

Briefing Note

Planning policy update



Savills Research
UK Residential

No sign of rush to adopt plans before NPPF revisions

The Housing White Paper (HWP) published earlier this year stated that all areas need to be covered by a plan and that local authorities without a plan in place are failing their communities. The paper specified that the government will intervene where necessary to ensure plans are put in place, with a March 2018 (or revised NPPF – whichever is later) deadline applying to many of the proposals. Since then, 15 authorities have been put under special measures to ensure they are successful in producing an up-to-date plan (Figure 2Figure 1).

Despite this, only 46% of local authorities across England have adopted a local plan since the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). But 5% of local authorities (15 in total) have post-NPPF plans that are now at least five years old. These plans will require updating to reflect changes in their objectively assessed need – through a new standardised approach or otherwise.

The remaining local authorities are at various stages of the plan-making process, with 7% yet to begin even initial preparation of a post-NPPF plan. These authorities are facing significant barriers to plan-making, most notably the necessity to adopt housing targets which will sufficiently meet need.

18% of local authorities have had a lack of five year land supply confirmed at appeal in the year to November 2017 (Figure 3). A further 18% had a published figure under five years. Of those who had a lack of five year land supply confirmed at appeal, 58% previously thought they had an adequate supply of land. England now has a total published land supply of 5.4 years, up from 5.3 years in March this year.

Towards 300,000

In the Budget, Chancellor Philip Hammond confirmed a national housing target of 300,000 homes per annum, to be reached by the mid-2020s. We agree with the figure but not the timescale nor the distribution; more supply is needed as soon as possible to improve housing affordability and more of it needs to be in the most unaffordable areas.

The recent consultation on a standard approach to calculating housing requirements proposes a method that only reaches 267,000 as a consequence of a cap that limits increases based on existing targets (for more on this see our policy response *Planning for the right homes in the right places*, [sav.li/9wp](#)). The impact of the cap will gradually unwind, but to hit the national target in time local authorities need to be preparing to meet the higher requirements now.

A major barrier to this is the repeated promise from the Government to protect the Green Belt from development. This has been echoed locally both by Mayor of London Sadiq Khan in the recently published London Plan, and Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham in his review of the Greater Manchester Spatial Framework.

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Figure 1 – Proportion of local planning authorities with an adopted post-NPPF plan

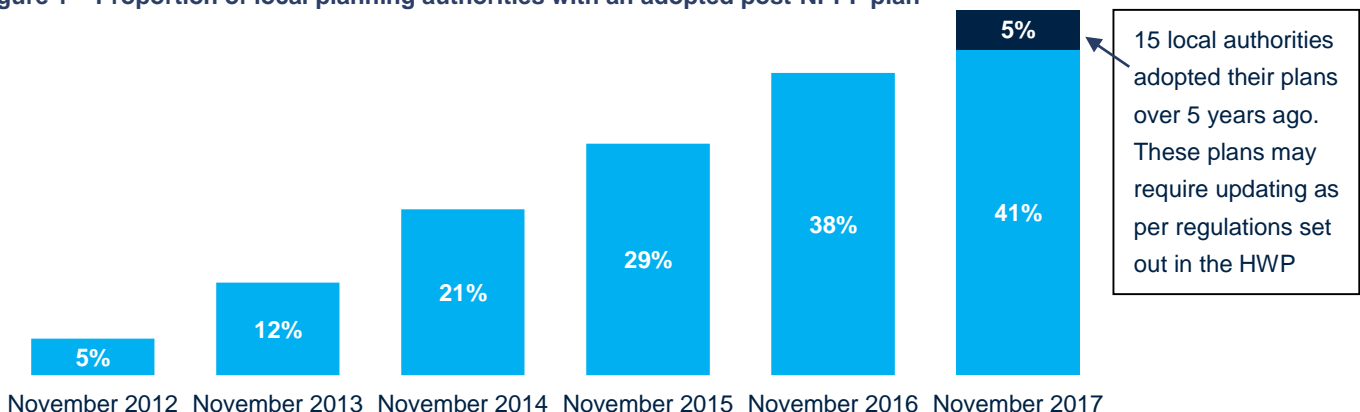
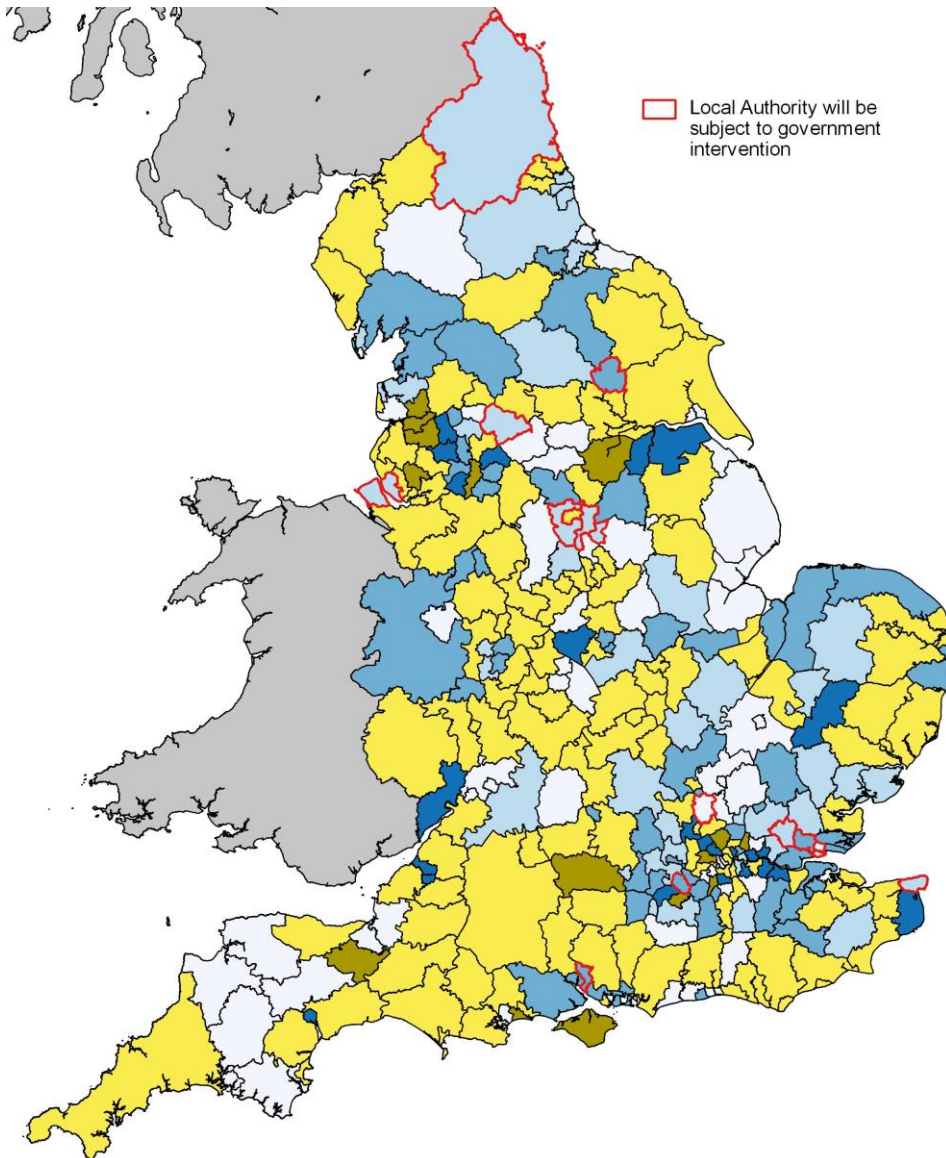
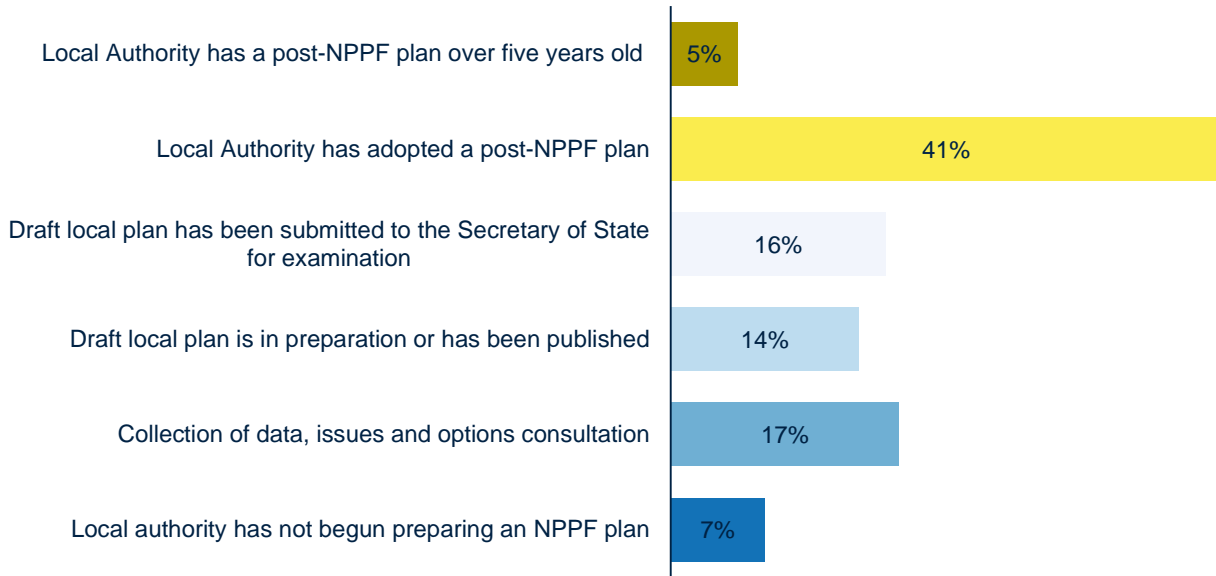


Figure 2 – Local Plan Status



46%

of local authorities have a local plan adopted after the publication of the NPPF

Adopted post-NPPF plan targets are

91%

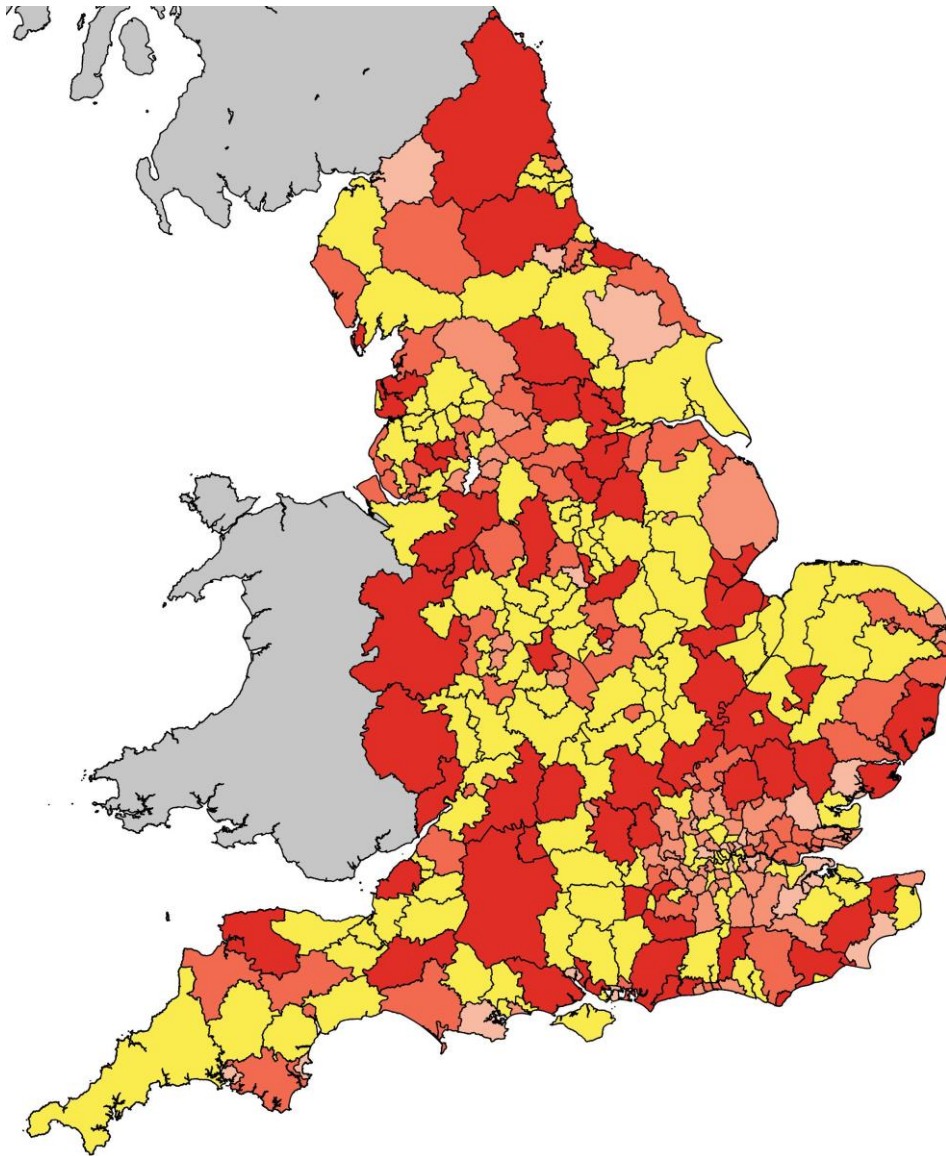
of SHMA targets

15

Local authorities have an adopted post NPPF which is now at least five years old

Source: Savills Research, November 2017

Figure 3 – Five year land supply



Across England, there are

5.4

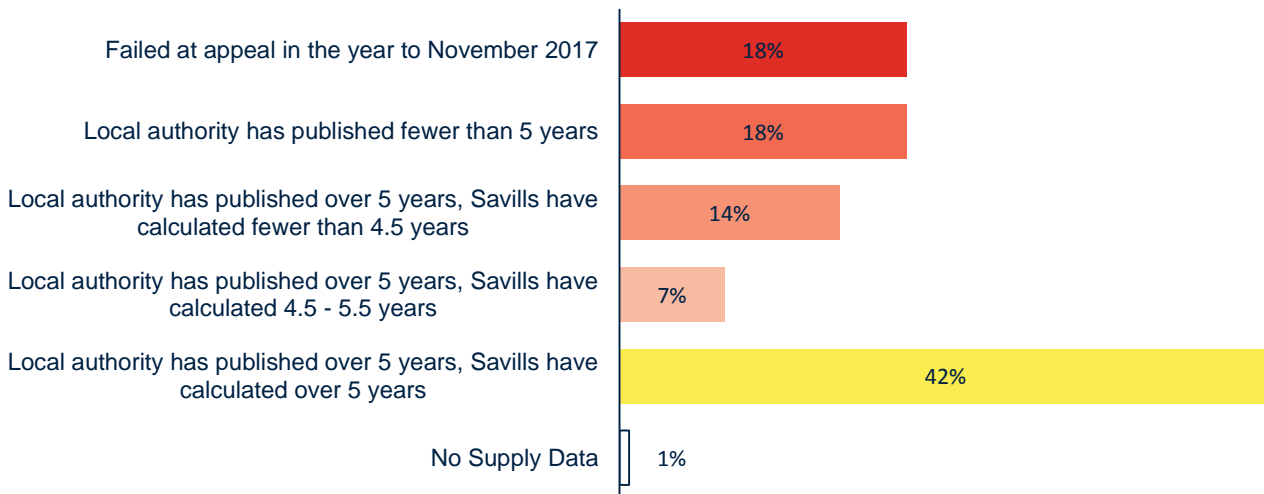
years of published land supply, up from 5.3 years in March

60

Local authorities had a lack of five year land supply confirmed at appeal in the year to November 2017

58%

of authorities that lost at appeal had a published five year land supply over 5 years



Source: Savills Research, November 2017

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