

December 2020



Briefing

Local Plan Examinations

A campaigner's guide

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Introduction

This briefing gives an overview of **Local Plan examinations** in England. There are some helpful tips throughout the briefing about how to get involved. Sources of further information and advice are given at the end of the guide.

Section 1 sets out an introduction to the examination process. **Section 2** outlines the different types of examination. **Section 3** discusses different stages of examinations. **Section 4** explains how to get involved. **Section 5** describes examination procedure. **Sections 6 and 7** discuss the role of written and oral evidence and **Section 8** details the Planning inspector's recommendation.

Section 1: What is a Local Plan examination?

Summary of the examination process

An examination of a Local Plan tests the effectiveness, robustness and legality of its policies. Examinations are carried out to ensure plans have been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements - for example, on matters such as Sustainability Appraisal, duty to co-operate and consultation. The overarching aim is to ensure that a council's Local Plan is "sound", in other words, that it has been "positively prepared" and is "justified", "effective" and "consistent with national policy".

The examination provides an opportunity for local people and stakeholders to voice concerns about draft planning policies and to suggest amendments, based on evidence, where a different approach is justified. The examination process is essential to ensure that Local Plans have been formulated taking into account neighbouring authority requirements; undergo scrutiny in light of national policy and evidence; policies are justified; and that correct procedures have been followed, before being adopted.

A Local Plan examination is sometimes referred to as an or "independent examination" **[referred to as “examination” from now on]**.

The examination can lead to three possible outcomes:

- The inspector finds the plan, as submitted, sound and legally compliant. In these circumstances the inspector must recommend that the plan be adopted.
- The inspector finds the plan is unsound and/or legally non-compliant, but considers it possible to make it sound and legally compliant by making main modifications to it. In these circumstances the inspector must recommend main modifications, if the local planning authority requests this.
- The inspector finds the plan unsound and/or legally non-compliant as submitted, and that it is not possible to make it sound and legally compliant by making main modifications to it.

Examinations usually involve bespoke hearing sessions which are based on a series of "main matters" – as set by a planning inspector. Hearings are structured around “matters, issues and questions” (MIQs), which aim to address specific aspects of plan policies about which the inspector may have concern, seeks clarification or amendments. How long an examination takes will depend on the type and complexity of the plan. Hearing sessions can take place over a matter of weeks or months or in some rare instances much longer. Hearing sessions are a key aspect of a Local Plan examination and sometimes referred to as the "public examination" or "examination in public".

You have a right to be heard at an examination where you've previously responded to a formal consultation on the draft plan and objected. If, however, you are in support of the plan, an opportunity to speak will be at the inspector's discretion. Seating is also usually provided for the general public to observe proceedings for those not wishing to speak.

Unlike planning inquiries, examination hearings are non-adversarial. Legal counsel (a barrister or solicitor) may be present; however, cross-examination of representatives is allowed only in exceptional circumstances. Compared with inquiries, examination hearings are more relaxed, with different parties engaging in roundtable discussion, with questions and debate held at the inspector's discretion.

Typically, the examination of a full Local Plan containing both strategic and non-strategic policies will last around a year, sometimes longer (NB this includes the period from when a draft plan first submitted to the Secretary of State to when an inspector's final letter is published). If the local planning authority (LPA) is just updating a small number of policies in their plan, it may be possible to complete the examination in a shorter timescale.

Who carries out the examination?

A planning inspector working on behalf of the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) will carry out the examination – see section 4 for more details on inspectors and their role. The PINS is an Executive Agency which serves the Ministry for Communities, Housing and Local Government in England and the National Assembly in Wales. Scotland and Northern Ireland each have their own equivalent of the Planning Inspectorate: the Planning and Enforcement Appeals Division of the Scottish Government and the Planning Appeals Division in Northern Ireland, respectively.

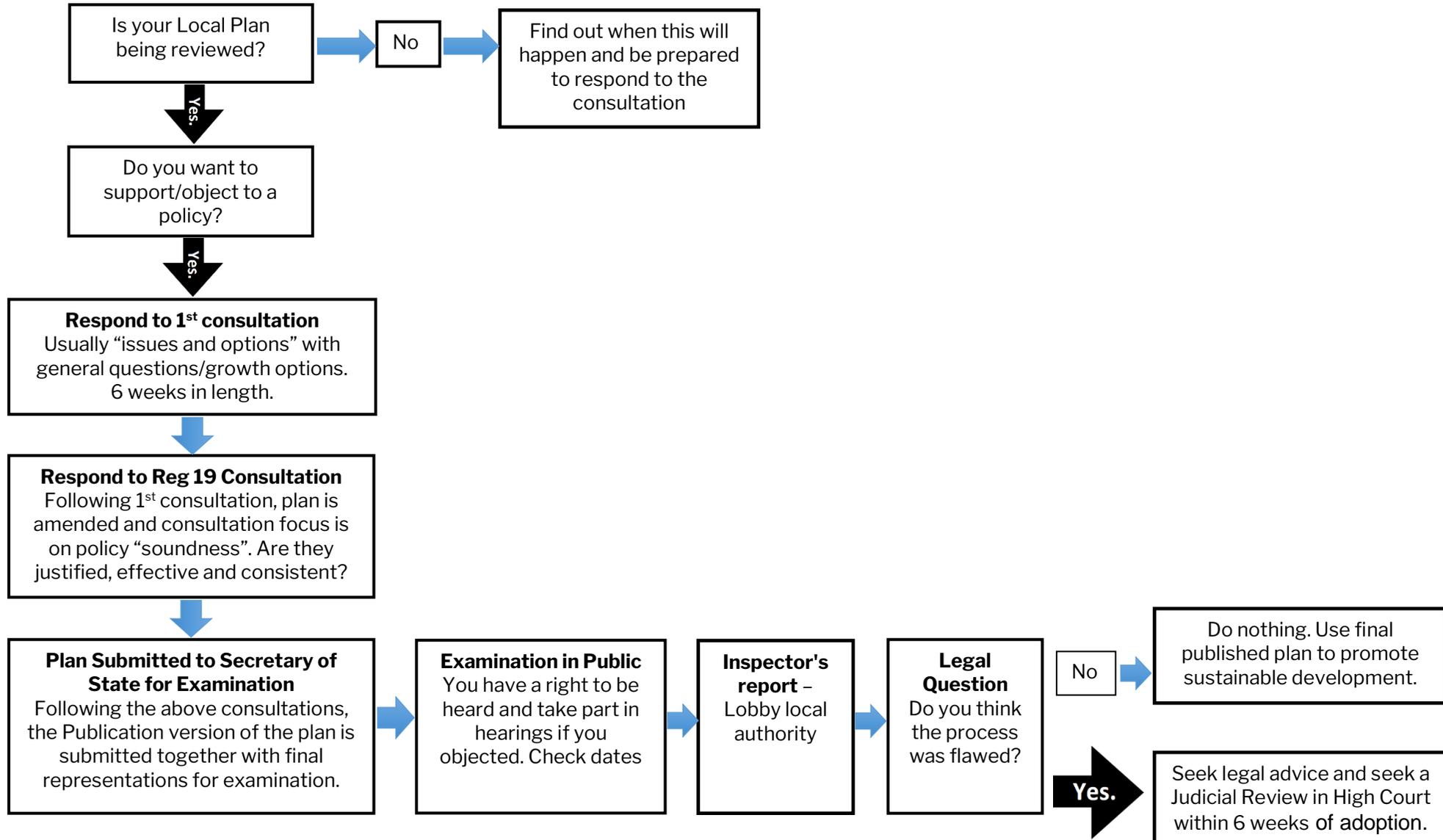
The PINS plays a vital role in taking decisions that affect both businesses and the public, although this doesn't always mean it's well-resourced, which has implications for processing timescales and performance. While as an organisation we may not always agree with its decisions, Friends of the Earth respects the function the PINS operates and the work it does.

How do examinations fit in with the rest of your campaign for or against a development?

Where your Local Plan is proposing allocations, or policies linking to types of development you oppose, this is an opportunity to tie in with wider campaigning and to make the case for sustainable alternatives and mitigation you believe are necessary to make a development environmentally and socially acceptable. Equally, you may also want to present a compelling case in support of a policy, for example, for renewable energy or a particular policy approach you consider suitable for your area.

Running such a campaign is beyond the scope of this briefing, but it is essential that in the run up to an examination, during and beyond, a campaign is run to highlight the public concern or views on the issue at hand.

Local Plan examination route-map



Section 2: Types of examination

Local Plan examination

Examinations run in a format as described in the sections below and will aim to deal with the soundness of Local Plans (including Minerals and Waste Local Plans). The scale of proceedings will depend on the number of respondents who want to speak at the hearings and the length; usually prescribed by the number of MIQs the inspector has identified. Policies will be tested on soundness grounds, linked to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), and other legal and procedural requirements. A Local Plan examination which covers minerals and waste, may require consideration by a specialist inspector.

Other plan examinations

Spatial Development Strategies (SDSs), prepared by Mayors or combined authorities (an example being the London Plan), also undergo examination. The legislation and process for preparing, examining and adopting a Spatial Development Strategy differs to that for Local Plans. For some aspects, such as examination hearing sessions, the procedure is similar, with hearings focusing on specific matters and questions and taking the form of a roundtable discussion. A panel of inspectors oversees proceedings, rather than one inspector. An examination secretary is appointed to provide administrative and programming support. As happens with a Local Plan examination, an SDS is examined to assess whether it has been prepared in accordance with legal and procedural requirements, and whether it is sound, positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy.

Neighbourhood Plans undergo examination by an independent examiner. This is someone who is suitably qualified and experienced. Again, the process differs to that for Local Plans. The purpose of the examination is to assess whether or not a draft Neighbourhood Plan meets basic conditions, and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Unlike the process for examining Local Plans and Spatial Development Strategies, the independent examiner does not test the soundness of a Neighbourhood Plan or examine other material considerations. Most Neighbourhood Plans are examined by written representations, though hearings can be held at the examiner's discretion. To find out more about Neighbourhood Plan examinations, how they're run, how to take part, meeting basic conditions and tips on evidence, refer to "Planning Practice Guidance" and Locality's Neighbourhood Planners toolkit How to prepare for and what to expect at Examination (see "Further information and guidance" below).

Section 3: Local Plan examination: key stages

As explained earlier in this guide, examinations are held to examine the soundness and legal compliance of Local Plans. The examination follows a series of consultations held by the local planning authority (LPA) to consider different iterations of the emerging Local Plan.

Key stages in the Local Plan examination

1. A publication version of the draft Local Plan is submitted to the Secretary of State together with all previous consultation responses to the public consultations undertaken on the emerging Local Plan.
2. An inspector and Programme Officer are appointed who issue an examination timetable, confirm hearing dates and a venue. The inspector carries out an initial assessment of the plan.
3. The inspector sets out a list of Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) to which he/she invites hearing statements on specific matters (including confirmation of attendance). It is open to the inspector, if he or she considers it necessary, to invite further written statements from representatives who have decided not to attend the hearings, on matters covered in their representations.
4. Examination hearings are advertised 6 weeks before the start. Hearing sessions are based around the inspector's MIQs and responses received in the hearing statements.
5. Attendees are invited to speak at specific hearings at which they wish to discuss certain matter(s), eg soundness of a policy. A hearing schedule is published.
6. Examination hearings commence. If you confirmed attendance for a hearing, you should have a place at the table (and name plate), giving you an opportunity to formally contribute to the examination discussion – ie present your arguments concerning the plan or specific policies it contains.
7. During the hearing sessions, the inspector may recommend modifications to the local planning authority to ensure the plan is "sound" (based on arguments from third parties, national policy, material considerations and justified evidence).
8. The council holds a Main Modifications consultation after which the inspector is sent all comments and writes their final report.
9. Following internal peer review by the PINS, the final examination report is issued. This states whether or not the plan is "sound" and is sent to the council.

If the inspector concludes a plan is "sound", the council can then proceed to formally adopt the plan which becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area. If a Local Plan is found "unsound" at examination, an inspector must recommend modifications that would make a Local Plan sound if asked to do so by the LPA. If the inspector does not consider a Local Plan could be made sound through modifications, he or she will recommend that it is not adopted. In these circumstances, it's likely the authority will have already been made aware of this – usually by the inspector prior to the hearing sessions commencing. In this instance, hearings will be cancelled, and the planning authority will need to do more work (eg research, evidence gathering and further consultation) to remedy key issues identified by the inspector. In some circumstances the planning authority may withdraw the plan from examination and start over.

Timetable	Local Plan examination key stages
Examination commences	Submission of Publication draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State
Within 3 weeks of being submitted	Inspector appointed for plans containing strategic policies
Within 5 weeks of being submitted	Inspector appointed for plans not containing strategic policies
Prior to the commencement of examination hearings	<p>In the intervening weeks from inspector's appointment the inspector will:</p> <p>Look for major flaws in terms of soundness/ compliance (eg whether the Duty to Cooperate has been carried out).</p> <p>Determine matters for discussion at hearings</p> <p>Prepare a hearing timetable (including matters)</p>
6 weeks before hearing	<p>Inspector confirms start date for hearing sessions.</p> <p>LPA must ensure the start date is advertised at least 6 weeks in advance. The programme officer publishes the times for hearing sessions, matters for discussion etc.</p> <p>LPA and other participants ("interested parties") are allowed 2-3 weeks to prepare hearing statements on inspector's matters. These should be submitted by a deadline set by the programme officer.</p>
Prior to the commencement of examination hearings	PO checks attendance, any updates to matters and/or timetable and confirms venue (not necessarily 4 weeks before but enough notice should be given).
Examination hearings commence	<p>Hearing participants should attend the relevant hearing session (usually where their matter is discussed).</p> <p>Non-strategic plans usually require 2-6 sitting days</p> <p>Strategic plans usually require 9-12 days</p> <p>Minerals and waste plans usually require 4 sitting days</p> <p>Comprehensive plans with strategic and non-strategic policies may be split into two blocks.</p>

<p>Post hearings</p>	<p>LPA may request the inspector recommend main modifications (MMs) to make the plan sound and/or compliant. This will result in further consultation.</p> <p>Timetable for this is in hands of the LPA. Inspector will publish a progress report, but cannot finalise their report until responses from MMs consultation received.</p> <p>Further hearing sessions may be held if the inspector decides these are needed to clarify or resolve substantial new issues.</p>
<p>End of examination</p>	<p>Inspector's report issued. After internal PINS review, and fact checking with LPA, the inspector's report is sent to the LPA - usually 3-4 months after the examination hearings close.</p>

The Local Plan examination timetable – as taken from PINS Guidance

Section 4: Getting involved

Get involved early on

Participating in Local Plan examinations requires longer-term preparation and prior involvement in the consultation process. This is worthwhile, as you are essentially commenting on the drafting of a new Local Plan that will be in place for 15+ years.

Prior to examination, the council will hold public consultations on the draft plan. During early stages of plan preparation, councils have flexibility in how they consult the public and other stakeholders, though must meet requirements set out in the Local Planning (England) Regulations 2012. The final consultation stage prior to submitting the plan to the PINS for examination is called the "publication stage" and involves a formal, statutory consultation inviting representations from the public and other stakeholders. Upon reaching this stage, the plan should be in a form that the local planning authority considers to be "sound" and ready for examination.

If you have previously objected on the draft Local Plan, you have a right to be heard at the examination – as per the above regulations. The council will also need to notify you at least 6 weeks before examination takes place, so you'll have time to prepare a final hearing statement which will assist you at the hearing sessions (that is if you plan on attending; it is not compulsory).

The inspector invites participants who are likely to make significant and justified comments linked to the MIQs. If you want to participate in the examination, you'll need to make a significant objection on the matters you are interested in, or join with a local organisation or group that is objecting.

Pre-examination hearing

Once the final publication version of the draft plan is submitted to the Secretary of State, a planning inspector is appointed by the PINS, with a programme officer (PO) also allocated by the council. The PO will organise a time, date and venue where the examination will take place. This information is usually sent out by post or email and made available online. The inspector carries out an initial assessment which includes looking for any fundamental flaws in respect of soundness or legal compliance and may write to the LPA if there are major concerns

Following an initial read through of the plan, the inspector will identify and circulate a list of Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) to which he/she will want to focus on specifically during the course of the hearing sessions. These may relate to specific policies he/she feels are in need of attention, require further information or where amendments may be suitable following third-party objection. The inspector (via the programme officer) will ask for final hearing statements to be submitted on the back of these MIQs, to which you will need to submit (with evidence) your final arguments and proposed policy amendments – where needed.

Following receipt of hearing statements, and confirmation from respondents whether they would like to participate in the hearings in person, the examination hearings will be advertised and a hearing schedule published. Members of the public and stakeholders will be invited to attend specific hearings where they have previously raised a soundness issue (usually stating why a policy is not "consistent" with national policy, "justified" or "effective", or "not legally compliant") in a consultation response.

In light of the Coronavirus pandemic of 2020, the Planning Inspectorate gradually introduced new arrangements to enable examination hearings to take place online by video conference rather than physical settings. These hearings typically make use of face-to-face software such as Zoom and Microsoft Teams. Several Local Plan examinations have now been conducted this way, hosted by the LPA. The Planning inspector will now also issue guidelines on how to participate virtually ahead of the meeting (see for example, [Corby Borough Council Virtual Hearing Guidance](#)). It seems likely that provision for virtual attendance at hearings will continue for the foreseeable future, possibly with a combination of in-person and virtual attendance once in-person events are able to resume.

At the examination hearing

When speaking at the relevant hearing, you will have a chance to sit at the table with the inspector, council officers and other interested parties (some who may be represented by counsel). Evidence is then presented regarding specific MIQs relating to specific policies, the presentation of which is more informal than a planning inquiry – with this very much a forum discussion. The inspector leads proceedings, with the majority of MIQs directed at the council's policy officers, as essentially, they drafted the plan. However, each participant at the table will also be able to voice their concern(s) where appropriate, and discussion is encouraged to sound-out key policy issues. The inspector may (or may not) recommend a Main Modification to the plan to ensure its soundness on a specific MIQ.

Presenting evidence at examination

Rather than read out your hearing statement (see section 6 below) in full at the examination, it's more likely the inspector will ask you for a précis of the its arguments linked to the specific matter in question (eg, climate change or seismicity wording). To be successful, you will need to give a strong and clear case. You will need to be factual as far as you can and challenges to the wording of policies need to be supported by evidence. This can take the form of references to technical studies, such as Local Plan evidence base documents, other plans, relevant legislation or national policy.

The inspector will be aware of your hearing statement's contents and proposed policy changes and be familiar with some of the key arguments you're likely to make. They will, however, be open to further explanation of evidence submitted in your statement to justify a change to plan policies or other parts of the plan (eg, objectives, explanatory text). Once you've spoken, discussion usually takes place between the inspector, the council's policy team and – where invited by the inspector – you and other representatives at the table. Hearing sessions are inquisitorial, with the inspector probing the issues rather than taking an adversarial approach, leading proceedings and exchanges between parties.

You can, however, also get a barrister to present your case which may be worthwhile, especially in instances where it's likely there will be a lot of legal representation. While this approach does not guarantee a successful outcome, it may ensure your key points are put across in a salient manner and that responses to the inspector's MIQs are well argued, persuasively conveyed and bring in well researched evidence.

Post hearing

Following the closure of the hearing sessions, there's usually a formal consultation on the Main Modifications held by the council, after which the inspector will write and issue their final report. Following internal checking/peer review at the PINS, the final report is issued and states whether the plan is "sound".

The planning inspector

The inspector will be assigned by the Planning Inspectorate. He or she will have a great deal of knowledge and experience of the planning system and will be professionally qualified (for example a former senior planning officer, solicitor, architect etc). In some instances, the inspector may have one or more assistant inspectors, such as where a Local Plan includes minerals and waste policies or where it's an examination for a Local Development Strategy.

The inspector has considerable discretion in running an examination, deciding the schedule and so forth. If you have difficulties or special requirements it is well worth talking to the programme officer who may be able to help and take these into account and where needed will relay your concerns to the inspector. Inspectors will also try to ensure that the views of unrepresented third parties are understood and that they are not intimidated by the formality of the proceedings.

However, it can also be the case that some objectors give less concise speeches, with largely irrelevant points to the matter at hand and an inspector can and will intervene. You should state your case clearly and concisely.

Inspectors have clear guidelines on what is/ isn't relevant to an examination, and they will set out what the main issues are both before and when the hearings commence/ inquiry opens – it's therefore really important that you are able to show how your case is relevant when submitting written evidence and when you give oral evidence.

Remember: The inspector is your friend, is impartial and does not work for the developer or the council.

Section 5: Procedures

For Local Plan examinations in England, the inspector will consider all representations received during statutory consultations prior to the document's submission to the Planning Inspectorate. In Wales, representations on a submitted Local Development Plan (LDP) are sent /direct to the local planning authority. However, the basis for holding examinations into these documents in both England and Wales is essentially the same.

If anyone has exercised their right to be heard in person, their representations will be heard by the inspector at examination hearings (structured discussions led by the inspector involving the LPA, council and people/agents who have made representations) or roundtable discussions (a more formal discussion on, for example, housing supply figures)

The inspector's report on the plan will only be issued once the LPA has consulted on any main modifications put forward by an inspector (following the examination) and the inspector has had the opportunity to consider any representations submitted on these.

Sometimes an inspector may feel that too many substantial changes are needed to make a plan sound and will direct the local authority to withdraw the plan it has submitted. This is rare, but it does happen.

In exceptional circumstances you can apply for Judicial Review of the plan where you feel you have been aggrieved or there is a procedural issue. This usually happens where mineral operators or housing developers feel plan policies will unfairly restrict how they can operate or bring about development in the future. Local groups can, however, also apply where they feel the council's evidence was flawed (for example, if they think it is inadequate or inaccurate).

The programme officer (usually in consultation with the inspector) will set out what will happen, including which matters will be discussed and when (in a hearing schedule) and who will be allowed to formally attend hearings. Any member of the public can watch the proceedings. Where hearings are held by video conference, sessions may be livestreamed to enable the public and non-participants to watch proceedings.

Section 6: Written evidence

Hearing statements

As referenced in Section 4 above, hearing statements are requested by the inspector in response to their final list of Matters, Issues or Questions (MIQs) linked to a submitted Local Plan scheduled for examination. Each hearing statement must address a specific matter, to ensure clarity – so more than one statement may need to be submitted, depending on how many matters you wish to comment on.

Your statement(s) do not need to repeat all evidence previously submitted in previous representations, as the inspector will have a copy of your last representations already, but do feel free to reference and reemphasise key points you've previously made. Statements should explain, and be backed up with evidence, why a particular policy, policy justification or plan objective is "unsound". Each statement should suggest proposed policy and other wording changes needed to make the plan sound and respond directly to the inspector's MIQ.

The hearing statement represents the most concise version of your evidence, by which you can answer the inspector's specific MIQs and propose policy changes justified by evidence. By the time you write it, the planning authority may well have remedied some or all of your earlier concerns, meaning you might redact some earlier proposed changes from your statement. A conscious decision to offer more informed policy amendments will be welcomed by the inspector.

Section 7: Oral evidence

Examination hearing sessions are based around specific main themes (MIQs) which your hearing statement should have addressed along with your key arguments. It's worth bringing a copy of this with you to read through before you speak.

Where you have been invited to attend a hearing session, you will be expected to take your seat at the table before the session starts. There should be a nameplate (with your details and your organisation). Once the hearing starts, the inspector will introduce the session. Each party will introduce themselves and discussion will commence on the first MIQ. Once discussion comes to a matter you wish to contribute verbally, it's customary to raise your nameplate on its side to notify the inspector that you wish to make a point. When asked to speak, you should set out your points clearly and succinctly, especially if the inspector has asked you to state your position on a relevant matter. The inspector will welcome comments from all parties at the table when requested but will not tolerate interruptions or people talking over each other.

Remember to speak clearly, be concise and cite evidence to support why the council's approach to a policy is unsound (or conversely, why you think a proposed policy is sound). Where you seek a change to policy, while being considerate of the council's point of view, don't be afraid to make your point(s) in as compelling a manner as you can. Arguments you could deploy include:

- that robust evidence from "x" source justifies a different policy approach

- that as other Local Plans have approached a policy in a similar way to your thinking, this adds weight to why the planning authority should change its approach
- there are legal reasons why a policy is unsound – such as wording that contradicts what is written in planning legislation
- the evidence base underpinning a policy is flawed. For example, the council has not undertaken its Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to required standards and/or the plan has failed to take into account SA findings and recommendations in drafting policy
- consultation on the Local Plan was not in line with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (which sets out what methods the council will use to consult the public and other stakeholders on the Local Plan)
- a policy is out of line with national policy on a specific matter.

Where you're speaking in support of a policy, cite evidence, national policy or other places where this policy approach has been successfully adopted.

The inspector should be aware of the gist of your proposed policy wording amendments and may put them to the council to justify a modification. It will be up to the planning authority to defend its approach.

Overall, be confident in your delivery, but also bear in mind it's not automatic that your proposed amendments will be taken forward – in some instances, none may. Also be mindful that other parties taking part in the hearing session may not support your suggestions. They might object, but should do so using proper etiquette, balanced reasoning and based on evidence.

Once you've made your point, the planning authority and inspector will deliberate further, and the inspector may or may not decide to recommend a main modification. Even if the inspector doesn't take on board your suggestions, you should feel positive that you have engaged with the process and argued your point of view in such a formal setting.

Getting policy wording amendments through at examination isn't easy, and requires a lot of work, evidence gathering, time and courage (especially if you are representing yourself). Make sure your oral evidence is informed pragmatic. but maintain focus on the points you are seeking to get across. It pays to prepare well in advance. Good luck.

Section 8: The inspector's report and plan adoption

At various points throughout the examination the inspector will issue guidelines, usually published in your council's Examination Library (check online), and may publish an interim report, for example recommending Main Modifications needed to make the plan sound. The inspector's final report will only be issued once the LPA has consulted on main modifications and the inspector has had the opportunity to consider any representations on these. The inspector also needs to ensure their report has been internally peer reviewed at the PINS before issuing.

Assuming the report is positive, any decision to adopt a local plan is usually made at a meeting of the full council usually held 6-8 weeks after the inspector's report is issued (if not sooner).

Alternatively, where it is realised early on that a Local Plan is unlikely to be found sound without substantial changes to the evidence base or major redrafting, it's likely that the plan will have been withdrawn at an earlier stage of the examination. Essentially, the council will be made aware before the inspector writes their final report of soundness issues and will amend/hold further hearings/take other action needed to remedy issues raised by the inspector. This will in turn improve prospects for the plan being found sound and recommended for adoption in the inspector's final report.

Remember: Following on from Local Plan examination, the inspector will only issue their report once the LPA has consulted on the main modifications and the inspector has had the opportunity to consider representations on these and has internally checked their report.

Challenging the decision

The adoption of a Local Plan can be challenged via the High Court, but this challenge must be made within 6 weeks of its adoption. It is worth noting from the start that if you lose, you will usually have to pay the other parties' costs, as well as your own.

It is also possible for a council to submit a "correctable error" – such as where a proposals map has been incorrectly drawn – by making a request in writing within 6 weeks to the High Court. See S56 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (see "Further information and guidance" below) concerning correctable errors, as well as the Planning Inspectorate website on complaints and challenges.

Further information and guidance

Friends of the Earth – Tel: 020 7490 1555

1st Floor, The Printworks, 139 Clapham Road, London, SW9 0HP.

Website: <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/system-change/guide-community-rights-environment-and-planning-laws>

Useful website resources

We recommend you consult some of the excellent publications which go into much greater detail than this briefing.

Air Quality: UK National Air Quality site: <https://www.airquality.co.uk>

Local Plans: the examination process (last update October 2020): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-plans>

Local Plans (Planning Practice Guidance) (2018): <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/plan-making>

Locality's Neighbourhood Planners toolkit – how to prepare for, and what to expect at, Examination: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/NP-Examiners-toolkit-20190606.pdf>

Model representation form for Local Plans: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/model-representation-form-for-local-plans>

National Infrastructure Planning: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/>

National Planning Policy Framework: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-2>

Neighbourhood Planning – the independent examination: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#the-independent-examination>

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents>

The Planning Inspectorate Code of Conduct: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/code-of-conduct>

The Planning Inspectorate virtual events: guide to participating (July 2020) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-inspectorate-virtual-events-guide-to-participating>

Planning Portal: www.planningportal.co.uk

Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations (England) 2019:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examining-local-plans-procedural-practice>

Procedural Practice in the Examination of Spatial Development Strategies

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/864774/spatial_development_procedure_guide.pdf

Procedure Guidance: Local Development Plan Examinations (Wales):

<https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/local-development-plan-examinations-procedure-guidance.pdf>

The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made>

Government departments, agencies and public bodies

Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government>

The Planning Inspectorate: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/planning-inspectorate>

Environment Agency: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/environment-agency>

Environment Agency Public Registers: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/access-the-public-register-for-environmental-information>

Information Commissioner's Office: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Non-governmental organisations

Environmental Law Foundation: www.elflaw.org/

Liberty: www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/

Wildlife and Countryside Link: www.wcl.org.uk