



By Email Only

4 November 2022

Message from Chief Planner

This newsletter provides updates on planning policy and practice in England, from DLUHC and other departments and government agencies.

In particular, it highlights requests for input from local planning authorities on a number of matters. With apologies for the short notice on a number of the deadlines, your input would be gratefully received in relation to:

- Natural England's survey on SSSI impact zones;
- The Planning Inspectorate's (PINS) Artificial Intelligence Innovation Survey; and
- The Department for Education's stakeholder workshop on design codes for schools and colleges – with two on **Monday 7th November**.

Local authorities will also want to note that the thresholds for designation of local planning authorities on the speed and quality of decision making for the 2023 and 2024 designation rounds have been confirmed and remain unchanged.

Kind regards

Joanna Averley
Chief Planner



Improving planning performance: Updated criteria for designation

On 19th October 2022 an updated [Criteria Document](#) was laid in Parliament, maintaining the existing thresholds for designation of local planning authorities on the speed and quality of decision making for the 2023 and 2024 designation rounds. A planning service that provides the service both local people and applicants expect is essential to delivering housing and economic growth. DLUHC continue to closely monitor the performance of local planning authorities and have the powers to designate them where appropriate.

Law Commission review of compulsory purchase law

The Government is keen for local planning authorities to make better use of their compulsory purchase powers, where appropriate, to drive forward the regeneration of their towns and cities. To facilitate this, we recognise there is a need for a more modern and efficient compulsory purchase system. Therefore, in addition to the measures in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill, which is currently being considered by Parliament, DLUHC have now asked the Law Commission to undertake a review of the law on compulsory purchase procedure and land compensation. The aim of the review is to make the legislation easier to access and understand for all those involved in the compulsory purchase process.

The review will bring the legislation on compulsory purchase procedure and land compensation together into one Act. In undertaking this consolidation, the Commission will seek to modernise the drafting, repeal any out of date provisions and rectify any technical inconsistencies identified. The review is expected to take 3 years to complete and will involve engagement with key stakeholders.

The Commission is currently advertising for a person to lead the review and the job advert can be found [here](#). The deadline for applications is **Thursday 10th November**.

Natural England survey on SSSI Impact Risk Zones

Natural England is seeking feedback from local planning authorities on their usage of SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs). The results will be used to plan for improvements to the tool. All local planning authority staff responsible for deciding when to consult Natural England on planning applications are encouraged to complete the [survey](#) by **Friday 11th November**.



PINS AI Innovation Survey for local planning authorities

The Planning Inspectorate is currently running the second phase of its AI innovation project. The last phase of the project focused on investigating whether artificial intelligence (AI) had the potential to provide a consistent and systematic approach for categorising and organising local plan representations. This phase will focus on deepening learning and understanding the effects of standardisation.

We have created [this survey](#) to increase our understanding of your experiences, the tools and methods you use to gather, process and analyse representations (generated as part of public consultation) during Local Plan development. It consists of 21 questions and is expected to take less than 20 minutes. Responses will be anonymous and will inform this phase of the project. If you are interested in contributing further to this project, you can opt in at the end of this survey.

DfE design code for schools and colleges - register for upcoming stakeholder engagement sessions

Are you producing your own design code or have thoughts on what a design code for schools and colleges should include? DfE would like to invite you to register for our final stakeholder engagement sessions to help inform DfE's own design code guidance. The sessions will provide some background on the emerging guidance and an opportunity for input from stakeholders. We're keen to hear from LPAs and LAs on how a design code for schools and colleges can help you in local plan preparation, decision-making and delivery. We'd also welcome school and college case studies. The session dates are:

- **Monday 7th November, 13:00-14:00** – [Register here](#)
- **Monday 7th November, 15:00-16:00** – [Register here](#)

We appreciate this is short notice, but we'd like to hear from as many of you as possible. If you'd like to attend, please register at the links above.

If you are unable to attend either session but would like to inform the scope or content of the document, please email:

DesignCodeSchoolsColleges.DFE@education.gov.uk