



The
Bikeability
Trust



Briefing from the Walking and Cycling Alliance on the LEVELLING UP AND REGENERATION BILL (LURB)

For the Commons Consideration of Lords Amendments (CCLA) debate: 17 October 2023

INTRODUCTION

This briefing outlines the views of the 7 organisations comprising the Walking and Cycling Alliance (WACA):

- The Bicycle Association, the national trade association for the UK cycle industry;
- The Bikeability Trust, the charity which promotes the Bikeability cycle training programme;
- British Cycling, the governing body for cycling;
- Cycling UK, the national membership charity promoting everyday cycling;
- Living Streets, the national charity promoting everyday walking;
- Ramblers, the national charity primarily focussed on recreational walking; and
- Sustrans, the walking and cycling charity, best known for the National Cycle Network.

The Lords Amendments we are supporting are also backed by the [Better Planning Coalition](#).

BACKGROUND

The Government's planning reforms – initially launched in a [White Paper in 2020](#) – originally proved highly controversial. Concern about them led to the formation of the [Better Planning Coalition](#), which now comprises over 30 organisations, united by a common goal: **a planning system fit for people, nature and the climate**. BPC members' interests encompass housing, local democracy and the protection of nature and heritage as well as sustainable transport, health and wellbeing, and the climate. Four of the member organisations of the Walking and Cycling Alliance (WACA) – namely Cycling UK, Living Streets, the Ramblers and Sustrans – are also members of BPC.

The Government's subsequently-revised planning proposals have taken legislative form in the [Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill](#) (LURB). As and when LURB has been passed (which is expected shortly), the Government has promised a full overhaul of its [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF, i.e. the policy guidance which local planning authorities must have regard to in developing their local development plans). LURB also contains provisions which will necessitate the drafting and (we hope) consultation and approval by Parliament of a series of National Development Management Policies (NDMPs). NDMPs are expected to enshrine national planning policies which national Government expects to be followed in making decisions on specific planning applications. They are intended to remove the need for local development plans to replicate statements of national policies.

This briefing outlines three amendments to LURB which were added in the Lords - we urge MPs to support their retention. It then outlines some policy outcomes which we hope will be delivered by the review of NPPF and the drafting of new NDMPs.

AMENDMENTS TO LURB

We urge MPs to support the retention of two new clauses that were added to the Bill in the Lords, as well as one clause as amended by them:

- A new clause (**Lords Amendment 45**) on **climate duties** – which now forms **Clause 96** – requiring national and local government to “have special regard” to climate considerations at every stage in the planning system, from national policy-making to decisions on specific new developments.
- A new clause (**Lords Amendment 46**) on **healthy homes and neighbourhoods** – which is now **Clause 97** – requiring the Secretary of State to promote a regulatory framework which supports adherence to “healthy homes principles” in order to provide physical, mental and social health benefits. One of these principles requires that “all new homes should be built within places that prioritise and provide access to sustainable transport and walkable services, including green infrastructure and play space.”
- **Clause 95** of the Bill, as amended by the Lords (**Amendment 44**), now requires the Secretary of State to carry out an appraisal of sustainability of the **National Development Management Policies** (NDMPs) to be created under that Clause, including their climate impacts.

ASPIRATIONS FOR THE NPPF REVIEW AND NEW NDMPs

Looking further ahead, we urge MPs also to support us in calling for the promised **review of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** and the new **National Development Management Policies (NDMPs)** to deliver the following outcomes:

- Decisions about development sites should **take full account of the CO₂ and other anticipated impacts of travel** (environmental, health etc) related to the development.
- It should aim to ensure that key destinations (e.g. schools, key shops, healthcare facilities, public transport, green open space) are **within easy reach of people’s homes**, without depending on car use to reach them.
- The process for securing developer contributions should **fully capture the increased value of the land to be developed**. It should **secure the funding for whatever sustainable transport provision is needed to prevent the development becoming car-dependent**, ensuring that road and other infrastructure within and around the development facilitates and maximises the use of walking, wheeling and cycling, public, shared and community transport.
- Specifically, development plans and proposals should **incorporate cycling, walking and rights of way network plans**. At present, the lack of such a requirement, particularly in areas with two-tier government, means that developers and local planning authorities often make significant progress towards agreeing development masterplans without being aware of the walking, cycling or rights of way aspirations of the relevant local transport or highway authorities – this clearly to be rectified.
- **Cycle provision** associated with new developments should be planned and designed in the Government’s excellent [Cycle Infrastructure Design guidance](#). Local streets should be designed on the **assumption of a 20mph speed limit**.
- Car parking provision should be minimised accordingly, while **ample cycle parking provision** should be made at all developments (including residential developments), for both their occupants (e.g. residents or employees, as appropriate) and for visitors.
- Councils should be given a **clear mandate to reject developments which risk becoming car dependent** – paragraph 111 of the current NPPF [makes this extremely difficult](#).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact Cycling UK’s Policy Director Roger Geffen (roger.geffen@cyclenguk.org) or Sustrans’ Senior Policy and Parliamentary Officer Dan Simpson (dan.simpson@sustrans.org).