

Information required at the three ‘gateway’ stages

The Gateway system is a central feature of the new plan-making framework introduced by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, made under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Gateways divide local plan preparation into structured stages, each acting as a formal check-point before a plan can progress further.

Gateway 1

Gateway 1 is a self-assessment process which determines whether the Local Planning Authority (LPA) is ready to formally start plan-making and begin to prepare a plan. The self-assessment summary must set out details relating to each of the following 5 areas, as set out in regulations:

- preparing and publishing a local plan timetable
- establishing project management and governance arrangements about the preparation of the plan
- our approach to consulting and engaging on the plan
- anticipated content of the plan
- progressing the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The self-assessment summary is made publicly available.

Gateway 2

The purpose of Gateway 2 is for the Planning Inspectorate to assess progress in preparing the plan to support:

- early resolution of potential soundness issues
- progress towards meeting the ‘prescribed requirements’ (requirements for passing through Gateway 3)

Documents or other information person considering necessary in order for the Planning Inspectorate to provide observations and advice must be sent to them. The assessor will give their observations and advice in a workshop and then in a formal report. They will identify practical steps that could be taken to progress the plan, and where further support maybe needed. The observations and advice must be published on the council’s website as soon as is reasonably practicable.

Gateway 3

At Gateway 3 the Planning Inspectorate will provide observations and advice on whether the plan is ready for submission for examination. The proposed submission plan and other supporting documents, including a completed statement of compliance, must be provided.

The plan will be ready if it meets the prescribed requirements (to be set out in regulations). These requirements will relate to:

- legal compliance
- whether all submission documents have been prepared
- whether the council is ready to proceed to examination

Gateway 3 should take 4 weeks or up to 6 by exception. After successfully passing Gateway 3 the following must be made available:

- the documents submitted to the gateway assessor
- a Gateway 3 completion statement confirming the date it was successfully passed