

Planning Bulletin May 2025

This monthly note highlights some of the recent and forthcoming developments in the world of planning, from a heritage perspective. Please note that this is not necessarily a complete review of matters and is not intended to provide any legal advice on the issues raised. Unless otherwise stated, it does not comprise the formal position of Historic England on these matters.

Legislation and Matters Arising

This section provides a summary of updates to emerging legislation in the last month. Further information on what the emerging legislation covers can now be found in [Appendix I](#).

New Legislation

Great British Energy Act

- The [Great British Energy Act](#) received Royal Assent on 15 May. The Act establishes Great British Energy, a new, publicly owned energy production company which will own, manage, and operate clean power projects. Great British Energy will have £8.3 billion in funding over the course of the parliament to speed up the delivery of strategic energy projects and invest in new technologies according to an accompanying [press release from the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero](#).

Emerging Legislation

Government Bills

Planning and Infrastructure Bill

- The [Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) was published on 11 March. The Public Bill Committee met for the first time on 24 April. All [written evidence](#) submitted to the committee is available online, including [Historic England's submission](#). The government has proposed an amendment to the Bill to remove the statutory requirement to consult as part of the pre-application stage for NSIP applications (see [Amendment NC44](#)) as set out by Matthew Pennycook MP in his [Written Ministerial Statement](#) on 23 April. All [amendments to the Bill are available online](#). On 6 May, MHCLG published the [Impact Assessment for the Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#), which concluded an overall positive impact on society equivalent to £3.2 billion over the next ten years.

Secondary Legislation

Permitted Development Rights

- The [Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) \(England\) \(Amendment\) Order 2025](#) makes changes to permitted development rights for the

installation and operation of off-street electric vehicle (EV) charging points and the installation of air source heat pumps. These changes include:

- Removing restrictions over siting wall-mounted EV charging within 2m of the highway.
 - Increasing the height of permitted EV upstands on non-domestic sites from 2.3 to 2.7m.
 - Introducing rights to construct equipment / equipment housing for standalone EV charging upstands on non-domestic sites up to 3m in height.
 - Increasing the number of air source heat pumps on detached dwellings to 2, with an increase in cubic m capacity, whilst removing restrictions on siting them within 1m of a boundary.
- The changes are due to come into force on 29 May.

Policy and Guidance

Guidance

Planning Practice Guidance

- On 12 May, the [Making an application PPG](#) was amended with paragraphs 13 and 14 revised to reflect recent changes to Crown Development consent routes (described in [April's Planning Bulletin](#)).

Committees

Built Environment Committee

- The [Built Environment Committee](#), in the House of Lords, has two inquiries open:
 - The [Grey Belt Inquiry](#) is looking at what Grey Belt land is, how it can contribute to housing targets and what sustainable Grey Belt development looks like. The [Committee's Grey Belt Inquiry conclusions were set out in a letter to the Deputy Prime Minister](#) on 5 February from the then Chair, Lord Moylan. On 19 March, [Minister of State, Matthew Pennycook MP's reply to the Inquiry was published](#). [Historic England's response](#) is available online. On 29 April, the new chair of the Committee, Lord Gascoigne, wrote [a further letter to Mathew Pennycook MP](#) requesting a further response to the questions raised by the Inquiry. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.
 - The [New Towns Inquiry](#) is a modular inquiry into new towns and expanded settlements. The first module will focus on whether the construction of new towns and expanded settlements is practicable and achievable. Subsequent modules will cover themes of Enabling Infrastructure, Social Infrastructure, Housing Delivery, and Creating Communities. All [evidence submitted to the New Town Inquiry](#) including

[Historic England's submission](#) is available online. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.

Culture, Media and Sport Committee

- The [Culture, Media and Sport Committee](#) currently has five inquiries open, including:
 - The [Protecting Built Heritage Inquiry](#), which opened on 16 December 2024. The Inquiry is examining issues with funding and whether current finance models are suitable and accessible. It will also engage with how the government can tackle practical and regulatory challenges, such as the availability of skilled practitioners, the managed decline of assets on publicly owned land, and policy issues arising from net zero targets and planning policy. Alongside this, MPs will highlight the importance of built heritage for economic regeneration and to community identity, as well as how those communities can be empowered to manage their local built heritage assets. All [written evidence submissions are available online](#) including [Historic England's submission](#). The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.

Energy Security and Net Zero Committee

- The [Energy Security and Net Zero Committee](#) currently has nine inquiries open, including:
 - [National planning for energy infrastructure](#), which opened on 25 April in response to the [government's consultation on updates to three National Policy Statements for energy infrastructure \(EN-1, EN-3 and EN-5\)](#). Noting that many stakeholders will be submitting responses to the government's consultation, the Inquiry welcomes submission of the "highlights" or key elements of these more detailed responses to government, to be considered by the Committee.
 - [Retrofitting homes for net zero](#), which opened on 19 November 2024. The Committee will invite two stakeholder panels to consider the policy changes needed to deliver low carbon heating and energy efficient homes. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.
 - [Unlocking community energy at scale](#), which opened on 11 November 2024. The Inquiry is considering, amongst other things, how reforms to the planning system, grid connections and the energy market could support the growth of community energy at scale. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.
 - [Workforce planning to deliver clean, secure energy](#), which opened on 11 November 2024. The Inquiry is considering how to build the workforce that is needed to deliver the policies and infrastructure for the UK government's clean, secure energy mission. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee

- The [Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee](#) has six inquiries open, including:

Historic England

- [Inquiry into the Work of Defra and its arm's length bodies](#), which opened on 6 November 2024. The Inquiry is scrutinising the policy, spending and administration of Defra and its arms-length bodies.
- [The future of farming](#), which opened on 6 December 2024. The agricultural sector is experiencing a period of significant change as it transitions away from a legacy direct payments regime towards nation-specific farming schemes. The Inquiry will provide scrutiny of the issues facing the sector as it makes this transition. On 16 May, the Inquiry published their [Report on the Government's Vision for Farming](#). A government response is due by 16 July.

Environmental Audit Committee

- The [Environmental Audit Committee](#) has seven inquiries open, including:
 - [Environmental sustainability and housing growth](#), which opened on 18 November 2024. The Inquiry is seeking views on how the government's proposed reforms to national planning policy and housebuilding targets might affect environmental protections and current approaches to sustainable development. The terms of reference are available at the [Environmental Audit Committee's evidence portal](#). The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence. You can [view all written evidence submitted to the Inquiry](#) online, including [Historic England's submission](#).
 - [Governing the marine environment](#), which opened on 16 December 2024. The Inquiry is focusing on the UK's environmental obligations under marine treaties and how the UK is delivering on them, as well as the government's strategy for marine planning and protection in its domestic waters. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence. You can [view all written evidence submitted to the Inquiry](#) online, including [Historic England's submission](#).
 - [Flood resilience in England](#), which opened on 10 December 2024. The Inquiry focuses on how flood resilience can be strengthened in response to increasing risks from extreme weather, rising sea levels, and evolving flood hazards. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence. You can view [all written evidence submitted to the Inquiry](#) online, including [Historic England's submission](#).

Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee

- The [Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee](#) has five inquiries open, including:
 - [Delivering 1.5 million new homes: Land Value Capture](#), which opened on 22 January. The Inquiry is looking at how land value capture policies - which seek to capture the value uplift on land when it is granted planning permission - can contribute to the delivery of the government's house building plans and help fund affordable housing

and public infrastructure. All [written evidence](#) to the Inquiry is published online. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.

Industry and Regulators Committee

- The Industry and Regulators Committee, in the House of Lords, has launched an inquiry on [The energy grid and grid connections](#). The Inquiry will focus on the regulatory, planning and funding barriers to delivering energy infrastructure and the ability of the government's proposals to address them. The Committee will consider issues such as possible legal challenges which arise as a result of reforms to the connections queue. The deadline for submitting evidence was 28 February. You can view [all written evidence submitted to the Inquiry](#) online, including [Historic England's submission](#).

Public Accounts Committee

- The [Public Accounts Committee](#) has 54 inquiries open, including:
 - [HS2: Update following Northern leg cancellation](#), which opened on 31 October 2024. On 28 February, the [Public Accounts Committee report](#) was published. It calls for details on plans for a “fundamental reset” by summer 2025. The [government's response PAC report](#) was published on 16 May and agrees with all but one of the eight recommendations in the report.

Transport Committee

- The [Transport Committee](#) has four inquiries open, including:
 - [Managing the impact of street works](#), which opened on 6 December 2024. The Inquiry is looking at the effects of street works on surface quality and maintenance costs, and how well local authorities are able to manage disruption for road and pavement users. The Inquiry is no longer accepting evidence.

Advice

- All [Historic England planning advice](#) is available on our website, and [Appendix II](#) includes a list of all Good Practice Advice notes (GPAs) and Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs).

Training

- Historic England provide webinars and e-learning courses. Visit [Historic England's training webpages](#) for information and booking, or keep up-to-date on new courses and training news by signing up to receive [Historic England's bi-monthly Training Newsletter](#).

Historic England Planning Research

Heritage Related Article 4 Directions Report

- On 20 May, Historic England published the [Heritage Related Article 4 Direction Report](#). The research, undertaken by Avalon Planning & Heritage, used data, surveys of local authority officers, and targeted interviews to analyse the purposes and effectiveness of Article 4 Directions in protecting the historic environment as well as any drivers or barriers to their implementation.

Pendle Mill Design Code

- On 16 May, Historic England published the [Pendle Mills Design Code](#). The project was commissioned by Historic England's policy development team, working collaboratively with regional colleagues, the council and delivered by Donald Insall Associates, to research and explore how design coding could support the sustainable reuse of a specific building type. Whilst the goal is for the code to be adopted by Pendle Borough Council as a decision-making tool, it is hosted on the Historic England website as an illustrative research piece to support discussion within the sector in applying, adapting and evolving similar methodological approaches across areas and asset types nationally.

Other Items

Local Heritage Hub

- On 21 May, Historic England launched the [Local Heritage Hub](#) to coincide with the year's Local History Month. With nearly 400 locations, every county, city, district, major town, and national park in England now has a dedicated digital page that uncovers its rich and layered history.

Current Consultations

Government Consultations

10 Year Infrastructure Strategy Working Paper

- On 26 January, HM Treasury published the [10 Year Infrastructure Strategy Working Paper](#) for consultation. The ten-year strategy seeks to reduce uncertainty by bringing together a long-term plan for the country's social, economic and housing infrastructure. The Strategy will also set out an institutional framework to support its implementation, including the role of public financing institutions such as the National Wealth Fund, and how it will support other strategies such as the [Industrial Strategy](#), which is the UK government's proposed 10-year plan for the economy. There is no set deadline for responses.

National Policy Statements Updates

- On 24 April, DESNZ published the [Planning for new energy infrastructure: 2025 revisions to National Policy Statements for consultation](#). The consultation seeks views on draft updates to the following National Policy Statements:
 - EN-1: Overarching National Policy Statement for energy
 - EN-3: National Policy Statement for renewable energy infrastructure
 - EN-5: National Policy Statement for electricity networks infrastructure
- The consultation closes at 11:59pm on 29 May.

Solar on Car Parks and Electric Vehicle Charging

- On 7 May, DESNZ published a [call for evidence on solar on car parks and electric vehicle charging](#). The consultation seeks views on a proposal to mandate the installation of solar canopies on new outdoor car parks, subject to certain exemptions, as well as views around current planning policy relating to EV charging infrastructure. The consultation closes at 11:59pm on 18 June.

Government Consultation Responses

- On 19 May, Defra published the [government's response to the Office for Environmental Protection \(OEP\) review of implementation of the duty to have due regard to the Environmental Principles Policy Statement \(EPPS\) in England](#). The OEP's report was published on 27 February and set out eight recommendations. The government's response notes the OEP's intention to strengthen links between the EPPS and government's environmental targets, plans and strategies. They will consider what scope there is to address those links through planned updates to guidance and in the revised Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP).

Historic England Consultation Responses

- Historic England [responses to recent consultations](#) are available on our website. This includes:
 - [Response to the Improving the energy performance of privately rented homes in England and Wales](#).

Calendar

May 2025

29 May – [National Policy Statements consultation](#) closes and changes to [permitted development rights for off-street electric vehicle charging points and the installation of air source heat pumps](#) come into force.

June 2025

18 June - The [call for evidence on solar on car parks and electric vehicle charging](#) closes.

December 2025

31 December - The [Infrastructure Planning \(Onshore Wind and Solar Generation\) Order 2025](#) comes into force.

Planning Bulletin Notifications

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If you no longer wish to receive Planning Bulletin, or have received this in error, please email governmentadvice@HistoricEngland.org.uk and we will remove you from the mailing list.

Appendix I: Progress of Emerging Legislation

Government Bills

Planning and Infrastructure Bill

- The [Planning and Infrastructure Bill](#) is accompanied by [explanatory notes](#). MHCLG published a [guide to the bill](#) and a series of [factsheets](#) on a range of issues covered in the bill.
- The government states that the bill seeks to:
 - Provide for a faster and more certain consenting process for critical infrastructure and strengthen the policy framework around National Policy Statements (NPSs);
 - Deliver a more efficient and predictable system for energy infrastructure projects;
 - Streamline and improve the efficiency of delivering transport infrastructure projects;
 - Introduce a more strategic approach to nature recovery in relation to development, enabling developers to fund restoration more efficiently through a new Nature Restoration Fund, whilst securing improved outcomes for the environment;
 - Improve certainty and decision-making in the planning system, including through introducing a new scheme of delegation to modernise local planning committees, and increasing the capacity of local planning authorities (LPAs) by enabling the cost recovery of planning fees;
 - Unlock land and secure public value for large-scale investment through reforms to the compulsory purchase order process and compensation rules;
 - Strengthen development corporation powers for infrastructure delivery, including transport, and clarify and update development corporation remits and objectives; and
 - Provide for the introduction of a strategic planning system for England.
- The committee stage commenced on 24 April.

English Devolution Bill

- The [English Devolution Bill](#), not yet laid before Parliament, proposes to:
 - Make devolution the default, with a standardised devolution framework.
 - Provide greater powers to mayors over areas including strategic planning.

- Ahead of the bill, on 16 December 2024, government published the [English Devolution White Paper](#), which provides further detail including a proposed devolution structure and local government re-structuring.

Holocaust Memorial Bill

- The [Holocaust Memorial Bill](#) was carried over from the previous Parliamentary session. The bill will enable the government to deliver on a long-term commitment to build a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre next to the Houses of Parliament by allocating funding and removing restrictions on development in Victoria Tower Gardens. It reached committee stage in the House of Lords on 4 March. The report stage is due to take place from 11 June.

High Speed Rail (Manchester to Crewe) Bill

- The [High Speed Rail \(Manchester to Crewe\) Bill](#) was carried over from the previous Parliamentary session. The bill enables powers to deliver rail infrastructure in the north of England. A date for committee stage has yet to be announced.

Appendix II: Historic England Planning Advice

Good Practice Advice Notes (GPAs)

The GPAs provide information on good practice, particularly looking at the principles of how national planning policy and guidance can be applied. They are the result of collaborative working with the heritage and property sectors in the [Historic Environment Forum](#), and have been prepared following public consultation:

- [GPA1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans \(March 2015\)](#)
- [GPA2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment \(March 2015\)](#)
- [GPA3: The Setting of Heritage Assets \(December 2017\)](#)
- [GPA4: Enabling Development and Heritage Assets \(June 2020\)](#)

Historic England Advice Notes (HEANs)

The HEANs include detailed, practical advice on how to implement national planning policy and guidance. They have been prepared by Historic England following public consultation:

- [HEAN 1: Conservation Areas: Designation, Appraisal and Review \(Second Edition\) \(February 2019\)](#)
- [HEAN 2: Making Changes to Heritage Assets \(February 2016\)](#)
- [HEAN 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans \(October 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 4: Tall Buildings \(Second Edition\) \(March 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 5: Setting up a Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement \(November 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 6: Drawing up a Local Listed Building Consent Order \(November 2015\)](#)
- [HEAN 7: Local Heritage Listing \(Second edition\) \(January 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 8: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment \(December 2016\)](#)
- [HEAN 9: The Adaptive Reuse of Traditional Farm Buildings \(October 2017\)](#)
- [HEAN 10: Listed Buildings and Curtilage \(February 2018\)](#)

- [HEAN 11: Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment \(Second Edition\) \(April 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 12: Statements of Heritage Significance \(October 2019\)](#)
- [HEAN 13: Minerals Extraction and Archaeology \(January 2020\)](#)
- HEAN 14 has been superseded by HEAN 18 and has been withdrawn
- [HEAN 15: Commercial Renewable Energy Development and the Historic Environment \(February 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 16: Listed Building Consent \(June 2021\)](#)
- [HEAN 17: Planning and Archaeology \(November 2022\)](#)
- [HEAN 18: Adapting Historic Buildings for Energy and Carbon Efficiency \(July 2024\)](#)