

West Suffolk

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

December 2018

West Suffolk

Council

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1. Introduction

The Council sees the Local Plan as positive tool in supporting delivery of our corporate priorities.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires local planning authorities to prepare, maintain and publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out what development plan documents are to be produced, their subject matter and broad timetable for their preparation including consultation, examination and adoption.

A revision to the 2016 joint St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath LDS is now required in order to reflect recent changes to the planning system, to update progress on the development plan documents currently in preparation and to roll the programme forward to 2023 for the preparation of a West Suffolk Local Plan.

From April 2019 St Edmundsbury Borough's and Forest Heath District's functions and services will be transferred to a single new council, to be known as West Suffolk Council. This LDS covers the period 2018-2021 and provides information on the new West Suffolk Local Plan and related documents. The new West Suffolk Local Plan will ultimately replace the adopted and emerging development plan documents of St Edmundsbury and Forest Heath (hereafter referred to as West Suffolk Councils).

2. What is the Local Plan?

Local Plans are a statutory requirement for each council area (or can be produced jointly if working together). A Local Plan can be a single document or a suite of documents which can cover specific policies. The 2018 NPPF states that a local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of both.¹ The documents which form a Local Plan are called Development Plan Documents.

There are a number of supporting documents to a Local Plan, including;

- **Local Development Scheme** – the timetable for the preparation of local development plans;
- **Statement of Community Involvement** – sets out the Council's approach to engaging with local communities during plan preparation, the assistance given to communities in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and when consulting on planning applications;
- **Authority Monitoring Report** – sets out the progress in terms of producing development plan documents and implementing policies;
- **Supplementary Planning documents** – documents which add further detail to policies in a Local Plan. These do not form part of the LDS.

¹ Strategic policies are those policies and site allocations which address strategic matters. Non-strategic policies are those in a Neighbourhood Plan, or those in a local plan which are not strategic.

The Local Plan will also include a Policies Map which illustrates the geographic extent of policies and proposals on a map base.

3. Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans are not compulsory. However, when duly made/adopted they are a statutory document that forms part of the development plan. In parished areas such as ours, these are prepared by a parish or town council or councils. They must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of a council's local plan. Details of those parish/town council's currently preparing neighbourhood plans can be seen on the council's website at www.westsuffolk.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

4. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL is a mechanism introduced under the Planning Act 2008 to provide a standard tariff approach to determining financial contributions from new development towards local infrastructure provision. CIL is a form of securing planning obligations to supplement and co-exist with s106 contributions. It has been designed to be generally paid up front and is a levy calculated on the size and type of development.

Although CIL is not currently in use in West Suffolk, work has begun to explore its introduction but at this time no final decision has been made to introduce it. Production of a CIL charging Schedule is therefore not included in this LDS.

5. West Suffolk Local Plan documents

On the publication of this LDS, the development plans for West Suffolk Councils comprise:

St Edmundsbury

- St Edmundsbury Core Strategy (2010)
- Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 (2014)
- Haverhill Vision 2031 (2014)
- Rural Vision 2031 (2014)

Forest Heath

- Forest Heath Core Strategy (2010)
- Saved policies of the 1995 Forest Heath Local Plan (1995)

West Suffolk Councils

- Joint Development Management Policies Document (2015)

Neighbourhood Plans

- Hargrave Neighbourhood Plan (July 2018)

The Forest Heath Single Issue Review of Core Strategy Policy CS7 and the Site Allocations Local Plan have been through Examination and the Inspectors' reports are expected by the end of 2018. At this point the documents will be

taken to Council for adoption and will become part of the development plan until superseded by the West Suffolk Local Plan.

6. Timetable for the West Suffolk Local Plan review

West Suffolk Councils are commencing work on a review of the current and emerging Local Plans and associated documents. The Government does not set out precise details of how a plan should be prepared, but rather considers Councils are best placed to decide the exact process and how to engage with their communities. However, the Regulations do prescribe certain stages where the public are to be consulted.

The Council is committed to early and meaningful engagement, collaborating with neighbourhoods, local organisations and businesses is essential. This commitment is echoed by Government. The Regulations include a requirement for public participation at an early stage in plan preparation before the plan is finalised with the detail left for councils to determine. The Regulations also stipulate that the final document should be published for formal consultation prior to it being submitted for independent examination. The various stages of development plan document preparation are summarised in the table below:

Development Plan Document Stage	Stage
Early tasks	This stage involves the Council gathering evidence, including concerns and proposals the community may wish to make regarding planning issues. This stage also involves consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.
Pre-submission (regulation 18)	The Council will have a minimum of one consultation on issues and options in the early stages of this process and will continue to engage with stakeholders and the community throughout the pre-submission stage.
Pre-submission Consultation or publication stage (regulation 19)	This stage involves a formal consultation on the final version of the DPD, when the Council will invite all interested parties to submit representations.
Submission (regulation 22)	The Council will formally submit the DPD to the Secretary of State for independent examination.
Examination	Interested parties can seek to make representations to the independent Planning Inspector. Following the examination the Planning Inspector will produce a report and may recommend changes.
Adoption	This is a formal process for West Suffolk Councils to adopt the documents as part of the Local Plan.

The profile table below sets out detail on the content and timetable for the production of the West Suffolk Local Plan, which can also be seen in the timeline of key milestones at Annex 1. The timetable is taking a realistic approach and is based on the time taken to achieve key milestones during the preparation of previous Local Plans. Progress will be measured against milestones to assess whether there is any need to revise the published timetable. The timeline is a 'live' document and will be updated on the West Suffolk Council's website as necessary.

West Suffolk Local Plan 2041	
Overview	
Role and content	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To set out the strategic and local policies for the area 2. To set the overall housing provision and distribution; 3. To identify land use sites to meet housing, employment, leisure and community needs; 4. To set out specific criteria against which planning applications will be considered.
Coverage	St Edmundsbury Borough and Forest Heath District (to be known as the West Suffolk Council administrative area from April 2019)
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of conformity	With the 2018 National Planning Policy Framework, national legislation and case law
Timetable and milestones	
Start evidence base, scoping and issues	November 2018
Public consultation on issues and options (regulation 18)	November 2019 - January 2020
Public consultation on preferred approach (regulation 18)	August – October 2020
Public consultation on submission draft plan (regulation 19)	April – May 2021
Submission (regulation 22)	July 2021
Examination in Public (regulation 24)	January – February 2022
Adoption (regulation 26)	May 2023
Arrangements for Production	
Lead	Portfolio Holder for Growth
Service Area	To be prepared by the Strategic Planning Service
Internal resources required	Other services involved will include: Economic Growth, Housing, Policy, Families and Communities, Development

	Management and Environment Service Areas.
Community and stakeholder involvement	Parish and Town Councils, Partner Organisations, and others as identified in the Regulations and the Statement of Community Involvement. Stakeholders and the community will be involved in the preparation of the Local Plan through direct contact with the relevant organisations, groups and individuals – including duty to co-operate requirements – and through formal publication procedures as set out in the Local Planning (England) Regulations (2012)
Monitoring and Review	Authority Monitoring Report

7. Risk Assessment

An assessment has been carried out of the factors that could affect the ability of the councils to deliver the Local Plan(s) in accordance with the indicated programme. Actions to manage these risks have been identified.

Risk	Risk / Implications	Mitigating Measures
Timescales	A single Local Plan with multiple parts presents potential risks to its deliverability.	Robust scoping. Prioritised LDS. Sound project planning. The progress made on Plans prepared to date provides increasing confidence. Preparation of Statement of Common Ground.
Available resources & skills	Pressure on financial resources with implications on service budgets	Continued cooperate commitment of the Council to resourcing this statutory function. Robust management of staff resources and cross service and partnership working.
Evidence base	Inadequate / incomplete evidence risk to soundness. Financial risk to evidence gathering.	Early and thorough assessment of available evidence and need. Prioritise further work. Council wide commitment.
Planning Inspectorate	Abortive or inappropriate progress due to change in	Early and consistent engagement with the Planning Inspectorate and

Risk	Risk / Implications	Mitigating Measures
/ legislation engagement	guidance / legislation, advice from the Planning Inspectorate	ensuring consistent and ongoing legal advice.
Political change	Potential changes in political support for all or elements of the Local Plan	Ongoing engagement and ownership of Local Plan preparation and progression with Portfolio Holder for Growth and Members of the Council.
Tests of Soundness	Risk of being found unsound and the potential resultant major delay to the implementation of the policies and proposals.	Continuous soundness self-assessment. Consultation with the Planning Inspectorate before and during publication of a document. Self-assessment using Planning Advisory Service Tool Kit.
Introduction of significant changes	The Inspector may suspend the process should there be significant changes made to the Local Plan which may have not been consulted upon	Consultation on significant changes made following publication in accordance with the Inspectors requirements.

8. Further information

For further information on this Local Development Scheme, or any of the documents mentioned, please contact the Planning Policy team using the contact details below. Information on the existing and emerging Local Plans is also available on the Council's website www.westsuffolk.gov.uk

By E-mail: planning.policy@westsuffolk.gov.uk

By Telephone: 01284 757368

Annex 2: Glossary of Terms

Adoption: The formal approval by a Council of the final version of a development plan document once the inspector has found it sound.

Allocation: Land identified as appropriate for a specific use.

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR): A report prepared by the Council setting out progress on the Local Plan and the effectiveness of the policies it contains.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): A standard charge levied by councils on developers towards the cost of local and strategic infrastructure to support development.

Core Strategy: The key development plan document, setting out the long term spatial vision for the area, the spatial objectives and strategic policies.

Development plan: an authority's development plan consists of the adopted Local Plans, made neighbourhood plans and published spatial development strategies Neighbourhood plans that have been approved at referendum are also part of the development plan, unless the local planning authority decides that the neighbourhood plan should not be made.

Development plan document: a planning document which is part of the Local Plan, subject to extensive consultation and independent examination.

Issues and options: an informal early stage of the development plan document preparation, aimed at engaging the public and stakeholders in formulating the main issues that the Plan should address and the options available.

Local Development Document (LDD): A document that forms part of the Local Plan and can be either a development plan document or a supplementary planning document.

Local Development Scheme: A document setting out the timescales for the production of the development plan documents.

Local Plan: The plan for the future development of the area drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community. In law this is described as the development plan documents adopted under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Neighbourhood Plans: A plan prepared by a Parish Council, a Town Council or a Neighbourhood Planning Forum for a particular neighbourhood area.

Publication Draft: First full draft of the development plan document prepared for formal consultation.

Spatial planning: spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with

other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function.

Spatial vision: A brief description of how an area will change by the end of a plan period.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): A document which informs how a council will involve the community in the preparation of planning documents and on all major planning applications.

Strategic policies: Policies and site allocations which address strategic priorities in line with requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): A procedure (set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) which requires the formal environmental assessment of plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Submission draft: Final draft of the development plan document submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination by the Planning Inspectorate.

Supplementary planning document (SPD): Documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or can be topic based for example, design. SPDs are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): Examines the social, environmental and economic effects of strategies and policies in local development documents from the outset of its preparation.

Sustainable development: National planning policy defines this as being meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.