitigating the impact of development on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC

- 3.29 Evidence produced by Footprint Ecology in support of the Dacorum Local Plan looked at recreational pressures on the Chilterns Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC) at Ashridge Estate and Tring Woodlands, which are located in Dacorum. The western portion of Luton was identified as falling within a 12.6km "zone of influence" for the Ashridge Commons and Woods, although

residents of Luton made up less than 2% of visits to the SAC. However, for larger developments that fall within the zone of influence and result in a net increase of more than 100 dwellings, further consultation with Natural England is recommended to determine the recreational impacts and any requirement for mitigation measures. Cooperation will therefore be required with Natural England on this matter and with the Local Nature Partnership.

Conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape and visual impact

- 3.30 Alongside Historic England's schedule of statutory protected designations (listed buildings, ancient monuments, Conservation Areas and Registered Parks and Gardens), the council maintains a Local List of non-designated heritage assets. Luton has five Conservation areas and over 100 designated heritage assets, which includes listed buildings and other monuments. Three of Luton's conservation areas are considered to be at risk by Historic England. To the south of the town is also a nationally significant asset - Luton Hoo estate, House and garden (Grade I Registered Park and Garden).
- 3.31 Heritage matters, including visual impact in relation to the design / scale of development (including tall buildings and the skyline) will need careful consideration in the Local Plan and Historic England will have a key role to play. Cooperation will also be required with neighbouring authorities.
- 3.32 Luton lies within the northern end of the Chilterns National Landscape. It is recognised for its globally rare chalk streams, wildflower-rich chalk grassland, and prehistoric settlements. Luton benefits from a number of ecological sites and the adopted local plan lists 25 county wildlife sites and 14 district wildlife sites. We also have two SSSIs - sites of national importance - within our boundary. Cooperation will be required with our neighbours and the nature partnership.
- 3.33 We have commissioned consultants to carry out a review of our wildlife sites and will be carrying out a piece of work to understand how landscape and visual impact inform the preparation of a new local plan. We have also commissioned a historic environment study which will include a review of our conservation areas.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 3.34 Luton is a significantly built-up borough but benefits from a variety of parks and green spaces. Some parts of the town are lacking in terms of access to green spaces, and some green spaces are fragmented and are dispersed throughout the borough. The River Lea flows through the town, but a lot of it is culverted. Because green and blue infrastructure is so closely connected to other areas of planning it is likely that other policies in a new local plan (for example, biodiversity, or open space provision) will impact on green infrastructure provision. Green infrastructure requirements and references are therefore likely to be woven throughout a new Local Plan.

- 3.35 In making a new Local Plan we will look at having a more up to date understanding of our open space needs and we will also produce a green and blue infrastructure study. As green and blue infrastructure cuts across local authority boundaries, this is likely to involve cooperation with a number of bodies, including Natural England, Historic England, and our neighbouring authorities (including North Hertfordshire District Council and Central Bedfordshire Council) who likely have their own green and blue infrastructure strategies.

Flood risk

- 3.36 There are many sources of flood risk in Luton, however, the biggest risk in Luton is surface water flooding. The River Lea flows through the town but is extensively culverted, and culverts can increase the risk of river flooding through blockages and structural failure. The Houghton Brook, Cat Brook, Riddy Brook and Lewsey Brook are also potential sources of flood risk, along with rising groundwater, overwhelmed sewers and drainage systems, and artificial sources of flooding such as the Sundon Reservoir. Luton shares a unique geography with Central Bedfordshire. It is located both upstream and downstream of Central Bedfordshire, with tributaries of the River Lea originating in the Houghton Regis area and the Lea then entering Central Bedfordshire south of Luton. As parts of the borough are at risk of flooding careful attention will need to be paid to this when drafting policies and proposals of the Local Plan. The Environment Agency will be a key consultee. We are in the process of commissioning an updated Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) Level 1 and will also commission a new Water Cycle Study. The Lead Local Flood Authority (Luton Council), Thames Water and Anglian Water will have important roles to play. Cooperation will be required with neighbouring authorities.

Climate change mitigation and adaptation

- 3.37 At the beginning of 2020, the council declared a climate emergency and set out its ambitions to be a net zero town by 2040. Climate change will likely result in milder, wetter winters and increased summer rainfall intensity. There are many sources of flood risk in Luton, however, the biggest risk in Luton is surface water flooding. The River Lea (from Luton to Luton Hoo Lakes) is also currently of poor ecological status.
- 3.38 The South East of England is an area of serious water stress, and the total amount of rain falling in any year is expected to decrease slightly in the next 100 years. This means there will be future pressures on public water supply due to population growth and climate change causing drier conditions. We will be commissioning a Climate Change Study to evidence and help us develop policies in our new local plan. Managing flood risk will be a key element of our climate change mitigation plans, involving the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England. Carbon reduction and associated emissions, heating and cooling, and air quality issues will also play a part in preparing the borough for changes associated with climate change.

Provision of utilities infrastructure (including telecommunications, wastewater capacity, water supply and energy)

- 3.39 There is likely to be increasing demand on the network from larger uses of energy, such as data centres, and to cater for the increase in electric vehicles. However, there are opportunities for changing the way energy is produced through green methods and from those wanting to supply the network. Increased development will also likely increase demand on other utilities infrastructure such as water supply and sewerage. A range of bodies including neighbouring authorities, Environment Agency and National Highways will need to be involved in framing the policies and proposals of the Local Plan in this regard, including discussing the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise. In addition, other bodies including Affinity Water, Thames Water, Anglian Water and energy and telecommunications providers will need to be involved.

Education, including primary and secondary school provision

- 3.40 The council has a legal duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for its population, and we will cooperate with our neighbouring authorities on this matter, including discussing the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise. Highway authorities may also need to be involved.

Provision of health infrastructure and local facilities

- 3.41 At local level Luton's Public Health Team has responsibility for public health and so will be important in helping frame the policies in the new Local Plan. The Bedford Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care Board (ICB) and NHS England will also have important roles to play, in addition to discussions with neighbouring authorities on approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise. Highway authorities may also need to be involved.

Provision of security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities (including burial capacity)

- 3.42 As the population grows and ages (e.g. through natural change and net migration flows), there will be further need over the plan period to provide additional capacity to accommodate burials and cremations. The Vale Cemetery has recently been extended. However, capacity for burials and cremations in existing facilities has largely been used up. We will cooperate with our neighbouring authorities on this matter.
- 3.43 Neighbouring authorities may want to be involved in helping to frame the policies and proposals of the Local Plan in relation to security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities, including discussions on the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise. In addition, highway authorities and Bedfordshire Police may need to be involved.

Provision of infrastructure for transport

- 3.44 The NPPF requires planning policies to be prepared with the active involvement of local highways authorities, other transport infrastructure providers and operators and neighbouring councils, so that strategies and investments for supporting sustainable transport and development patterns are aligned. Thus, strategic transport infrastructure requires cross boundary co-operation.
- 3.45 There are three train stations in Luton. Luton railway station currently has poor access to platforms for mobility impaired passengers. Network Rail started work at the station in September 2023 as part of a programme of improvements and upgrades to improve accessibility, which could also be implemented at Legrave station.
- 3.46 Luton attracts a significant proportion of its workers from outside its boundaries. 80% of employees at the airport for example come from within Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Whilst network connectivity is generally good in and around Luton, congestion is experienced in key parts of the network. Sections of the ring road that surround the town centre and other radial routes constrain pedestrian and cycle access into the town centre.
- 3.47 There are key highway corridors in Luton which connect to strategic sites identified in the current Local Plan. A new strategic road to create a northern Luton bypass running from the A6 road to junction 11a of the M1, connecting with the A5 to M1 Link road is proposed but has yet to come forward.
- 3.48 Luton Council, as a unitary authority, is the highways authority with responsibility for producing the Local Transport Plan. Neighbouring authorities (including Central Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire County Council) also have an important role to play in these matters, and discussions may need to include the approach to any cross-boundary implications, should they arise. National Highways is responsible for the strategic road network including the M1, therefore close co-operation with them is key, as well as the Office of Rail and Road. Close working with Network Rail will also be required.

Luton Airport and other airport / airspace impacts

- 3.49 Luton airport is major transport hub within Luton providing for millions of international trips each year and it will continue to play a significant role in the future planning of the town. The Local Plan will need to consider its infrastructure requirements, opportunities and potential impacts going forward. A number of authorities will have a role to play in this matter, including neighbouring authorities, neighbouring highways authorities, Historic England, the Civil Aviation Authority, Office of Rail and Road, Mayor of London and Transport for London.

Waste and recycling facilities and Minerals

- 3.50 A joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan is being prepared by the Bedfordshire authorities. Appropriate engagement will take place for the Minerals and Waste

Plan separately. Engagement could be required between Luton Council and other bodies, including our neighbouring authorities, on any elements of the Luton Plan which concern waste. Minerals are unlikely to be a matter for the Luton Plan.

Table 2: Consultation Summary

	Summary
Housing Needs	Approach to accommodating any of Luton's unmet housing needs that may be identified
	✓
	✓
	✓
	✓
	✓
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	Summary
Gypsy and Traveller Needs	Approach to accommodating any unmet gypsy, traveller and traveling showpeople needs that may be identified
	✓
	✓
	✓
	✓
	✓
	✓
	✓

	Summary																																	
Education, including primary and secondary school provision	Approach to accommodating any unmet education needs including needs arising from new development	✓	✓							✓										✓	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
		Central Bedfordshire Council	North Hertfordshire District	Dacorum Borough Council	St Albans City and District Council	Buckinghamshire Council	Stevenage Borough Council	Bedford Borough Council	Milton Keynes City Council	Hertfordshire County Council	Natural England	Historic England	Environment Agency	The Mayor of London	Civil Aviation Authority	Homes England	Bedford Luton Milton Keynes ICB	NHS England	The Office of Rail and Road	Highways Authorities	Integrated Transport Authority	Active Travel England	Transport for London	Network Rail	Bedfordshire Local Nature	Affinity Water	Anglian Water	Thames Water	Lead Local Flood Authority	UK Power Networks	National Grid	The Office for Nuclear Regulation	Sport England	Luton Borough Council

	Summary	Central Bedfordshire Council	North Hertfordshire District	Dacorum Borough Council	St Albans City and District Council	Buckinghamshire Council	Stevenage Borough Council	Bedford Borough Council	Milton Keynes City Council	Hertfordshire County Council	Natural England	Historic England	Environment Agency	The Mayor of London	Civil Aviation Authority	Homes England	Bedford Luton Milton Keynes ICB	NHS England	The Office of Rail and Road	Highways Authorities	Integrated Transport Authority	Active Travel England	Transport for London	Network Rail	Bedfordshire Local Nature	Affinity Water	Anglian Water	Thames Water	Lead Local Flood Authority	UK Power Networks	National Grid	The Office for Nuclear Regulation	Sport England	Luton Borough Council
Provision of security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities (including burial capacity)	Approach to Accommodating any security / community / cultural infrastructure (including burial capacity) needs including needs arising from new development	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Partnerships, Boards and Forums

3.51 We are also actively involved in a number of joint partnership and cross-boundary relationships and forums. These have helped to shape early stages of the plan and will continue to inform the preparation of the new local plan.

- Chilterns National Landscape Conservation Board
- Ox-Cam Pan - Regional Partnership
- England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Leadership Board
- RCFF Sustainable Development (planning leads) subgroup
- Health Inequality Board
- Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership Board
- Town Centre Partnership Board
- Luton Rising
- Public Access Forum
- The Luton Developers' Forum

Neighbourhood Planning

3.52 There are no neighbourhood plans or designated neighbourhood forums in Luton. A neighbourhood plan is a community-led document, produced by the community, rather than the local planning authority.

3.53 In terms of the Council's role, preparation and consultation will be undertaken in accordance with legislation, government policy and guidance. In general, we expect any proposed neighbourhood forums to discuss their proposals with us at an early stage to discuss the scope of the proposed plan, amendments to the proposed plan, or the proposed development order. We are able to provide general advice and guidance on the production of neighbourhood plans of neighbourhood development orders. We are unable to provide financial assistance to support neighbourhood planning.

Joint Plans

3.54 The Council is producing a joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan with the other Bedfordshire authorities. A Separate Engagement Strategy will be produced for the Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Preparation and engagement will be undertaken in accordance with this strategy, legislation and government policy and guidance.

4. What methods of engagement will we be using

4.1 **Tables 3a, b and c** provide further information about the engagement methods we are proposing to use in preparing the Local Plan. **Table 4** sets out how the public and stakeholders will be involved in each of the statutory key plan making stages.

Table 3a: Notification and publicising of Consultations

Method of notification/publicising	What this method involves
Email notification or written letter	Notifications of consultations may be sent out via email from the Online Consultation Portal. Where no email address is available, written notification may be sent via post.
Media release and public relations	Media releases may be issued through the local press, council publications, or television and radio.
Press notices	Notices may be published in local newspapers covering the whole of the area.
Social media	The council's social media channels may be used to publicise consultations and provide links to ways of providing feedback.
Posters, displays and banners	These may be displayed in key public locations, including council offices, leisure centres, libraries and community centres, with the aim of attracting interest and providing information. In appropriate locations displays may also be used.
Use of existing partnerships, forums, panels or community resources	Examples include boards such as the Luton Tenant Partnership Board, and resources such as schools. These can provide representative views from a range of organisations/ agencies or groups.
Community development	Luton Borough Council has community development officers who work in priority areas and neighbourhoods in the area to support and facilitate social inclusion and renewal.
Fairness Taskforce	Launched in November 2021, the Fairness Taskforce aims to enable the community, citizens and charities, our faith and community groups to actively shape the future of the town. It will be a critical friend, challenging leaders to respond to new citizen-led solutions.

Table 3b: Engagement formats

Engagement format	What this format involves
Placing documents on deposit	Making documents available for the public to view in prominent locations, such as in the Town Hall and public libraries. During consultation periods, legislation requires us to make the main documents being consulted on available at

	our principal office (the town hall) as a minimum, during normal office hours.
Meetings Workshops and focus groups	<p>Pre-arranged meetings guided by an agenda to discuss topics and share information. Meetings will be arranged with internal officers, neighbouring local planning authorities, and statutory bodies when appropriate.</p> <p>These may be used to encourage discussions around particular issues and can offer an opportunity to develop community capacity and offer training. These may take place in person or online.</p>
Website	<p>The council website will be used to display information and updates, provide access to documents, and explain/ provide ways of providing feedback / comments.</p> <p>During consultation periods, legislation requires us to make the main documents being consulted on available on our website.</p>
Online consultation portal	Consultation documents and feedback forms may be made available on a purpose-built consultation website. The council has a consultation portal for non-planning policy related consultations, but planning policy consultations take place separately, on Objective Keyplan.
Public exhibitions	Public exhibitions can provide a good visual means of displaying draft proposals and communicating relevant issues and options. Visitors will be able to discuss these matters with planning officers and other staff and submit their comments at the time.
Pop-up stalls	Pop-up stalls are less formal than public exhibitions and can include leafleting at busy locations such as train stations.
Email notification or written letter	Notifications of consultations may be sent out via email from the Online Consultation Portal. Where no email address is available, written notification may be sent via post.

Table 3c: Engagement methods

Engagement methods	What this method involves
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Questionnaires and surveys	These can be an effective means of gaining views on emerging documents and strategic policy-related proposals. They can be aimed at a small group or included in leaflets and newsletters to reach the wider community. Either may be online, or physical paper copies, particularly during community engagement or drop-in events.
Community involvement / drop-in events	A range of community involvement events, or drop-in events, may be organised at accessible locations in order to capture community views. They will allow all those interested in the planning process to directly discuss the relevant issues, options and strategic planning proposals with planning officers and other staff.
Workshops and Meetings and discussions	These will include meetings with specific consultation bodies, community groups and forums and could include map-based exercises.

Table 4: Consultation during Plan-making

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
Publication of Commencement Notice and Timetable	May 2026	-	-	-	Documents published on the Council's website in required digital formats and made available at Council Offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	-
Regulation 20: Scoping consultation – what the Local Plan should contain, approach to engagement and call for sites	May 2026	July 2026	Email notification, press notices, social media, newspaper notices, posters, Council website.	In writing to the Council and through meetings/works hops/exhibitions .	Documents published on Council's website in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	Opportunity to comment on published documents. Feedback at exhibitions/ meetings/workshops.

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
Gateway 1: Publish Self Assessment Summary	October 2026	-	-	-	Self Assessment published, including on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	-
Publish Summary of Scoping Consultation	October 2026	-	-	-	Summary of Scoping Consultation published, including on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	-
Regulation 23: Consultation on	May 2027	June 2027	Email notification, press notices,	In writing to the Council through	Documents published,	Opportunity to comment on

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
proposed local plan content and evidence and call for sites			social media, newspaper notices, posters, Council website.	meetings/works hops/exhibitions	including on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	published documents. Feedback at exhibitions and meetings/workshops.
Publish summary of consultation	August 2027		-	-	Documents published, including on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	-
Publication of Gateway 2 observations and advice	November 2027		Request for notification of publication can be made to the Council by email.	-	Plan documents published, including on Council website, in required digital	-

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
					<p>formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.</p> <p>PINS observations and advice and documents published on Council website and sent to those mentioned in the advice.</p>	
Regulation 27: Consultation on proposed local plan	November 2027	January 2028	Email notification, press notices, social media, newspaper notices, Council website.	In writing to the Council through meetings/workshops/exhibitions	Plan documents published on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	Opportunity to comment on published documents. Feedback at exhibitions and meetings/workshops.

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
Publish Summary of consultation on proposed Local Plan	February 2028	-	-	-	Plan documents published, including on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	-
Publication of Gateway 3 Planning Inspectorate Assessment	June 2028	-	Request for notification of publication can be made to the Council by email.	-	Plan documents published on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. PINS Assessment published on Council website and sent to those mentioned in the	-

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
					assessment and others considered appropriate. Copies can be requested from the Council.	
The Submission of the Local Plan	June 2028	-	Request for notification of publication can be made to the Council by email.	-	Plan documents published on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	-
Local Plan examination	June 2028	September 2028	Email notification of examination including; date, time and location.	At/for the Local Plan examination.	Plan documents published on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be	Opportunity to attend and take part in public examination. Request for notification can be made to the Council by email.

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
					requested from the Council.	
Publication of the examiners' recommendations	October 2028	-	Request for notification of publication can be made to the Council by email.	-	Documents published on Council website, in required digital formats and at Council Offices. Plan documents published on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	-
The adoption of the local plan	December 2028	-	Request for notification of publication can be made to the Council by email.	-	Plan documents published on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices. Plan documents	

Consultation/Plan-making stage	Start date	End date	How consultees will be notified/informed	How comments can be made	Availability of Documents	Consultation methods
					published on Council website, in required digital formats and made available at Council offices and libraries. Copies can be requested from the Council.	

5. How to make comments

- 5.1 When planning policy consultations are live, they will be available to view and for comment on our planning policy consultation portal, known as Objective Keyplan.
- 5.2 Objective Keyplan also holds all contact details of those who have signed up to our consultation database. Responses to consultations are likely to be recorded on this database, even if not originally submitted through it.
- 5.3 Residents, community groups, organisations and any other stakeholders who are interested in planning policy consultations are encouraged to self-register with this system to ensure that they are consulted on future planning policy matters. Anyone may register, and individuals can ask to be removed at any time, unless they are a statutory consultee. To ask to be added to the database, we can be emailed at localplan@luton.gov.uk.

Comments to the Scoping Consultation, including on the Engagement Strategy, can either be submitted by visiting www.luton.gov.uk/newlocalplan , or by emailing / writing to us at:

Email: localplan@luton.gov.uk

Post: Planning policy team, Luton Council, Second Floor, Town Hall George Street, Luton, LU1 2BQ

Please note that we are unable to process anonymous comments. Further information is available at www.luton.gov.uk/newlocalplan. **Comments must be received by 5pm on 23 July 2026.**

Consultation questions on the engagement strategy:

1. Do you have any comments on the overall approach in our engagement strategy?
2. Do you agree with the key matters we have identified and the bodies which we plan to discuss these with?
3. Do you have any suggestions for other organisations/forums or groups we should be liaising with?
4. Are the engagement methods proposed appropriate?
5. Do you have any suggestions about how we can make consultation material available and in what formats?
6. Are you a group or organisation that want to be involved in the Local Plan, please let us know