

Local Development Scheme 2025-2028

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Introduction

1. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a three-year project plan which sets out what development plan documents the Council is intending to produce and when they will be delivered.
2. The LDS shows the anticipated key milestones in the production of Local Plan documents. The LDS is being updated at this time in response to a request from the Deputy Prime Minister, Angela Rayner MP, the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government who has requested an updated LDS from all Local Planning Authorities by the 6 March 2025.

Why is a Local Development Scheme produced?

3. An LDS is required to be produced under section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The document must be publicly available and should be kept up to date.

How does it link to the Statement of Community Involvement?

4. The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) sets out how the Council intend to engage with local communities, businesses and other interested parties when developing and reviewing planning documents and determining planning applications. The SCI contains more detail on how we will consult on the Local Plan and its preparation at each key milestone.

Current Development Plan

5. The Development Plan for the Borough currently consists of several documents and some selected saved policies. These are as follows:
 - Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy (adopted 2009)
 - Saved Policies of the Newcastle under Lyme Local Plan (adopted 2003)
 - Minerals Local Plan for Staffordshire (2015-2030), produced by Staffordshire County Council
 - Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Waste Local Plan (2010-2026), produced by Staffordshire County Council
6. The documents listed above are available to view on the Councils Planning Policy website, via the 'Current Development Plan' page: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/planning-policy/current-development-plan>

Neighbourhood Development Plans

7. Neighbourhood Development Plans also form part of the development plan. They are produced by local communities led by Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums. As such, the Local Planning Authority cannot set a timeline for their production in the LDS. However, the Council will continue to support neighbourhood planning groups to progress their Neighbourhood Plans. For more details on Neighbourhood Plans in the Borough, please see the relevant pages of the

Borough Council's website: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning>

8. Also included on the Borough Council webpages is a map of all designated neighbourhood areas and more information on each of the plans.

Approved or 'Made' Neighbourhood Development Plans as at January 2025

- Loggerheads Neighbourhood Development Plan (made 15 February 2019)
- Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan (made 21 January 2020)
- Betley, Balterley and Wrinehill Neighbourhood Plan (made 4 January 2022)
- Madeley Neighbourhood Development Plan (made 23 May 2022)

Neighbourhood Development Plans in development as at January 2025

- Audley Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (at submission / examination stage)
- Kidsgrove Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Keele Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Silverdale Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Bradwell, May Bank, Porthill and Wolstanton Neighbourhood Forum

The new Local Plan(s) for the Borough

9. On 13 January 2021, Cabinet resolved to produce a new Local Plan covering the borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme administrative area. The emerging Local Plan (2020-2040) has been prepared and consulted upon over the last few years and was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on the 20 December 2024. An independent Inspector(s) from the Planning Inspectorate will be duly appointed to consider the local plan and its supporting evidence and decide whether the plan meets the relevant soundness and legal compliance tests. The planning policy pages on the Council's website provide an update on the Local Plan examination.
10. Once adopted, the emerging Local Plan (2020-2040) will replace the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy and Saved Policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (adopted 2003).
11. The LDS reflects the position on the emerging Local Plan (2020-2040) but also sets out next stages for the preparation of a new Local Plan for the Borough.
12. In line with the provisions of the December 2024 National Planning Policy Framework (paragraphs 234b & 236 respectively) for local plan making, where a local plan has been submitted for examination on or before the 12 March 2025 and the emerging Plan provides for less than 80% of local housing need, the Local Planning Authority will be expected to begin work on a new plan, under the revised plan-making system provided for under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (as soon as the relevant provisions are brought into force in 2025) in order to address any shortfall in housing need.
13. The LDS sets out the Council's indicative programme for producing a new Local Plan in line with the revised plan-making system as per paragraph 12 above. However, as there remains uncertainty about the implementation of national reforms, including from the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act, national development management

policies and potentially a further revised National Planning Policy Framework on Plan Making, then the dates set out in Appendix 1 are indicative only and should be treated with caution. The dates in this LDS may have to be revised to respond to national changes in Plan making, in due course.

Policies Map

14. A Policies Map accompanies local plans to illustrate spatially, the application of policies within them. The policies map for the Borough will be updated as each Plan is adopted.

Evidence

15. A range of evidence is required to inform the content of policies and proposals in the Local Plan. Some evidence is produced in-house by the Council and several documents are also produced by specialist external consultants on behalf of the Authority. The Council's planning policy team continually work on developing the evidence base at the same time as the Local Plan document. Policies in the Local Plan will make clear which evidence has been used to inform the wording of the policy. The full evidence library will also be subject to independent scrutiny once any Local Plan has been submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination.

Sustainability Appraisal

16. The Local Plan is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal which meets the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. The process of sustainability appraisal is iterative, beginning with a scoping report which identifies the criteria to assess the sustainability of each policy and proposal including any site allocations. At key stages of consultation on the Local Plan, the plan will be supported by an appraisal of the sustainability of proposed policies and of reasonable alternative options. This demonstrates the Council has met the SEA Directive as decisions made should accord with the objectives of sustainable development.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

17. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) identifies whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on the protected features of certain sites, also known as 'habitats sites' in the National Planning Policy Framework, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This fulfils the obligations of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). Along with the Sustainability Appraisal, the HRA is produced at each key stage of plan production.

Glossary of Terms

Adoption – approval of a local plan by a council after the plan has been through all of the stages in its preparation, including independent examination. Once adopted, it becomes a development plan document (see below).

Development plan – comprises all adopted local plan documents and ‘made’ neighbourhood plans. The development plan is, by law, the starting point for making planning application decisions.

Evidence – documents prepared to support and inform the Local Plan policies and proposed site allocations (where relevant)

Examination – is the process by which a local plan is independently assessed by a Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. The Inspector decides whether the plan has met relevant legal requirements and meets the tests of ‘soundness’ as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy).

Local Plan – a plan for the future development of a local area, drawn up by the local planning authority in consultation with the community, under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. A local plan can consist of either strategic or non-strategic policies, or a combination of the two.

Local Development Scheme – a timetable for producing future local plan documents.

National Planning Policy Framework – This sets out the government’s planning policies and explains how they should be applied when preparing local plans and when making planning application decisions.

New-style local plan – this is the term used to describe a local plan prepared under the reforms being brought forward through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023.

Regulation 18 stage – this is the stage where the Council sets out the potential scope of the Local Plan.

Regulation 19 stage - this is the stage at which the Council publishes its full, final draft of its local plan for a minimum of six weeks' public consultation. It should be the version of the document that it intends to submit for examination.

Submission – this follows the publication stage when the local plan is formally submitted for independent examination.

Appendix 1 Schedule of Development Plan Documents

Table 1: Schedule of Local Plan Documents

	Emerging Local Plan (2020-2040)	New Local Plan
Title	Local Plan (2020-2040)	New Local Plan
Description	The Local Plan sets the vision and framework for how the Borough will grow. It sets out targets for the number of jobs and homes to be delivered in the Borough and an overarching spatial strategy to guide development to sustainable locations.	This plan will be prepared in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as updated) and the requirements of the revised plan making system provided for under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (when relevant provisions are brought into force in 2025). Plan period to be decided.
Area covered	Borough wide	Borough Wide
Key policy context	National Planning Practice Guidance, Ministerial Statements. The Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with the December 2023 version of the National Planning Policy Framework.	National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024, as updated), National Development Management Policies, National Planning Practice Guidance, Ministerial Statements, Levelling Up and Regeneration Act Regulations
Local Plan preparation	Complete	-
Notice of start of plan making	Complete	01 November 2025***
Regulation 18 Stage	Complete	01 November 2026
Regulation 19 Stage	Complete	01 November 2027
Submission	Submitted on 20 December 2024*	01 March 2028
Adoption	19 November 2025**	01 September 2028

*Once the Local Plan is submitted for examination, it is difficult to accurately estimate in terms of timescale because the timetable is influenced by the progress of the examination led by the Planning Inspector(s). It is hoped that the examination can be concluded in 2025 - that the Plan is found sound by the Inspectorate and that the Council can move forward to adopt the Local Plan.

**this date is currently the last scheduled Council meeting in 2025. Again, this will be dependent on progress with the Local Plan examination.

*** this is the date from which the Council will start to produce a new local plan, in line with the requirements of the regulations published by the government in 2025, following the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023). This date will be dependent on when the regulations are published and also progress on the examination of the 2020-2040 Local Plan.