



**Corporate Director
Neighbourhoods and Regeneration
Officer Key Decision**

22 June 2026

**Report from the Director Inclusive
Regeneration and Climate
Resilience**

**Lead Member – Cabinet Member for
Planning and Regeneration
(Councillor Matthew Kelcher)**

**Publication of Intention to Commence Plan Making and
Local Plan Timetable**

Wards Affected:	All except parts of Alperton, Harlesden and Kensal Green, Stonebridge and Tokyngton, where OPDC is the Local Planning Authority.
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Key decision.
Open or Part/Fully Exempt: (If exempt, please highlight relevant paragraph of Part 1, Schedule 12A of 1972 Local Government Act)	Open.
List of Appendices:	Appendix A: Notice of Intention to Commence Plan Making Appendix B: Brent Local Plan Timetable
Background Papers:	None
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1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To authorise the publication of the 'intention to commence plan making' for the replacement of the Brent Local Plan and the plan's associated timetable as well as highlighting the requirement to start plan making by 31 October 2026.

2.0 Summary

- 2.1 The Government's new plan-making system requires that the Council within 5 years of the adoption of any Local Plan starts the preparation of its replacement. For the Brent Local Plan, this would be February 2027. The new Local Plan must take no more than 30 months from formally starting.
- 2.2 Brent bid for and has been awarded £108,474.57 of funding from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Funding is conditional on Brent publishing its Gateway 1 self-assessment and Local Plan timetable by 30th June 2026; the 30 month Plan making Period is required to start by 31 October 2026. This report seeks authority to proceed to allow the deadlines to be met.
- 2.3 Following publication of the notice and timetable, mandatory pre-commencement / "getting ready" work will be done to meet the 31 October 2026 deadline. This includes publication of a scoping consultation, completion of project governance arrangements, continued evidence gathering, and progression of Strategic Environmental Assessment work. Officers will also engage with councillors through regular Local Plan Member Working Group meetings.
- 2.4 The timetable for commencement of work in the replacement Brent Local Plan is consistent with the Council's previously published Local Development Scheme. Some later stages will, however, need to be brought forward. This allows the Council to comply with Government funding requirements and reduce use of its own resources. This will enable the Council to maintain an up-to-date plan-led framework, respond to changes in national planning policy and local need, and reduce the risk of policy drift as the adopted Local Plan approaches five years old in February 2027.

3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Property:
 - 1) Approves the Council's publication by 30 June 2026 of the notice of intention to commence plan-making for a new Brent Local Plan.

2) Approves publication by 30 June 2026 of Brent's Local Plan timetable as set out in Appendix B.

4.0 Detail

4.1 Contribution to Borough Plan Priorities & Strategic Context

- 4.1.1 An up-to-date local plan is the principal mechanism through which the Council can establish a clear spatial strategy, allocate land, plan positively for housing, employment, infrastructure and environmental protection, and provide certainty for communities, service providers and investors. It therefore contributes significantly to the five Brent Priority Areas:

Prosperity and Stability in Brent

- 4.1.2 The Plan seeks to address housing needs of the population and necessary social and cultural infrastructure. By supporting extensive regeneration of parts of Brent, especially in its growth areas, its town centres and commercial areas and supporting business it provides increased opportunities for wealth generation and prosperity of Brent residents through providing access to local jobs. This will sustain its desirability and prosperity, whilst providing clear guidelines for development and helps ensure stability in an area.

A Cleaner, Greener Future

- 4.1.3 New developments will deliver higher environmental standards, better addressing the threat posed by climate change and working towards the Council's goal to be carbon neutral by 2030.

Thriving Communities

- 4.1.4 Addressing the wide range of needs of residents and businesses will better equip Brent communities in meeting the challenges and opportunities ahead. A strengthened sense of place provided through a clear vision for the development of Brent helps to improve development outcomes and create a sense of belonging which contributes towards community cohesion.

The Best Start in Life

- 4.1.5 A principal determinant of future life chances for younger people is having a stable accommodation, including a home that is affordable, has sufficient space to live and growth in and internally provides a healthy environment. Brent's current development plan supports the delivery of as many homes as are realistically considered to be feasible in the period to 2041, a significant number of which will be higher quality affordable homes, with higher levels of outdoor amenity space than standards set in the London Plan.

A Healthier Brent

- 4.1.6 Providing more and better homes, jobs, social infrastructure and improving the quality and amount of green infrastructure in Brent, encouraging walking and cycling, whilst reducing unnecessary vehicle movements will improve mental and physical well-being.

4.2 Background

- 4.2.1 Cabinet on 7th April 2025 considered a report '[Brent Local Development Scheme](#)' and approved the timetable for the replacement of the Brent Local Plan. This anticipated scoping and early participation for the Local Plan in March 2026. The report also set out a summary of likely Government changes to the plan-making system. A key aim of Government was to seek to reduce the time taken to prepare and adopt a plan to 30 months. The changes have now been enacted through the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026 that came into force on 25 March 2026.
- 4.2.2 Under the new process, a local planning authority must first undertake a pre-commencement / getting ready period before passing through Gateway 1. This period includes publication of the plan timetable, publication of the notice of intention to commence plan-making, a mandatory scoping consultation, suitable governance and project management arrangements, early work on plan content and evidence, and progress on Strategic Environmental Assessment.
- 4.2.3 The Regulations also require the Council to publish a Local Plan timetable no later than the same day as the notice of intention to commence. It must include the matters the plan will deal with, the geographical area it will cover, any supplementary plans, and key dates for the major milestones in the end-to-end process, which includes three 'Gateway' stages before submission and adoption. The timetable must be kept up to date.
- 4.2.4 The notice of intention to commence plan-making must be published on the Council's website. The notice must be published before, or at the same time as, the scoping consultation and at least four months before Gateway 1.
- 4.2.5 The scoping consultation is the first of the mandatory consultation stages under the new system. MHCLG guidance states that the Council should invite representations on matters relevant to preparation of the local plan, including

what the plan should contain and how the authority should engage with the public and stakeholders during plan preparation. A summary of the consultation must later be published before the Council can move on to consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence.

4.2.6 Gateway 1 is a self-assessment of readiness explaining what the Council has done to get ready in five areas:

- 1) the local plan timetable;
- 2) project management and governance;
- 3) the approach to consultation and engagement;
- 4) anticipated content of the plan; and
- 5) progress on Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The publication of Gateway 1 self assessment starts the 30-month formal plan-making period including consultation on proposed local plan content and evidence (minimum 6 weeks), followed by Gateway 2, consultation on the proposed local plan (minimum 8 weeks), Gateway 3, submission for examination and, if successful, adoption.

4.3 What is required in the pre-commencement period

4.3.1 The pre-commencement period is intended to ensure that the Council is sufficiently prepared to complete plan-making within 30 months once Gateway 1 is published.

4.3.2 Specifically, the Council must:

- publish a Local Plan timetable and bring it into effect;
- publish a notice to commence plan-making on its website;
- allow at least 4 months between publication of the notice and publication of Gateway 1;
- undertake a mandatory scoping consultation before Gateway 1;
- establish suitable project management and governance arrangements, including member and senior officer oversight;
- make appropriate progress on the anticipated content of the plan, baseline information, land availability and proportionate evidence;
- progress the Strategic Environmental Assessment, which MHCLG expects will be required for local plans.

4.3.3 Officers propose that Brent will use the period between 30 June 2026 and 31 October 2026 as its pre-commencement phase. This will provide the minimum statutory notice period while allowing time to carry out meaningful early engagement and complete the Gateway 1 self-assessment. The proposed late August / early September 2026 scoping consultation would sit within that period and would inform the readiness statement to be published on 31 October 2026.

4.3.4 During this pre-commencement period, officers will also continue early work on the evidence base, establish the programme governance framework, conduct an initial Local Plan Member Working Group meeting (once date and terms of

reference confirmed), confirm the plan area and strategic coverage, review implications of national policy changes, and ensure publication arrangements meet the new digital and public availability requirements.

4.4 Proposed timetable and scoping consultation

- 4.4.1 It is proposed that the Council publishes its notice of intention to commence plan-making and Local Plan timetable by 30 June 2026. This is set out in Appendix A. The new timetable is set out in Appendix B. The initial start of work in the replacement Brent Local Plan is consistent with the timetable previously approved by Cabinet. However, it is necessary to amend the subsequent stages through to adoption by bringing them forward. This is required to be consistent with a funding award of £108,474.57 from MHCLG. Funding is conditional on Brent publishing its Gateway 1 self-assessment and Local Plan timetable by 30th June 2026. In addition, the 30-month plan making period is required to start by 31 October 2026.
- 4.4.2 Bringing the timetable forward is consistent with the Leader's and administration's desire to get a replacement plan in place as soon as can be achieved. The largest risk to meeting this new timetable will be the production of the new London Plan. As this will amongst other things set Brent's housing requirement which Brent must be in general conformity with, significant objection to or delays in its adoption, particularly its housing figures could impact on Brent's Local Plan timetable.
- 4.4.3 It is proposed that a scoping consultation be undertaken in late August / early September 2026, with consultation material inviting views on the key issues for Brent's future development, what the new local plan should contain, and how stakeholders and communities wish to be engaged through the remainder of the process. This aligns with the purpose of the mandatory scoping consultation set out in MHCLG guidance.
- 4.4.4 It is considered that as a scoping consultation only, focused on what the plan should cover and how people should be engaged, rather than what the vision, objectives and policies should say, it will be relatively light touch compared to consultations in the latter stages of the plan making process, which will be related to content and evidence. This is reflected in the fact that Government guidance only expects the scoping consultation to last a minimum of 21 days (as opposed to for example, six weeks, as stipulated in legislation for other consultation stages in the plan making process). However, it is considered that the consultation will be a good opportunity to raise awareness to the public that the Council is embarking on the plan making process so that there is a higher level of engagement in the later stages of plan making.
- 4.4.5 It should also be noted that officers are discussing options with other directorates through Communications and Engagement teams and Strategic Design Authority about how best to coordinate the scoping consultation with other consultations planned across the Council in Summer/August. These include:

- Borough Plan Consultation
- West London Waste Plan (Reg 19)
- Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy

4.4.6 Subject to satisfactory completion of the required readiness work, the Council would publish its Gateway 1 self-assessment on 31 October 2026. That publication would formally commence the 30-month local plan preparation period, with adoption targeted by April 2029.

4.4.7 Cabinet on 8th September 2025 considered the report '[Brent Development Documents Review](#)'. In respect of the move towards the new plan-making process and in particular to aid efficiency and meeting the 30 month timetable, Cabinet agreed to: 'delegate authority to the Corporate Director Neighbourhoods and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member Regeneration, Planning and Property to approve Development Plan consultation material to be issued in the stages prior to any final draft plan proposed to be submitted for examination'. The scoping consultation material that will be issued in August/September will be subject to a report for delegated approval in due course.

5.0 Options

5.1 Option 1 – Approve publication by 30 June 2026 of the notice to commence plan-making and the Local Plan timetable. This is the recommended option. It allows the Council to begin the pre-commencement period promptly, undertake a scoping consultation in late summer 2026, and commence the formal 30-month plan-making period on 31 October 2026.

5.2 Option 2 – Delay publication of the notice and timetable. This option is not recommended. Delaying commencement would have implications for the MHCLG funding and plan-making stages, reduce flexibility in responding to evidence and engagement, and increase the risk of the Council moving closer to the statutory five-year point for Gateway 1 following adoption of the current Local Plan. It may also prejudice future funding bids to MHCLG.

6.0 Financial Considerations

6.1 Funding for the Local Plan has already been agreed by Cabinet on 8th September 2025.

6.2 Preparation of a new local plan will require officer time, specialist consultancy support where needed, evidence commissioning, consultation costs, digital publishing and examination costs.

6.3 The decision sought relates to commencement actions only: publication of the notice, publication of the timetable, and undertaking the scoping consultation

and associated preparatory work.

- 6.4 Existing planning policy budgets and programme resources will be used initially, with any additional resource requirements for the full 30-month plan-making programme to be identified and managed through future budget monitoring and governance processes.
- 6.5 Brent has received funding under Section 31 of the Local Government Act 2003 for the sum of £108,474.57, conditional on publishing its intention to commence plan making on 30 June 2026 and its Gateway 1 self-assessment on 31 October 2026. Failure to meet agreed deadlines is likely to result in the funds being repaid and may prejudice future funding bids with MHCLG.

7.0 Legal Considerations

- 7.1 The statutory framework for this report is the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, together with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 25 March 2026.
- 7.2 The Regulations require local planning authorities preparing a plan under the new system to publish a Local Plan timetable, publish a notice of intention to commence plan-making, carry out a scoping consultation, and publish a Gateway 1 self-assessment summary before the formal 30-month period begins.
- 7.3 The timetable must be published before or on the same day as the notice to commence and must include the key dates for the plan-making process. It must be kept up to date and made publicly available.
- 7.4 The notice to commence must be published on the Council's website and must be given before, or at the same time as, the scoping consultation. Gateway 1 cannot be published until at least four months have elapsed from the date of the notice, or the day after the scoping consultation ends, whichever is later.
- 7.5 Publication of Gateway 1 marks the formal legal commencement of the new local plan preparation process and starts the 30-month period within which the Council is expected to prepare and adopt its local plan.
- 7.6 As Brent is within Greater London, further consultation at the proposed plan stage will need to address conformity with the operative Spatial Development Strategy. MHCLG guidance makes clear that this consultation must run at the same time as consultation on the proposed local plan and end on the same date.
- 7.7 Legal Services should review the final notice, timetable and consultation materials before publication to ensure full compliance with the Regulations, public law requirements, consultation law principles, equalities duties and document accessibility requirements.

8.0 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Considerations

- 8.1 The preparation of a new local plan has the potential to affect all who live, work, study or invest in Brent. It is therefore important that early engagement reaches a broad and representative range of communities.
- 8.2 MHCLG guidance emphasises that local planning authorities should engage proactively, use mixed methods of engagement, and ensure consultations are accessible so that a diverse range of voices can inform the plan.
- 8.3 The proposed scoping consultation will be designed to maximise participation across Brent's diverse communities, including people who may face barriers to engagement.
- 8.4 Officers will consider appropriate consultation formats, accessibility measures, translation / interpretation support where needed, and targeted engagement with groups that are often under-represented in planning processes.
- 8.5 Equalities implications arising from the content of the emerging local plan will be assessed as plan preparation proceeds and will inform future reports and consultation material.

9.0 Climate Change and Environmental Considerations

- 9.1 Local plans are a key mechanism for shaping climate mitigation and adaptation outcomes through the location and form of development, support for sustainable transport, energy efficiency, flood risk management, biodiversity, urban greening and protection of open space.
- 9.2 MHCLG guidance indicates that local plans are expected to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment, and progress on SEA is one of the five readiness areas that must be addressed before Gateway 1.
- 9.3 During the pre-commencement period, officers will continue to progress baseline environmental information and scope the environmental assessment work needed to support the emerging plan which will include having regard to the Council's Climate Adaptation Strategy. Climate and environmental objectives will be embedded from the earliest stages of plan preparation.

10.0 Communication Considerations

- 10.1 Publication of the notice to commence and timetable will be the Council's first formal public communication under the new local plan-making system.
- 10.2 Guidance requires the notice to be published on the Council's website as text on a webpage, and the timetable must also be made publicly available, including at the Council's main office and other appropriate places.

- 10.3 A communications approach will therefore be put in place to support publication of the notice, explain the new system, highlight the proposed timetable, and encourage participation in the scoping consultation. This should include web content, direct notification to planning policy subscribers and stakeholders, social media messaging, and targeted outreach where appropriate.
- 10.4 It will be important to communicate clearly that:
- publication of the notice and timetable does not itself consult on draft policies or sites;
 - the next key public opportunity to shape the plan will be the scoping consultation; and
 - publication of Gateway 1 in October 2026 will formally start the 30-month local plan process

Report sign off:

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