

**Local Plan  
Deadlines**

**DLP BRIEFING NOTE 221**

Prepared by  
**DLP Planning Ltd**

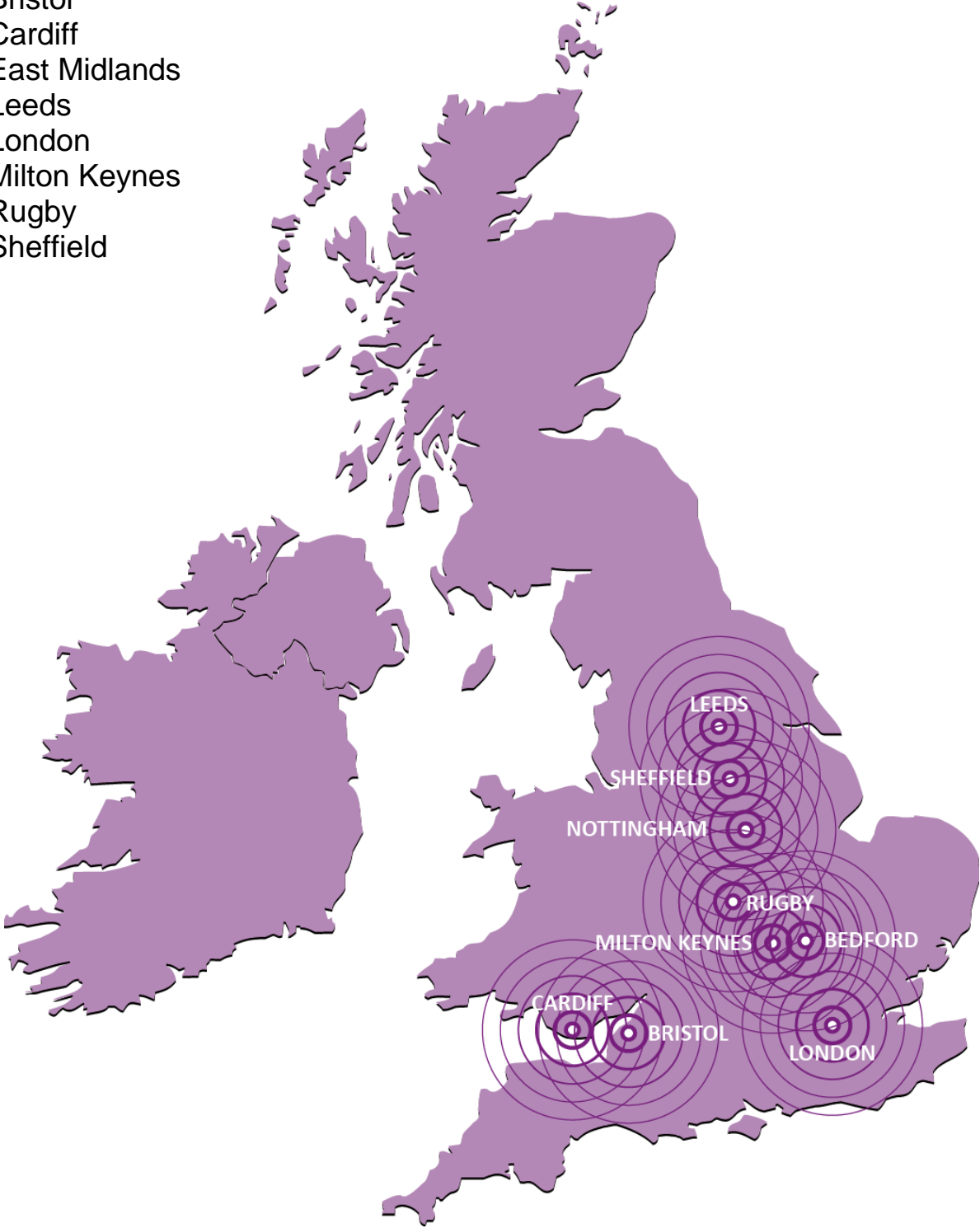
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## **18 month Local Plan deadline announced, but will it undermine housing delivery?**

On 21<sup>st</sup> July Planning Minister Brandon Lewis issued a written statement stating, that *“The government will intervene in cases where local authorities have failed to produce a local plan by ‘early 2017’ and arrange for the documents to be written ‘in consultation with local people’.”*

The exact detail of any intervention is as yet unknown, but the combination of an 18 month deadline and Central Government intervention may encourage Local Authorities to get Local Plans in place. DLP Planning suggest that in light of the 25-40% Whitehall budget cuts, due to be announced in November, it is unlikely that the Government will have the capacity to write many local plans, but they may impose a relatively simple structured local plan addressing the significant issues, such as housing and employment demand and supply.

It has been confirmed that the exact deadline will be announced before the summer recess, but DLP planning would speculate that a deadline of 27<sup>th</sup> March 2017 is likely given the suggestion that the Government will intervene five years after the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (published 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012).

Brandon Lewis’s written statement also says that *“the government will strengthen planning guidance to improve the operation of the duty to co-operate “on key housing and planning issues, to ensure that housing and infrastructure needs are identified and planned for. It is particularly important that this co-operation happens where our housing needs are greatest”.*

DLP Planning welcomes provisions to encourage Local Authorities to get Local Plans in place and work with their neighbours, if it boosts housing supply. However the deadline, combined with the recent letter from Greg Clarke to Planning Inspectorate Chief Executive Simon Ridley (21<sup>st</sup> July) will lead to speculation that plans adopted before the deadline may not address key issues and will include commitments to early review in whole or part within 5 years of the date of adoption.

The Greg Clarke Letter states *“there is a real value in getting a Local Plan in place at the soonest opportunity, even if it has some shortcomings which are not critical to the whole plan. We have acknowledged this in planning guidance by setting out that Local Plans may be found sound conditional upon a review in whole or in part within five years of adoption”.*

The letter refers to recent guidance from the Planning Advisory Service that highlights that adopted local plans have committed to early reviews for the following reasons:

- Where an authority might need to plan for more housing depending on the outcome of wider SHMAs from nearby areas (Lichfield and North Warwickshire)
- Where further analysis of employment provision demonstrates the need for more analysis
- Where areas are considering a shared green belt review, to meet unmet need in one of an HMA group of authorities (when extent of shortfall is known) (Cherwell)

DLP Planning have concerns that the adoption of inadequate plans that don’t meet full objectively assessed needs for housing or employment will undermine housing delivery and exacerbate the national housing shortage.

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