



Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Planning Policy Team ([via email](#))

Our ref: Bradford NDP/ Bingley
Your ref: Bingley NDP Reg 16

cc Bingley Town Clerk
Bingley Town Council

Date: 01 September 2025

Dear Planning Policy Team

**REGULATION 16 – PUBLIC CONSULTATION
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990, THE LOCALISM ACT 2011 AND
THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 2012 (AS
AMENDED)**

SUBMISSION OF BINGLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Thank you for inviting the Environment Agency to comment upon the Submission of the Bingley Neighbourhood Development Plan and supporting documents, including screening of the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment.

We note that Bingley Town Council has formally submitted a Neighbourhood Development Plan for the parish area in conjunction with the local community. This process is in accordance with the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

We previously commented on the Draft of the Bingley Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14). This was formally sent to Bradford Town Council on 12 April 2024. At the Full Council meeting of Bingley Town Council held on 25th February 2025, we understand it was resolved to agree to move to Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Plan process. This consultation is the next step in this process.

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Lateral 8 City Walk, LEEDS, LS11 9AT.
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www.gov.uk/environment-agency
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Environment Agency position

The Environment Agency do not have any objections to the Submission of the Bingley Neighbourhood Development Plan (BNDP).

We will take the opportunity to comment on key elements that fall within our land-use planning remit and where we consider it may present a lack of cohesion with the local development plan.

Key headlines will reveal that we continue to support key elements of sustainable development, design and an emphasis on the value of green infrastructure. We remain cautious that the Submission BNDP falls short in raising the profile of climate change, while also failing to maximise the potential role of development that interacts with the water environment.

The Environment Agency maintains its support to contribute towards future development and key issues that have been identified of importance by local communities. The Environment Agency will not repeat comments made at the previous stage as we did not object to any aspect. We will however underline key omissions that we consider are missed opportunities for positive outcomes and you may want to reflect upon these in the future.

Neighbourhood Context, Characteristics & Sustainable Development

Neighbourhood Development Plan Vision and Objectives

The Environment Agency has no critical comment on the Vision or Objectives. We note that climate change and flood risk are each considered as major issues for the Bradford area in the Local Plan and yet remain omitted in this Submission BNDP.

We again underline that there is a missed opportunity to better reflect and promote the valuable natural asset of water resources, while integrating Green-Blue Infrastructure as potential mitigating solutions.

We welcome the added reference to the River Aire but highlight the limited consideration of other named watercourses, becks or tributaries.

Climate Change

The Environment Agency recognises that a Climate Emergency was declared by CBMDC in January 2019. We support and welcome an underlined link between climate change resilience and likelihood of extreme weather episodes, including increased flooding events.

This remains of fundamental importance to the remit of the Environment Agency.

We continue to strongly advocate that in the context of climate change mitigation and/ or resilience, appropriate reference should be provided to adequately reflect measures that seek to conserve and enhance the water environment, natural resources and biodiversity.

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Such an approach should be integrated through all future Local Plan documents and cascaded to the Bingley NDP. Policies that promote the wider benefits of Green-Blue Infrastructure could be reinforced and supporting text used as a clear justification to combat the negative effects of climate change.

We note and support the Design Code PR10 Sustainable Development and Climate Change. That said, the Key Guidance is limited. It also omits obvious development tools, such as: sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), flood risk standing advice, opportunities for flood storage and integration with natural flood management (NFM) to possibly exploit win-win outcomes with ecology.

Flood Risk

Flood risk should be a major consideration in your Plan. While we acknowledge that the Submission BNDP will likely seek to avoid duplication with other aspects of the Local Development Plan, we would have expected to see some integration. Flood, flooding and/or flood risk is entirely omitted from the Submission NDP. This includes both fluvial (river) and pluvial (surface) water flood risk.

These aspects will continue be a challenge of particular relevance to aspects of physical development, such as housing, new business, retail and employment land. Relevant signposting to national and local plan policy and guidance may assist applicants.

Again, we note that there is no reference to either the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) or to Local Plan flood risk policies. At the very least, the Submission NDP should ideally alert all stakeholders to the importance of the SFRA when considering any future development in areas of high flood risk. Our previous reply listed the key flood risk elements we suggested should be added.

It is recommended that you consult your Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) regarding the proposed development and management of surface water within the Submission NDP. The LLFA is now the responsible authority for commenting on the surface water drainage arrangements.

Site Allocations

We note that a review of the CBMDC Local Plan is ongoing and, based upon the emerging 2021 allocations, each community in the Bradford area will be required to deliver a defined target over the period of the Local Plan. Specifically, the housing allocation for Bingley will likely be met by a mixture of sites within the Settlement Boundary and those that may be newly released from the review of the Green Belt.

In terms of flood risk most housing development remains either a more or highly vulnerable land-use classification. From an advance stage we would prefer that this highlighted when considering future housing proposals, particularly windfall development. These comments may be equally applied to new business, retail and employment land, including reference to the relevant vulnerability classification.

The Environment Agency further notes that, while importantly underlining valued community aims, Neighbourhood Plans are limited in their overall influence. As such

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we understand the Plan does not allocate specific sites for development and when supporting existing or promoting any new allocations it will work in accordance with the CBMDC Local Plan. We acknowledge that to allocate within this Neighbourhood Plan would only duplicate the allocation carried out by CBMDC.

Water Framework Directive

Any new development should take the objectives of the Water Framework Directive into account. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) is a European Directive that seeks improvements to the water environment to ensure that they are achieving a 'good' overall ecological status (or potential). The WFD sets targets for all waterbodies to achieve 'good' status or potential by 2027 at the latest (unless a lower status objective is proposed). The WFD is implemented regionally by way of River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs). You can access the details of the relevant catchments and watercourses at our Catchment Data Explorer pages <https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/>

We would strongly support a requirement for developers to carry out WFD actions when they are developing on sites adjacent to the relevant stretches of river. Where applicable, your plan could include a policy encouraging the removal of weirs, installation of fish passes and improvements to the morphology of the rivers to improve watercourses so that they achieve 'good' status.

Water Resources and Quality

Effective management is important to protect water quality and as a natural resource, both for groundwater and surface water. Drainage misconceptions can occur in new developments, redevelopments, extensions or through refurbishment. Developers must ensure that they do not connect any foul drainage (including sinks, showers, washing machine/dishwasher outlets and toilets) to a surface water sewer, as this can send polluted water into watercourses. Similarly, developers should ensure that they do not connect surface water drainage (e.g. roof gutter downpipes) into foul sewers as this can cause overloading of the foul sewer during heavy rainfall.

Polluted surface water flows from areas like car parks or service yards should always have sufficient pollution prevention measures in place to ensure the protection of groundwater and watercourses from specific pollutants like petrol (hydrocarbons) and suspended solids. Developers should follow appropriate pollution prevention guidance when designing formal drainage for large areas of hardstanding.

Ideally, applicants should introduce more 'surface' or 'green' drainage solutions to aid improvements in water quality, such as swales along hardstanding boundaries, or a more advanced reed bed system for larger sites. These solutions are easier to access and maintain than engineered solutions like petrol/oil interceptors, which require regular maintenance to ensure they operate correctly.

We note that our suggested has not been included for a policy or clear signposted reference elsewhere which requires a clear pathway in the delivery of and expectations from Biodiversity Net Gain through all development, as part of the LNRS.

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Groundwater

Protecting surface and groundwater from potentially polluting development and activity is a primary responsibility for the Environment Agency. There is a small area in Source Protection Zone (SPZ) 1 within the Plan area.

Sources of groundwater supply will be protected using the SPZs identified in the Environment Agency's existing mapping. The approach is documented in our Groundwater Protection: Principles and Practice, within SPZ1, we will normally object in principle to certain types of development.

Within Source Protection Zones 2 and 3, a risk-based approach will be applied to the consideration of development proposals. If neither the use of a soakaway or a direct discharge is possible, a system without any discharge (such as a sealed cess pool or chemical toilet) may be considered. Given their capacity to overflow and discharge raw sewage directly into the water environment, such systems are usually a last resort. These types of systems also require regular maintenance, they can create additional carbon emissions through excess traffic movements, which can impact on the overall sustainability of a proposal.

We would welcome these details are reflected in your Plan so that applicants are aware of the most sustainable options for their foul drainage when they are not able to connect to the main foul sewer network. In particular, we would like you to highlight that where a non-mains drainage solution is proposed, the applicant must submit the relevant Foul Drainage Assessment form with their planning application.

We note that neither groundwater nor where possible the need to connect to the main foul sewer network have been included in the Submission NDP.

Green Infrastructure And Biodiversity

Nature does not recognise borders. Strategic approaches and the integration with partnership working in the LNRS will be pivotal to maximise the application of BNG. The water environment and habitats should be identified as key assets, both in terms of resource and quality to support other environmental goals.

We continue to provide limited support to the approach for green space and associated infrastructure. The Environment Agency still insists that broader scope is provided, and stakeholder expectations are established, to reflect that the water environment also forms part of the natural environment.

Indeed, watercourses can perform an essential role in the enhancement of biodiversity and ecological habitats. We particularly would like to emphasise that watercourses can also benefit from the application of Biodiversity Net Gain and could perform a key role in the adaptation to and mitigation from climate change.

Equally, we would suggest that the Bingley NDP should consider reference to and alignment with the emergence of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which will seek to provide a pivotal link between vision and development across West Yorkshire. We note there is limited reference to LNRS in the Green Infrastructure chapter. Water (and Blue Infrastructure) is not underlined despite reference being

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made to nature recovery and biodiversity net gain opportunities in broad corridors, such as the River Aire south of A650 from Cottingley to the border with Keighley.

We would invite that a greater emphasis is applied to the opportunities of Green-Blue Infrastructure, especially as reference is made to emerging Local Plan 'blue assets'. We are uncertain if adequate links to the Local Plan have been made in the Submission BNDP and that ambiguity has been avoided.

Site Design

The Environment Agency welcomes relevant direction presented to developers that all proposals will need to address issues of sustainability. We would like to propose that a positive emphasis here could be revised to promote sustainability opportunities. A drive towards delivering the conservation and enhancement of natural environment elements could still be strengthened however by clearly defining, where and how, tools such as Biodiversity Net Gain and Climate Change Mitigation could deliver meaningful improvement.

We continue to underline that this has not been added or signposted to information elsewhere.

Sustainable Construction

The Submission BNDP could also positively contribute to your community by reducing costs through sustainable construction. Neighbourhood planning is an opportunity for communities to encourage efficient water and waste management systems in new buildings. You could also help to promote the use of sustainable materials in construction and encourage energy efficiency measures for new builds. These measures will reduce the cost of construction for developers and help to reduce utility bills for those occupying the building. This will also contribute to the efficient environmental management by reducing emissions and improving air quality.

We support the inserted details for rainwater harvesting and waste collection in design. We question if adequate scope has been given to both the process and material selection to reflect energy efficiency and climate change adaptation.

We welcome and provide limited support to the Design Codes PR08 Newbuilds and Extensions, PR09 Environmental and Biodiversity and PR10 Sustainable Development and Climate Change. Again, we further question the aspirations here and contest that the Key Guidance measures are overly passive, not prescriptive and do not satisfactorily layout priorities in relation to defined obligations through existing legislation. The measures as listed

This suggests that future development may not be required to undertake statutory aspects, like flood mitigation, surface water management and/ or BNG.

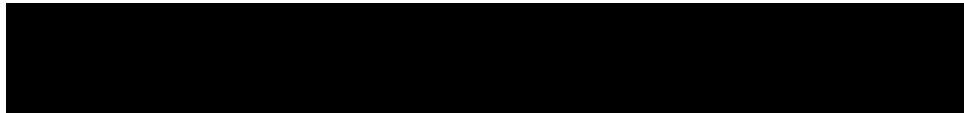
We hope that the structured detail of this reply will enable Bingley Town Council to take corrective action where possible and that the Bingley Neighbourhood Development Plan becomes an integral component of the local development plan for

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the community.

Yours sincerely

Mr. Neil Wallace
Planning Specialist



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