

Regulation 18 – Issues & Options Stage

Regulation 18 refers to a key stage in the local planning process in England, where local planning authorities (LPAs) consult the public and stakeholders on the initial proposals for a Local Plan.

Overview of Regulation 18

Regulation 18 is part of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It mandates that local planning authorities must engage in a consultation process when preparing a Local Plan. This stage is crucial as it allows for community involvement and feedback on what the emerging Local Plan should contain.

Purpose of Regulation 18

- **Initial Consultation:** The Regulation 18 consultation is often referred to as the "Issues and Options" stage. It invites comments on key topics, themes, and potential site allocations for development. This is the first formal opportunity for the public and stakeholders to influence the content of the Local Plan 
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- **Gathering Input:** Local authorities are required to notify specific consultation bodies, general consultation bodies, and local residents to gather a wide range of views. This helps ensure that the Local Plan reflects the needs and aspirations of the community 
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Process

1. **Call for Sites:** Before the Regulation 18 consultation, local authorities may issue a "call for sites," allowing landowners and developers to submit land for consideration in the Local Plan 
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2. **Consultation Period:** The consultation typically lasts for a minimum of six weeks, during which interested parties can submit their views and suggestions regarding proposed site allocations and policies 
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3. **Review of Responses:** After the consultation period ends, the local authority reviews the feedback received and uses it to inform the next stage of the planning process, known as Regulation 19, where more detailed proposals are presented 
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Importance for Stakeholders

For landowners and developers, the Regulation 18 stage is critical as it represents a genuine opportunity to influence how land is designated in the emerging planning

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framework. Engaging effectively during this stage can significantly impact future development opportunities  urbanistarchitecture.co.uk.

In summary, Regulation 18 is a vital part of the local planning process in England, ensuring that community voices are heard and considered in the development of Local Plans, which guide future growth and development in local areas.