



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

2023– 2026

October 2023



1. INTRODUCTION

The North West Leicestershire Local Plan

- 1.1 North West Leicestershire District Council as Local Planning Authority is required to produce a Local Plan.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Local Plan is to guide future decisions in respect of future development.
- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) notes that “*The planning system should be genuinely plan-led. Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings*”.
- 1.4 The North West Leicestershire Local Plan was initially adopted on 21 November 2017. It sets out as strategy for delivering the homes, jobs and infrastructure needed in the district between 2011 and 2031.
- 1.5 Policy S1 of the plan provided a commitment from the Council to undertake a review of the plan commencing within 3 months of adoption. There are two main reasons why an immediate review was required:
 - A shortage of employment land up to 2031 compared to what is needed (as identified in our Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment, or HEDNA)
 - The possible need to accommodate additional housing arising from unmet needs in Leicester city.
- 1.6 Work on the review commenced in February 2018. Due to issues of uncertainty relating to the issue of unmet need it was decided to undertake a Partial Review which amended only Policy S1.
- 1.7 The Partial Review was adopted on 16 March 2021. The Local Plan includes a commitment to preparing a replacement Local Plan via a Substantive Review. The Local Plan can be viewed on the Council’s website at www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/local_plan

The Local Development Scheme

- 1.8 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is required to be prepared by the Council (under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011)).
- 1.9 The LDS must specify (among other matters) the documents which, when prepared, will comprise the Development Plan for the area. It must be made available publically and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress.
- 1.10 This covers the three-year period up to 2026 and supersedes previous LDSs.

The Development Plan

- 1.11 Planning applications are to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Development Plan unless there are good planning reasons for doing otherwise. The Development Plan represents the cornerstone of the planning system as it sets out the local planning authorities planning strategy and policies to guide the future development of the district.
- 1.12 At the present time the Development Plan for North West Leicestershire consists of the following documents:
- The adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan 2021;
 - Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2019);
 - Ashby de la Zouch Neighbourhood Plan (November 2018);
 - Ellistown and Battelflat Neighbourhood Plan (July 2019)
 - Hugglescote and Donington le Heath neighbourhood Plan (November 2021)
 - Blackfordby (April 2022); and
 - Swannington (March 2023)
- 1.13 Neighbourhood Plans are community-led documents by a Parish/Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum and ultimately adopted by the District Council as part of the development plan.
- 1.14 All development plans have to be consistent with national policies, as set out in the NPPF.
- 1.15 Each Development Plan Document (DPD) must also be accompanied by a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal; or in the case of a Neighbourhood Plan be supported by a Screening Opinion as to whether an SEA is required.
- 1.16 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process intended to ensure that significant environmental effects arising from Local Plan proposals are identified, assessed, mitigated, communicated to decision-makers and monitored. The role of SEA is to:
- Support sustainable development;
 - Improve the evidence base for decision-making; and
 - Facilitate and respond to consultation with stakeholders.
- 1.17 The Planning Act requires local planning authorities to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating SEA) to ensure that, in addition to considering the environmental impacts of policies and proposals, an assessment is also made of their economic and social impacts.
- 1.18 The SA outputs will be consulted upon during the development plan process.
- 1.19 The River Mease which passes through part of the district is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) at EU level. The council is required to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment of any development plan whose policies or proposals could have a significant adverse effect upon the integrity of the SAC.

- 1.20 The outcome of any such assessments will be consulted up on alongside the parent development plan.
- 1.21 Details about SEA and sustainability Appraisal can be found at www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal

Neighbourhood Plans

- 1.22 Under the Localism Act Neighbourhood Plans can be prepared by local communities. These can be used to establish general planning policies for an area. A Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Development Plan, as well as having regard to national planning policy and must be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements.
- 1.23 Before a Neighbourhood Plan can be adopted it must gain the approval of a majority of voters of the neighbourhood.
- 1.24 If adopted a Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the Development Plan for that area – it will be a material consideration in determining planning applications.
- 1.25 The LDS does not set out what Neighbourhood Plans will be produced as this will be a matter for local communities to decide when such plans will be produced. However, the District Council will provide support to local communities wanting to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.26 In addition to those ‘made’ plans listed at paragraph 1.12. at the present time Neighbourhood Plan areas have been designated for the following areas and plans are being prepared:
- Breedon on the Hill;
 - Lockington cum Hemington
 - Long Whatton and Diseworth
- 1.27 In addition, the Ashby de la Zouch Neighbourhood Plan is in the process of being reviewed. Further detail regarding Neighbourhood Plans can be found at www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/neighbourhood_planning

Statement of Community Involvement

- 1.28 A Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how a Council intends to consult and involve the community in the preparation and review of local development documents and in development management decisions. The North West Leicestershire SCI was published in February 2019 and was subject to an Addendum in 2020.
- 1.29 Regulations require that the SCI is reviewed every 5 years. Therefore, the next review will be required in 2025.
- 1.30 The SCI can be viewed at www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/statement_of_community_involvement_consultation

Monitoring and Review – Authority’s Monitoring Report:

- 1.31 Local planning authorities are required to publish a report that monitors the progress and implementation of each document set the Local Development Scheme. It must specify whether adopted policies are meeting their stated objectives and if not, what actions are proposed to address any issues. In addition, it must include:
- Details of any neighbourhood development order or a neighbourhood development plan made by the Council;
 - Any Community Infrastructure Levy related receipts and expenditure; and
 - Details on where the Council has worked with other authorities in accordance with the ‘Duty to Cooperate’.

The latest Council monitoring report is available at www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/authority_monitoring_report

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 1.32 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge payable by developers which contributes towards the cost of providing new infrastructure as part of new development.
- 1.33 The Council has undertaken some work with the other Leicestershire Local Planning Authorities to establish the potential for a CIL charge and what such a charge would be. At that time, it was decided to not pursue the establishment of CIL. Instead, the Council continues to secure the infrastructure necessary to support new development by legal agreements known as Section 106 Agreements.
- 1.34 The Government are proposing to replace CIL with a mandatory Infrastructure Levy. CIL does not form part of the LDS but any future updates to the LDS will set out the latest situation on the CIL and Infrastructure Levy.

2. **THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE**

Purpose and Content of Local Development Scheme

2.1 The Local Development Scheme has the following main purposes:

- To inform the public and other key stakeholders of the documents that the District Council proposes to prepare which will make up the new planning policy framework for North West Leicestershire;
- To set out the timescales envisaged for the preparation of these documents;
- To establish and reflect District Council priorities;
- To enable work programmes to be set and resources to be allocated for the preparation of these documents;
- To set a timetable for the review of these documents once they have been prepared.

Development Plan Documents

2.2 As noted the Local Plan Partial Review was adopted by the District Council in March 2021. The Local Plan includes a commitment to preparing a replacement Local Plan. The LDS sets out the programme for this.

2.3 Work undertaken as part of the Partial Review and which has been consulted upon forms part of the input to the new plan.

2.4 The District Council will review the need for and timing of any development plans as part of the annual monitoring cycle involved in the preparation of the Annual Monitoring Report.

2.5 The Policies Map will be amended to reflect changes to the development plan. It will be updated to show the geographic extent of site-specific policies or other matters referred to in adopted development plans.

2.6 Each development plan will be subject to statutory procedures, including consideration at an independent examination, and an Inspector's report which the Council will need to consider before adopting the relevant development plan.

2.7 Section 4 sets out individual profiles for each document to be prepared by the Council. This provides a brief description of each document, information on its status and the timing of the main stages or 'milestones' towards its adoption.

3. **SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

Introduction

- 3.1 This supporting statement sets out the context for the preparation of the Local Plan. It identifies the resources that will be available for the preparation of the various documents and provides an assessment of the various risks which the District Council is likely to face in the production of the Local Plan.

District Profile

- 3.2 North West Leicestershire is a mainly rural district, covering 27,900 hectares. The principal town is Coalville and the other main settlements are Ashby de la Zouch, Castle Donington, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham.
- 3.3 The population of the district was estimated as being 104,700 in 2021¹.
- 3.4 Little trace of the former deep mining industry now remains as a result of the redevelopment and restoration of sites to a variety of uses, including woodland planting as part of the National Forest. Major employment areas have been provided at strategic locations as part of the area's regeneration strategy.
- 3.5 The District is crossed by the A42, with the M1 passing on the eastern side. East Midlands Airport is situated in the northern part of the District and provides a major source of local employment. There is no passenger rail service within the District, but the Leicester-Burton railway (the 'National Forest Line') remains open for freight traffic.
- 3.6 North West Leicestershire is at the heart of the National Forest and has areas of very attractive countryside, including Staunton Harold and the Charnwood Forest. There are nationally recognised conservation areas in Ashby-de-la-Zouch Town Centre and at Castle Donington.

Joint Working

- 3.7 The Council has worked at both member and officer level with all of the other local planning authorities in Leicester and Leicestershire on a Strategic Growth Plan to guide future development across the sub-region up to 2050. It is the authorities collective 'offer' to government and other partners for how (collectively) we can deliver the new homes, jobs and ancillary uses which the county requires. The Strategic Growth Plan was approved by all Councils at a series of meetings held during November and December 2018
- 3.8 The Strategic Growth Plan is a positive response to the Duty to Cooperate requirement introduced by the Localism Act 2011. The broader strategy and jobs and homes figures contained in the Strategic Growth Plan and its timetable for production will directly influence development of future Local Plans across Leicestershire.
- 3.9 None of the documents identified for preparation in this LDS will be prepared as joint documents with other authorities. However, the potential for the production of any joint documents will be kept under review as part of future iterations of the LDS. In addition, the Council will continue to engage with the

¹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/census>

other Leicester and Leicestershire authorities in respect of strategic matters during the period covered by this LDS, including progressing any Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) and Joint Evidence studies.

- 3.10 The work on strategic matters is overseen by an officer Strategic Planning Group which reports to a Member Advisory Group. Any SoCG requires sign off by each authority through its own internal processes.

Resources

- 3.11 Production of local development documents is led by the Planning Policy Team in the Planning and Infrastructure Service. A more detailed explanation of resource requirements is set out within the individual document profiles in Section 4.

- 3.12 The following staff resource is available for preparing the Local Plan:

- Head of Planning and Infrastructure
- Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager
- Principal Planning Officer x 2
- Senior Planning Officers x 2 (1.5 FTE)

- 3.13 Consultants have been engaged as necessary to carry out a number of studies for the District Council. The need for further input of such expertise will be kept under review.

- 3.14 Every effort will also be made to take advantage of the skills and experience available in other sections of the District Council to supplement the planning policy team.

Programme Management Responsibilities

- 3.15 The preparation of the Local Plan for North West Leicestershire will be the responsibility of the Head of Planning & Infrastructure, with day-to-day project management and programming being dealt with by the Planning Policy and Land Charges Team Manager.

Governance Procedures

- 3.16 The Local Plan Committee is responsible for overseeing the preparation of the Local Plan. A Council resolution will be required for the adoption stages of any DPD prepared by the Council.

- 3.17 At officer level a Project Board, led by the Strategic Director of Place, oversees the work undertaken by officers and directs the development of the plan.

Risk Assessment

- 3.18 An assessment has been undertaken of the main areas of risk facing the District Council in the preparation of the Local Plan, together with measures to address such risks. The risks identified include:

- Staff turnover and possible delays in filling vacant posts.

Impact: reduced capacity results in slippage to programme

Mitigation measures: flexible use of other planning expertise elsewhere within the Planning service as required; take steps to seek to fill vacancy immediately; consider use of consultancy/agency staff.

- Financial constraints.

Impact: work cannot be progressed, quality of plan and/or evidence base compromised

Mitigation measures: Local Plan a key corporate priority; ensure that budgetary provision included as part of Council's annual budget setting process and keep under review.

- Nature and extent of public response is such that existing resource will be stretched to maintain programme of work.

Impact: reduced capacity results in slippage to programme

Mitigation measures: The SCI for North West Leicestershire is in place and provides a clear basis for community engagement. Ensure timetable is realistic and monitor progress against LDS. Consider the employment of temporary staff to help assist with assessment of responses to consultations if required particularly to free up experienced planning officers.

- Policy team required to do unforeseen work

Impact: reduced capacity results in slippage to programme

Mitigation measures: Ensure that appropriate priority attached corporately and politically to Local Plan. Monitor volume of non - local plan work and discuss as part of team 121's. Consider need for additional resources.

- New Government guidance which affects approach being taken

Impact: additional work required which also includes additional cost and delays to programme.

Mitigation measures: closely monitor potential changes and ensure that all Planning Policy staff are aware of any emerging issues and guidance and assess potential impact upon Local Plan immediately.

- Duty to Cooperate issues.

Impact: progress delayed or plan found not sound.

Mitigation measures: ensure that all the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are consulted and kept up-to-date throughout the plan preparation process; Strategic Planning Group and the Planning Officers Forum provide forums for sharing information and emerging issues.

- Lack of political ownership or willingness to approve plan.

Impact: slippage in programme; failure to produce an up-to-date plan which leaves Council vulnerable to unwanted planning applications.

Mitigation measures: Ensure that members are fully briefed as to the importance of having an up-to-date Local Plan. Local Plan Committee in place which provides opportunity to engage with members; ensure that Portfolio Holder is provided with regular updates.

4 OVERVIEW OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENTS TO BE PRODUCED

- 4.1 This section describes the purpose of each Development Plan Document and the timetable for its preparation. The chart at Appendix 1 provides a summary guide to the timetabling of each document
- 4.2 The principal focus over the period of this LDS will be to complete the preparation of the new Local Plan.
- 4.3 The new Local Plan will address the future development needs of the district, most likely up to 2040, including site allocations as well as specific policies and criteria against which planning applications for development can be assessed. It will need to have regard to the outcome from the Strategic Growth Plan as well as the NPPF and other national policy requirements, including new household projections.
- 4.4 Changes to the plan making system are currently progressing through Parliament in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. As part of these changes, the government has set out transitional arrangements for moving from the current to the new system. This requires that plans such as that for North West Leicestershire being prepared under the current system will have to be submitted for Examination by 30 June 2025. It also requires that plans “in general” be adopted by 31 December 2026. The timetable below takes account of these deadlines.
- 4.4 The work previously undertaken as part of the Partial Review will feed into the Substantive Review.

OVERVIEW	
Coverage	District-wide
Status	Development Plan Document
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework

TIMETABLE	
Stage	Dates
Consult on draft policies and housing and employment site allocations	January/February 2024
Agree publication version (Regulation 19)	December 2024
Consult on Publication Local Plan (Regulation 19)	January/February 2025
Submission	May 2025
Examination	October 2025
Adoption	October 2026

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Organisational Lead	Head of Planning & Infrastructure
Political Management	Local Plan Committee Cabinet Council
Internal Resources	Planning Policy Team Manager and Planning Policy Team
External Resources	Resources from a range of external stakeholders including various public agencies (for example highway authorities, utility providers) will be required to inform the production of the document. Consultants have been used to provide input into evidence base.
Community & Stakeholder Involvement	As set out in Statement of Community Involvement
Monitoring	Addressed in the Annual Monitoring Review

Policies Map

Purpose

- 4.5 The Policies Map illustrates, on an Ordnance Survey base map, all the policies and proposals set out in Development Plan Documents (DPDs). Inset maps illustrate policies and proposals for specific parts of the district or specific settlements. The Policies Map (and any relevant Inset Maps) will be revised as new DPDs are adopted, policies are deleted or policies cease to be part of the development plan.

OVERVIEW	
Coverage	District-wide
Status	Development Plan Document
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework

Timetable

- 4.6 The timetable for revisions will be the same as that for the relevant documents which requires changes to the Policies Map.

Arrangements for production

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Organisational Lead	Head of Planning & Infrastructure
Political Management	Local Plan Committee Cabinet Council
Internal Resources	Planning Policy Team Manager and Planning Policy Team
External Resources	Possible external resource required to facilitate electronic version of proposals map which is web based. In addition, external printing resource may be required for paper copies of Policies Map.

Evidence Base

- 4.7 The Substantive Review will be supported by a proportionate evidence base as necessary. The existing Evidence Base together with any additions can be viewed at www.nwleics.gov.uk/pages/local_plan_review_evidence_base

6 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are documents which add further detail to specific policies in the Local Plan. Although they are not DPDs and hence accorded the same weight as a DPD, they are capable of being a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 6.2 The previous Local Plan was supported by a number of SPDs. Following adoption of the current Local Plan in November 2017 a review of these SPDs was undertaken. The Council's Cabinet of January 2018 agreed to withdraw all of the SPDs with the exception of a Good Design SPD.
- 6.3 Since the Local Plan was adopted the following new SPDs have been approved:
- Cycling Strategy Coalville (12 September 2018)
 - Cycling Strategy Ashby de la Zouch (12 September 2018)
 - Shop Front and Advertisements (June 2019)
 - Diseworth Village Design Statement (27 January 2021)
 - Affordable Housing (9 December 2021)
- 6.4 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill includes provision for replacing SPDs with formal Supplementary Plans. The need for Supplementary Plans will be kept under review and a programme for the preparation of these will be included in any subsequent iterations of the Local Development Scheme.
- 6.5 Copies of SPDs can be viewed at [Supplementary Planning Documents & Other Guidance - North West Leicestershire District Council](#)

APPENDIX 1

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW TIMETABLE 2023 – 26	
	January 2027 December 2026 November 2026 October 2026 September 2026 August 2026 July 2026 June 2026 May 2026 April 2026v March 2026 February 2026 January 2026 December 2025 November 2025 October 2025 September 2025 August 2025 July 2025 June 2025 May 2025 April 2025 March 2025 February 2025 January 2025 December 2024 November 2024 October 2024 September 2024 August 2024 July 2024 June 2024 May 2024 April 2024 March 2024 February 2024 January 2024 December 2023
Consultation (Reg 18) – draft plan including preferred housing and employment site allocations	
Council agrees Regulation 19 Plan	
Consultation (Reg 19) – publication Local Plan	
Submission to S of S	
Examination starts	
Adoption	