

Local Development Scheme

February 2025



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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) (the 2004 Act) introduced a new way of plan making and set out that Local Planning Authorities should produce a suite of planning documents known as the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 1.2 This Local Development Scheme (LDS), forms part of Hartlepool's LDF. An LDS is required under section 15 of the 2004 Act . This LDS sets out a programme for the preparation of documents relating to spatial planning in Hartlepool. It is specifically concerned with documents being prepared over the next five years (February 2025 – February 2030). The LDS will be reviewed as necessary if and when circumstances change.
- 1.3 In December 2024 the Government requested that all Local Planning Authorities should update and submit their LDS by 6th March 2025.
- 1.4 This LDS has been prepared after undertaking an assessment of current and pending legislation, the Authorities Monitoring Reports, the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework, the Council's five-year housing land supply along with ((engagement within HBC including presenting this document to Neighbourhood Services Committee.
- 1.5 This LDS has been prepared in accordance with the 2004 Act and Planning Practice Guidance.
- 1.6 This LDS acts as the starting point for the community, key stakeholders and others with an interest in the development process, who wish to find out about the status of existing and emerging planning policies. It highlights the key stages for the preparation of new policy documents and sets out a timeline for policy production.
- 1.7 Planning policies for Hartlepool are set out in the Hartlepool Rural Neighbourhood Plan (made December 2018), the Hartlepool Local Plan (adopted May 2018), the Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document (DPD)(adopted September 2011) and the Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (adopted September 2011).

2. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR HARTLEPOOL

- 2.1 The local planning system brings together and integrates policies for the use and development of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. Documents within the LDF seek to ensure the most efficient use of land by balancing competing demands in accordance with a clear, distinctive and realistic vision of how the area will develop and change within a demonstrable context of sustainable development.
- 2.2 The LDF comprises several documents as shown in diagram 1 below. The documents known as Development Plan Documents (DPDs) establish the main planning policy framework and form the statutory Development Plan for Hartlepool. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) provide further advice with regard to the policies in the development plan and how best to implement the policies.
- 2.3 The Development Plan Documents in Hartlepool are:
- The 2018 Local Plan that sets out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and strategic policies and allocations for the area;
 - A Policies Map which depicts what planning policies apply to parcels of land across the borough;
 - The 2011 Tees Valley Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and DPD which contain policies relating to land allocations and policies for assessing minerals and waste application;
 - The 2018 Hartlepool Rural Neighbourhood Plan that sets out the spatial vision, spatial objectives and strategic policies and allocations for the identified rural area;
- 2.4 The Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) adopted in Hartlepool are:
- Transport Assessments & Travel Plans SPD (January 2010)
 - Trees and Development SPD (2013)
 - Green Infrastructure SPD (February 2014)
 - Shop Fronts SPD (2014)
 - New Dwellings outside of Development Limits (August 2015)
 - Seaton Carew Regeneration SPD (September 2015)
 - Planning Obligations SPD (November 2015)
 - Residential Design SPD (2019)
 - Public Rights of Way SPD (2020)
- 2.5 It is not a statutory requirement to include the SPD's within the LDS, however, in the interests of providing residents and stakeholders a clear view, below is a list of what documents are currently being updated or will commence an update in 2025:
- Planning Obligations SPD (2015)
 - Green Infrastructure SPD (2014)
 - Public Rights of Way SPD (2020)
 - Trees and Development SPD (2013)
 - New Dwellings outside of Development Limits (August 2015)
- 2.6 The council are working on a residential design code, that will set out a clear vision for how housing and housing areas should be designed, consultation took place in 2024 and the council received a great insight into what residents want. The council is on track for publishing the draft code in spring 2025.

- 2.7 Other documents that comprise the Local Development Framework include:
- Local Development Scheme (LDS) – sets out the details of each of the Local Development Documents to be commenced over the next five years and the timescales and arrangements for their preparation.
 - Authorities Monitoring Report (AMR)– assessing the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being achieved.
 - Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) – this sets out the policy for involving the community and key stakeholders both in the preparation and revision of local development documents and with respect to planning applications. The SCI will be updated in 2025 and all local development documents will be prepared in accordance with the arrangements set out in the SCI.

Diagram 1: Hartlepool Local Development Framework

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK														
A portfolio of local development and other documents														
Local Development Documents												Other Documents		
Development Plan Documents				Supplementary Planning Documents										
Hartlepool Local Plan	Tees Valley Minerals & Waste CS and DPD	Hartlepool Local Plan Policies map	Hartlepool Rural Neighbourhood Plan	Travel Plans and Transport Assessments SPD	Hartlepool Green Infrastructure SPD	Trees and Developments SPD	Planning Obligations SPD	Shop Fronts SPD	Residential Design SPD	New Dwellings outside of Development Limits SPD	Seaton Carew Masterplan SPD	Public Rights of way SPD	Statement of Community Involvement	Authorities Monitoring Report
These documents comprise the Development Plan for Hartlepool.				These documents elaborate further on policies within the development plan and thus provide guidance for developers and decision makers.								These documents and this LDS are not spatial planning tools, they focus on engagement in planning and monitoring.		

3. DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS TIMELINE FOR PRODUCTION AND ADOPTION

Local Plan

- 3.1 The Local Plan sets out clearly what kind of place Hartlepool will be in the future, the changes that will be needed to make this happen, and how this will be achieved. The Local Plan is the key Development Plan Document that sets out the land use vision and strategic objectives for the borough for a 15-year period (2016 – 2031).
- 3.2 Table 1 below sets out the timeline for the commencement and delivery of the next Local Plan. The anticipated commencement date is January 2028 with a potential adoption date of June 2030.

Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Development Plan Document

- 3.3 The five local authorities in the Tees Valley (Darlington, Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar and Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees) adopted a joint minerals and waste Core Strategy and policies and sites Development Plan Document (DPD) in September 2011. The DPDs set out planning policies and site allocations until 2026.
- 3.4 Tees Valley authorities do not have a timeframe for updating the Minerals and Waste Core Strategy and Development Plan Document, but discussions are ongoing, and further direction is anticipated by winter 2025. Once a decision has been made on this matter then this LDS will be updated.

Hartlepool Rural Neighbourhood Plan.

- 3.4 The Hartlepool Rural Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in December 2018. A review of the plan commenced in September 2024 and the council are working with the Rural Neighbourhood Plan working group to understand if the plan as a whole is up to date, or partially up to date and if any policies need updating or if the plan needs updating as a whole. The council and working group expect clarity by autumn 2025. Once the working group have a better understanding of whether the plan is up to date and robust or not, then, if necessary, an action plan for updates will be put in place and this LDS will be updated.

Table 1: LOCAL PLAN TIMEFRAME FOR ADOPTION	
OVERVIEW	
Role and content	To set out the vision and spatial strategy for Hartlepool and the objectives and primary policies for meeting the vision.
Geographical Coverage	Borough-wide
Status	Development Plan Document
Conformity	Must comply with legislation, reflect the Hartlepool Community Strategy and be in general accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.
TIMETABLE / KEY DATES	
Stage	Date
Evidence base Production and pre consultation	2025 – December 2027
LP programme (January 2028 – June 2030)	
Evidence base update	January 2028 – May 2028 (5 months)
Drafting stage	June 2028 – September 2028 (4 months)
Consultation and on draft (including editing sessions)	October 2028 – December 2028 (3 months)
Amendments to the draft and Submission for examination	January - April 2029 (4 months)
Public Hearings	July 2029 (3 months after submission)
Inspector's Interim Findings	September 2029
Redrafting Stage and Consultation on Main Mods	October – December 2029
Inspector's Fact Checking Report	February 2030
Inspector's Final Report	April 2030
Adoption	June 2030
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Lead Organisation	Hartlepool Borough Council
Management arrangements	The Local Plan will be approved by Neighbourhood Services Committee during the various stages of consultation and ratified by full Council prior to adoption.
Resources Required	Primarily internal staffing resources with use of consultants if necessary for any special studies required.

Community and Stakeholder Involvement	In accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.
POST PRODUCTION / REVIEW	
<p>The effectiveness of the policies in the Local Plan will be assessed in the Authorities Monitoring Report. The Local Plan DPD may be amended in the following circumstances:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant review of the Community Strategy • A significant amendment to the Council's Corporate direction • Policies failing against the Monitoring Framework Associated with the Local Plan – this may trigger a partial update of a particular area of the plan or a full update. 	

4. MONITORING AND REVIEW OF THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS
 - 4.1 Monitoring and review are key aspects of the Government's "plan, monitor and manage" approach to planning and should be undertaken on a continuous basis.
 - 4.2 A requirement of the planning system is to produce an Authorities Monitoring Report to assess the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being met.
 - 4.3 The implementation of the Local Development Scheme is assessed in each AMR in terms of the extent to which the targets and key dates (milestones) for the preparation of local development documents have been met and to ensure the reasons for any failure to meet these are explained. Any adjustments required to the key milestones for document preparation will need to be incorporated in a subsequent review of the LDS.
 - 4.4 As a result of the assessment of policies, the AMR may highlight areas where policy coverage is insufficient or ineffective or where it does not accord with the latest national or regional policy. In this event it will suggest action that needs to be taken such as the early review of existing documents or preparation of new documents. As a consequence, the LDS will be amended to reflect such action to amend the LDF.

5. MANAGING THE DELIVERY PROCESS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENTS

- 5.1 The LDS has been drawn up having regard to resources (both staff and financial), council processes and an assessment of the likely interest of key stakeholders and the community. Nevertheless, there are risks that the timetables set out in this document may slip, for instance through legislation changes, staff shortages and/or council finances. The risks have been assessed in this respect but given the size of the authority and its resources not all can be readily overcome.

Staff Resources

- 5.2 The prime responsibility for delivering the LDF lies with a small Planning Policy team. This team has close working relationships with, and makes full use of the expertise and experience of colleagues throughout the council.
- 5.3 Full use will be made of consultants to provide independent specialist advice or to undertake necessary studies contributing to the information base necessary for the preparation of local development documents.
- 5.4 An in-house multi-disciplinary team having expertise in the various aspects of sustainable development will carry out the sustainability appraisals although consideration will also be given in this respect to the use of consultants if necessary.

Financial Resources

- 5.5 Resources will be allocated within the council's mainstream budget to cover the anticipated costs of work on local development documents. Provisional costs for future years will also be factored into the council's longer-term budget review.

Programme Management

- 5.6 The current arrangements for the management of the Development Plan production will continue. The Planning Policy team continually discuss the success of all LDF documents and report to senior management and Members as and when necessary.

Political Process

- 5.7 The planning system fully involves Members in the production and adoption of local development documents. Reports on planning documents are taken to the Neighbourhood Services Committee and Full Council as necessary and there are regular meetings with relevant Members such as The Leader and Committee chairs.

Risk Assessment and Contingencies

- 5.8 The programme for the preparation and production of the Local Plan set out in the LDS is based on a realistic assessment of the capacity of the council to undertake the work and of the extent and depth of the local community and stakeholder involvement and interest likely to be generated by each document. However, there are two main types of risk that could result in a failure to meet this programme. The first relates to resources (both human and financial) and the second to delays in the process primarily due to external factors.
- 5.9 The council has endeavoured to ensure that there will be sufficient financial resources made available within its budgetary framework. However, in view of

the relatively small size of the council and thus of its staff, the effect of, for example, redundancies as part of overall council budget cuts, long-term sickness, of officers obtaining employment elsewhere or of other unforeseen work coming forward, is significant. Should any of these instances occur, whilst every effort would be made to meet the deadlines set, some delay may occur.

- 5.10 Account has been taken of the political process relating to the approval of planning documents at the various stages of production. Whilst the council's formal scrutiny process provides an open forum for the consideration of issues, it is not possible to predict that Neighbourhood Services Committee recommendations will be endorsed at Full Council.
- 5.11 The potential for a delay due to the inability of the Planning Inspectorate to undertake the Examination of Development Plan Documents at the programmed time is minimised by the production of this Local Development Scheme and engagement with the Planning Inspectorate upon commencement of each Development Plan Document.
- 5.12 However, there are risks that adoption of a Development Plan Document could be delayed if the Examination Inspector finds that it is unsound and recommends major changes, or if the Secretary of State intervenes on the basis that it raises issues of national or regional significance. The council will therefore seek to ensure that the document is sound and conforms as necessary with national policy through close liaison with the Planning Inspectorate and the National Casework Office. The risk of a legal challenge to a document will be minimised by ensuring that it has been produced in accordance with the legislation.
- 5.13 There are also risks associated with changes to national planning policy and guidance or the introduction of new legislation which must be accounted for during the process.

6. REVIEW OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

- 6.1 The implementation of the LDS is assessed in each AMR in terms of the extent to which the targets and key dates (milestones) for the preparation of local development documents have been met and to ensure the reasons for any failure to meet these are explained. Any adjustments required to the key milestones for document preparation will need to be incorporated in a subsequent review of the local development scheme.
- 6.2 The Local Development Scheme can be readily reviewed when necessary. In particular it will need to be reviewed in the following circumstances:
- if monitoring establishes that an existing document should be reviewed.
 - slippage in the timetables caused by exceptional circumstances