

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Regulation 18 and why are we doing it now?

The Regulation 18 is the initial consultation stage of the local planning process in the UK, where local authorities consult with the community to gather input on the development of local plans.

A key factor in the timing of the Regulation 18 Consultation period was affected by the Highsted Park Planning Inquiry. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) that sets out the timescales for Local Plan progress was amended to reflect a new, workable timetable.

What Will the Regulation 18 Cover?

A light touch Regulation 18 was the preferred choice of Councillors, consisting of the Council's:

- Vision;
- Objectives;
- Portrait of the Borough; and
- Development Management (DM) Policies split thematically into:
 - General Development Criteria;
 - Good Design, Housing;
 - Economic Development;
 - Infrastructure;
 - Climate Change, Pollution & The Water Environment;
 - Biodiversity and Landscape; and
 - Historic Environment.

There will be no strategic policies or site allocations in this Regulation 18.

What Are Development Management Policies?

Development Management (DM) policies influence the type and impact of development by setting design standards, mitigating environmental impacts, promoting social and community development, and addressing infrastructure requirements. They also provide a framework for local authorities to decide on planning applications, influencing the scale, appearance and location of developments.

What are National Development Management Policies?

National development management policies (NDMPs), legislated for by the previous government's [2023 Levelling Up and Regeneration Act](#) (LURA) but never brought into force, are designed to cover planning considerations that apply regularly in decision-making across England. On Tuesday 16th December 2025, the new draft

revision of the National Planning Policy Framework was released and the NDMPs are out for consultation at [National Planning Policy Framework: proposed reforms and other changes to the planning system - GOV.UK](#).

When is the Consultation Taking Place?

From Monday 12 January 2026 to Monday 23 February 2026 (5pm), the Council is running a public consultation on the first draft of the plan's development management policies.

How to comment on the Regulation 18?

From 12 January, you can view the draft plan and submit your comments online via www.swale.gov.uk/consultations.

You can also view paper copies at local libraries and the Council offices across the borough and the Swallows leisure centre.

To submit your views, you can:

- Use the consultation portal that will be on <https://swale-consult.objective.co.uk/kse>;
- email comments to Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk. Please make sure to clearly state which policy or question your comment refers to; or
- Post your response to: Planning Policy, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 3HT. Please make sure to clearly state which policy or question your comment refers to.

How to register with Objective?

To register, click on this link <https://swale-consult.objective.co.uk/kse>. Once an email address and password has been set, a verification email will be sent to confirm the account details.

If you are an Agent acting on behalf of a landowner/client, follow the steps above, and within the registration screen, a tick box is available to select 'I am registering as an agent'.

Some customers/agents/organisations are already registered with Objective Consultation Portal for other Local Authorities. However, it is not possible to use the same username for all Local Authorities and a different username must be selected e.g. 'JoBloggsSwale'.

If you are returning to Objective after you have already registered, click on the arrow icon on the top right-hand side of the Portal home page. Enter a username (usually

the email address that has been registered) and a password. If the password has been forgotten, click on the 'forgot password' option to re-set it.

Any difficulties in either registering or logging in can be reported to Lpcomments@swale.gov.uk and help will be provided.

How to make a comment in Objective?

For details on how to submit a comment, you can watch a video here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NgQ93oNDVz8> or follow the guidance below.

From the home screen, the consultation event can be selected by clicking the '**Learn More**' icon. This screen will give further detail on the event itself and how to participate.

The PROPOSAL text (highlighted in yellow) can be selected to view the document. Please ensure you are commenting on the right policies before submitting any comments.

Swale Borough Council Consultation Portal

Local Plan Review (Regulation 18), January 2026 FORMAL SUBMISSION - PENDING

Swale Borough Council is inviting comments on the Regulation 18 stage of the Local Plan. This consultation seeks feedback from stakeholders and the community on a series of questions about the Local Plan's vision, objectives and Development Management

ABOUT THIS CONSULTATION **PROPOSAL**

- Swale Borough Council, Local Plan Review (Regulation 18) January 2026
 - 1 Introduction
 - 2 What has influenced the development of the Local Plan
 - 3 Characteristics of the borough and the key challenges to be addressed
 - 4 Vision and Objectives
 - 5 Policy G1 General Development Criteria
 - 6 Policy GD1 Local Design Principles
 - 7 Policy GD2 Alterations & Extensions
 - 8 Policy GD3 Shop fronts, signs & advertisements
 - 9 Policy H1 Affordable Housing

Future event

Swale Borough Council, Local Plan Review (Regulation 18) January 2026

1 Introduction

1.1 What is a Local Plan?

1.1.1 The Local Plan is a document that addresses the needs and opportunities of an area and guides decisions of future developments. The Local Plan includes policies on housing, employment, the natural and historic environment and infrastructure. It also identifies areas where development should take place and areas where development should be restricted. The Local Plan must be in accordance with the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\)](#). The NPPF is a land-use planning policy set by central government and are the overarching guidelines a Local Plan must adhere to.

1.1.2 Once a Local Plan is adopted, it will form part of the 'development plan' for the borough which means it will legally be the main consideration in deciding planning applications. The emerging Local Plan will replace the existing Local Plan, Bearing Fruits 2017. However, unimplemented development land allocations from Bearing Fruits will roll forward to meet the development needs of the borough for the plan period.

1.1.3 Kent County Council's Minerals and Waste Local Plan ⁽²⁾ will continue to provide the policy framework for waste and minerals and all Supplementary

From here (under the PROPOSAL text heading), by scrolling through the document, various question or comment boxes may appear, indicated by the '**Add Comment**' icon.

It is advisable to draft long comments somewhere else first like Word or Google Docs. These can then be copied/pasted into the relevant comment box within the document.

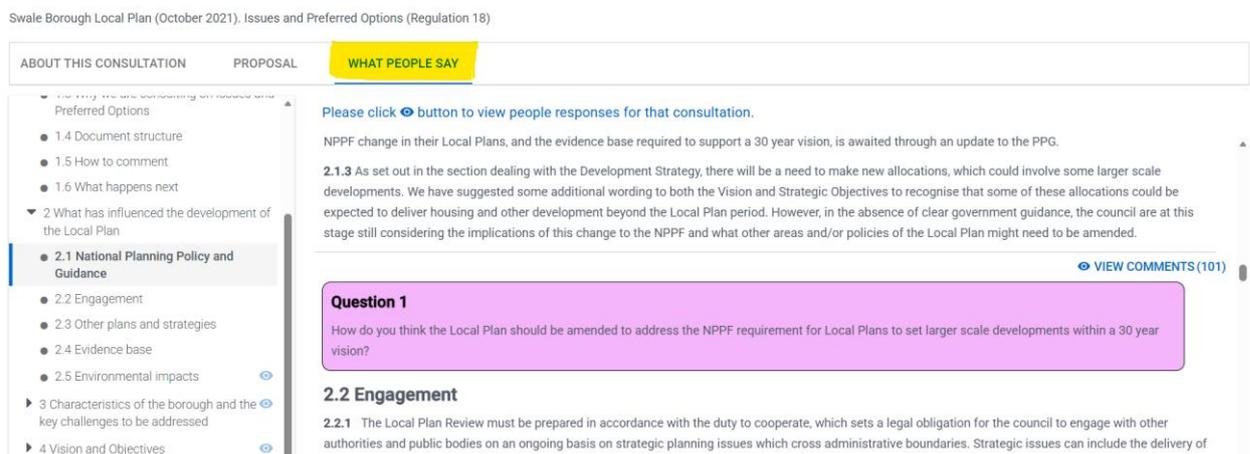
Comments can be added and should then be saved using the '**Save**' button. Multiple comments can be submitted to different points of the document where the '**Add Comment**' icon is showing, each time, remembering to click '**Save**'. Once all

comments have been drafted, there is an opportunity to check through them and click **'Submit'**.

Once comments have been submitted, they arrive with the Planning Policy team for review, before becoming publicly viewable. The team will check for **inappropriate use of language** and **GDPR** issues (where someone may have mentioned personal information within the comment itself). Please refrain from uploading any documents or images that contain photographs of people, car registration numbers, personal/medical information etc. Officers will also check whether the comment has been made against the most appropriate policy and move/split it if required.

This process can take between a few days and a few months, depending on how many people participate in the event or how complex the event is.

Once a comment is processed, an acknowledgement will be sent electronically and the comment itself will be viewable in the **'What People Say'** (highlighted in yellow) section of the portal consultation event, after the event closing date.



How to submit a comment as a group?

If a group of residents wish to submit a petition it is advised that a representative is usually chosen to submit a petition on behalf of a group of residents. The representative should register or log into the Portal to submit the petition via the upload attachment option.

Additional information

Do you have any additional information?

Within each consultation, there is usually an option to **upload attachments**. This is shown within the 'Add Comment' options throughout the document.

Example:

There is an official Council procedure for dealing with petitions and further information can be found

here: <https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/mgEPetitionListDisplay.aspx>

Alternatively, the petition can also be sent to:

The Petitions Officer, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT, or to petitions@swale.gov.uk

If you are a registered user and want to comment on behalf of an organisation or another person, select 'My Details' and tick the relevant box. All personal information can be checked and amended in this section including a tick box with 'I submit on behalf of an organisation' (shown on the left, highlighted in yellow).

MY DETAILS

PERSONAL

Username CHECK
This is a required field.

First Name
This is a required field.

Last Name
This is a required field.

Contact Number

I am submitting on behalf of an organisation

Email
This is a required field.

CHANGE PASSWORD

POSTAL ADDRESS

Address line 1

Address line 2

Postcode City/Suburb State

Country

SAVE CANCEL

SETTINGS

Your subject interests

Notify me when

Notify about new surveys

Preferred language Preferred method of communication

Other details can also be managed here, including how frequently notifications should be sent (shown on the right).

When the consultation closes, all comments are checked by the Planning Policy team and are made publicly available to view, on the consultation portal. The consultation event and all comments will remain available to view until the Local Plan is adopted.

What happens to my personal data?

As data controller we ensure that processing is carried out in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation. The information provided by you will be used solely in connection with the Local Plan and will only be shared where it is necessary in order for your request to be resolved or where there is a legal requirement to do so. The lawful basis which enables the Council to process your data for this purpose is Public Interest Article 6, paragraph (e) of the UK GDPR. The information will be stored and destroyed in line with the Council's Retention and Deletion Schedule. Please visit the Privacy pages for further

information: <https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/local-plans/local-plan-review/local-plans-privacy-notice>.

What is an Equalities Questionnaire?

An equalities questionnaire is a tool used to gather information about individuals' protected characteristics, such as age, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and religion. When responding to the Regulation 18, you will be prompted to visit a separate survey to answer these questions if you would like to. This information is collected to monitor and assess the diversity of an organisation's workforce or the community it serves. The data collected helps organisations understand the needs of different groups and ensures that their policies and practices are fair and inclusive. The data will only be used for statistical analysis, and this information is deleted after six months.

What happens next?

After the Reg 18 consultation, the Council will consider the responses, and this will inform the plan at the Reg 19 stage of the plan making process. The Council will come back and ask for your comment on the updated plan.

The consultation statement will also be updated to capture representations and responses and how this has influenced the plan.