

**Tamworth Borough Council
Local Development Scheme
2021-2024**

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1. Introduction

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) forms part of the Development Plan for Tamworth and sets out the Council's programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs) over a three-year period. The three-year programme includes informing the public and other stakeholders about opportunities to get involved with the plan-making process and to let them know the likely dates for involvement. The LDS is also required to set out a longer-term programme for document preparation beyond three years.

Preparation of the LDS is currently a mandatory requirement under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). Guidance on their preparation states that the LDS *"must specify (among other matters) the development plan documents (i.e. local plans) which, when prepared, will comprise part of the development plan for the area. Local planning authorities are encouraged to include details of other documents which form (or will form) part of the development plan for the area, such as Neighbourhood Plans. The Local Development Scheme must be made available publicly and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress. Local planning authorities should publish their Local Development Scheme on their website."*

2. Summary of current Local Development Documents

Development Plan Documents

The following documents are considered to be Development Plan Documents.

Tamworth Local Plan 2006-2031

The Tamworth Local Plan was adopted in February 2016 and, along with the proposals map, is the main document of Tamworth's development plan. It sets out the policies and guidance for new development in Tamworth. It sets out the vision and spatial planning strategy for Tamworth, it states the ambitions and principles to guide the future of the area up to 2031 and allocates parts of the town for new homes and employment land required to meet local needs. It also includes policies to ensure that appropriate supporting infrastructure is delivered and the area's built and natural environment is protected and enhanced. The Local Plan aims to be sufficiently flexible to adapt to the changing circumstances during its life.

Saved Policies of the Tamworth Local Plan 2001-2011

The majority of the policies contained within the Local Plan 2001-2011 have been superseded by the policies contained within the adopted Local Plan

2006-2031 with the exception of policy EMP7 Working from Home which remains in effect.

The Local Plan and saved policy applies to the whole of the borough.

Legislation introduced in 2018 requires local development documents to be reviewed every five years starting from the date of adoption, meaning a review of the Local Plan would be required by February 2021 in order to comply with the legislation. This review of the Local Plan is not the delivery of a new Local Plan, rather an assessment of the existing plan to determine if it is still fit for purpose or if a new Local Plan is required. A review (assessment) was undertaken in 2020 and it was determined that since the adoption of the Plan however, updates to national planning policy, a change in priorities at a local level and general implementation of policies has meant that an early preparation of a new Local Plan was considered appropriate.

The review concluded that, although the Plan is generally still in accordance with national policy and is performing relatively well, a number of changes would be required to ensure continued compliance with national policy and to reflect changes in local priorities. It was therefore determined that the level of changes required are significant enough to warrant the production of a new plan rather than a partial update to the existing Plan.

Work will shortly begin on a new Local Plan. An indicative timetable for work on the production of a new plan up to 2024 is set out later in this document.

Other Local Development Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents

The following documents are not considered to be Development Plan Documents but are nevertheless an important part of the development plan for Tamworth.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The SCI sets out standards and the approach to involving stakeholders and the community in the production of all Local Development Documents and the assessment of planning applications through the development management process. It is the Council's service level agreement with the community and stakeholders. The most recent SCI was adopted in November 2018 and a review of the document will be required by November 2023 at the latest.

The SCI applies to the whole of the borough.

The SCI will be kept under review to ensure it remains relevant and up to date and a full review of the SCI will take place by November 2023 at the latest.

In October 2020, as a result of the global COVID-19 pandemic, an addendum to the SCI was published setting out temporary changes to the way consultations are carried out as a result of social distancing measures. These temporary amendments will remain in place until such time as social distancing measures are lifted enough for them to be removed.

Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document

The latest Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted on 01 August 2018.

The document is intended to provide greater clarity and certainty to developers, landowners, the community and the Council by setting out how the Council will seek to collect contributions from developers to support the delivery of appropriate infrastructure in Tamworth.

However, the Government published the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) around the same time, and policies contained within that document affect the content of the SPD. Therefore a review of the SPD will be required within the timeframe of this LDS to ensure that it remains in compliance with national planning policy and guidance.

The document applies to the whole of the borough.

Design Supplementary Planning Document

The production of the Design SPD was included in the last LDS (2018 – 2021) and the document was adopted in July 2019.

The document sets out key guidelines to enhance the quality and distinctiveness of places when developing in Tamworth and seeks to raise the quality of the built environment, including the historic environment, and ensure that high standards of design are achieved throughout the borough. It also provides guidance to assist applicants in complying with the requirements of historic environment policies set out in the Local Plan and provides guidance on how the Council expects the historic environment to be taken into account in the development management process.

The document applies to the whole of the borough.

Periodic review of the document will be required to ensure it remains appropriate and up to date.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The CIL Charging Schedule came into effect on 01 August 2018 and sets out the various chargeable rates for development on which the levy is collected. The monies collected via the levy will be put towards the provision of infrastructure projects to support the delivery of Local Plan objectives. The CIL

is closely linked to the Planning Obligations SPD and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and applies to the whole of the borough with geographical exceptions applying to certain forms of development.

The CIL Charging Schedule should be subject to periodic review and this will take place as part of the wider process of delivering the new local plan. A period of consultation and an examination in public will be required before changes can be made the rates set out in the CIL Charging Schedule, however this is unlikely to be during the timeframe of this LDS.

3. New Local Development Documents

Development Plan Documents

During the timeframe covered by this LDS, it is not intended to produce any new DPDs, however work will commence on the production of a new Local Plan for Tamworth and this will include a number of stages of public consultation.

Setting out a future timetable is not straight forward as the time it takes to move from one stage to the next depends upon the amount and complexity of comments received during consultation and therefore the length of time it will take to process them. It is also possible that further evidence will need to be gathered which could cause later stages to be delayed.

The indicative timetable set out in Appendix A takes into account the best information available at this time and reflects lead in times to obtain consents and approvals to move between different stages of the local plan development process. Further changes may need to be made to the timetable once the first stage of consultation has been completed.

Other Local Development Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents

It is not currently proposed to produce any new LDDs or SPDs during the period covered by the LDS, however the existing Design SPD and Planning Obligations SPD will be kept under periodic review and may require amendments that necessitate a period of public consultation.

4. Joint working/duty to cooperate

It is the Councils intention to continue to engage with both Lichfield and North Warwickshire to address any issues that cannot be dealt with within the

borough. The three local authorities have already committed to co-operate on strategic planning issues to deliver the unmet housing and employment needs identified in the adopted Tamworth Local Plan through a statement of common ground. Where it is expedient and cost effective to do so, the Council will work with the neighbouring councils and relevant bodies within the region, to collect evidence to support the development of a new local plan.

The Council is also a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority and so will be required to collaborate with other members of the Combined Authority on issues which could affect the wider Combined Authority area, such as a strategic review of Green Belt land.

5. Resources

The following in-house resources will be made available for preparing local development documents:

Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration	5%
Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader	80%
Planning Policy and Delivery Officer	90%
Monitoring and Information Officer	70%
Development management Service team	Input at key consultation stages

Due to the small size of the existing Planning Policy and Delivery team, there is currently limited capacity within the team to carry out the local plan development work alongside other commitments and there is no capacity to deal with any unexpected absences. There will therefore be a need to explore options for temporarily increasing the size of the team to meet demand and be more resilient.

Consultants will also need to be engaged on specific projects where there is a requirement for specialist skills or knowledge.

There is a budget identified for the development of a new local plan of £50,000 for 2021/22 and £10,000 per year up to 2025/26. Due to the work commencing later than expected, there remains approximately £211,969 held in a retained fund from previous years that can be used to supplement the existing budget.

The budget setting process for 2024/25 and beyond will need to include appropriate consideration of resources to deliver the revised work programme beyond the end of 2024 (that set out in the draft LDS) and may result in the need for a policy change.

8. Programme Management and Responsibilities

Management responsibilities for each area of work include:

Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration (programme overview)

Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader (day to day programme staff & resource management).

The LDS and preparation of LDDs is reported to the Corporate Management Team meetings as appropriate.

Regular meetings are held between the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration and the Planning Policy and Delivery Team Leader to ensure lines of communication are working and to review progress. E-mail and shared work directories are used to facilitate joint working and link all officers engaged on the project and a Development Plan Team meeting is held on a regular basis.

9. Council Procedures and Reporting Protocols

The Council's procedures and reporting protocols are set out in the Tamworth Borough Council Constitution which is updated periodically and is available to view on the Council's website.

10. Risk Assessment

In preparing the Local Development Scheme, it is considered that the main areas of risk relate to:

Staff resources

Having regard to the current staff levels there is a risk to the delivery of the work programme set out in the LDS should the Council be unable to recruit appropriately qualified/experienced staff or where existing staff leave or there is a prolonged absence. The Council has established good working relationships over the years with specialist consultants who have an understanding of the town but their support is subject to available budget allocations and procurement processes. As set out in the resources section above, consideration will need to be given to temporarily expanding the team to increase both capacity and resilience.

Political conflicts

In an effort to reduce any potential conflict a cross-party working group has been established to seek early input from members and to guide the development of Development Plan documents including the new Local Plan.

Capacity of PINS and other agencies to cope with demand nation-wide

Lack of availability of the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) or any other outside agency required to have input into the delivery of any aspects of the work

programme has the potential to cause delays. This is not something which the Council can influence, however early warning will be given to PINS of any part of the work programme which is required to go through an examination.

Legal challenge

The risk of legal challenge will be minimised by ensuring that DPDs are “sound” and founded on a robust evidence base and well-audited stakeholder & community engagement systems.

Programme slippage

This will be affected if resources are not secured or they are reduced. Slippage of any planned part of the programme could have a knock-on effect on later parts of the programme. The programme attempts to ensure that the key milestones are not affected should there be a need to put contingency arrangements in place.

Changes to relevant legislation and guidance

Between August and October 2020 the Government consulted on proposals for reforms to the planning system that would see a number of significant changes made to the way local plans are prepared. Responses to the consultation exercise are currently being reviewed by the Government and an announcement on which, if any, of the proposals will be taken forward is expected later in 2021.

Provided that any announcement comes before the end of 2021, and subject to any transitional arrangements, the impact on the work programme may not be significant owing to the fact that the new local plan development is still at an early stage. There is however potential for delay and/or changes to the work programme. The programme will therefore be reviewed and updated if necessary following any announcement.

Appendix A – Indicative Timetable

Document	Preparation Stage	LDS Target Date
New Local Plan	Issues & Options consultation	Spring 2022
	Preferred Option Consultation (non-statutory stage)	Early 2023
	Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) consultation	Late 2023/Early 2024
	Submission	Late 2024
Obligations Supplementary Planning Document	Update	Subject to the outcome of a review
Design Supplementary Planning Document	Update	Subject to the outcome of a review
Statement of Community Involvement	Review	By November 2023