

Tamworth Borough Council
Local Development Scheme 2022-2025
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1. Introduction

This Local Development Scheme (LDS) forms part of the Development Plan for Tamworth and sets out our programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents (LDDs) between 2022 and 2025. The purpose of this document is to let you know about our progress with the plan-making process and upcoming opportunities to get involved.

Producing an LDS is currently a requirement under the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). Guidance on their preparation states that the LDS should specify the development plan documents, and other documents, which will be part of the development plan for the area. The LDS should be kept up to date, so that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress, and should be published on the Council's website.

2. Summary of current Local Development Documents

Development Plan Documents

The following documents are considered to be Development Plan Documents.

Tamworth Borough Council Local Plan 2006-2031

The 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 that help to shape new development in Tamworth up to 2031 and allocates parts of the town for new homes and employment land required to meet local needs.

Saved Policies of the Tamworth Local Plan 2001-2011

The majority of the policies in the old local plan (Local Plan 2001-2011) have been superseded by the policies contained within the current local plan (2006-2031) with the exception of policy EMP7 Working from Home which remains in effect.

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

A review of the local plan was undertaken in 2020 and it was determined that, although the plan is generally still in accordance with national policy and is performing relatively well, some changes would be needed to make sure it continues to comply with national policy and to reflect changes in local priorities. It was therefore determined that the level of changes required were significant enough to warrant producing a new plan rather than a partial update to the existing Plan.

Work has begun on a new local plan and an indicative timetable for work on that plan up to 2025 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 still an important part of the development plan for Tamworth.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

The SCI sets out our approach to involving the community and other stakeholders in producing Local Development Documents and assessing planning applications.

The SCI must be reviewed at least every five years. The previous version was published in November 2018 and 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.

Although it has been less than five years since the previous version was published, we have recently reviewed and updated the document in advance of consulting on the first stage of a new local plan. The latest version was published in September 2022.

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.

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 we 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 may 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.

An updated version of the document will be included as part of the work to develop the new local plan, but the document will be kept under review in case an earlier update is needed.

Design Supplementary Planning Document

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

The document sets out key guidelines to be followed when developing in Tamworth and seeks to raise the quality of the built environment (including the historic environment) by ensuring that high standards of design are achieved. 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.

An updated version of the document will be included as part of the work to develop the new local plan, but the document will be kept under review in case an earlier update is needed.

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. Money collected through the levy will contribute to the costs of infrastructure projects to support the development of Tamworth. 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, and this is likely to happen at a similar time to the examination of the new local plan.

3. New Local Development Documents

Development Plan Documents

During the timeframe covered by this LDS, we don't intend to produce any new DPDs, however work will continue 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 straightforward as the time it takes to move from one stage to the next depends upon the number and type of comments received during consultation and how long it takes 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 in Appendix A is based on the best information available at this time and will be updated at a later date if more up to date information becomes available.

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 review and may require some changes that could trigger 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 councils to address any issues that can't 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 local plan through a statement of common ground.

Where there are opportunities to work with the neighbouring councils (or other relevant bodies, such as Staffordshire County Council and Warwickshire County Council) to collect evidence to support the new local plan, we'll look to take them, especially where it would save money.

The Council is also a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority and so will be required to work with other members of the Combined Authority on issues which could affect the wider Combined Authority area.

5. Resources

The main resource required to deliver the work programme is officer time. The following table sets out the proportion of their time that the existing officers will contribute towards delivering the programme.

Officer Role	% of officer time
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 as required

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 £10,000 per year for the period covered by this LDS. Due to the work commencing later than expected, there remains £244,159 held in a retained fund from previous years that will be used to supplement the existing budget.

The budget setting process for 2025/26 and beyond will need to include appropriate consideration of resources required to deliver the later stages of the local plan, including the examination in public. The costs associated with an examination are not easy to estimate at this point because they will depend on the complexity of the issues raised during the process.

8. Programme Management and Responsibilities

Management responsibilities for all areas of work are:

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 project 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 online at <https://democracy.tamworth.gov.uk/ecCatDisplayClassic.aspx?sch=doc&cat=13229&path=0>.

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.

The impact of local elections and the associated purdah period has already caused delays in the programme up to this point. The overall programme should remain unaffected, but the time between stages has been affected. The indicative timetable included in Appendix A has been updated to take account of this.

Changes to relevant legislation and guidance

The Government have announced a number of proposals that may have an impact on the contents of local plans and how they are prepared. At this point, it is too early to say exactly what impact this may have on the planned programme, because the timeframe for implementation of any changes and any transitional arrangements are not currently known. There is however significant potential for delay and/or changes to the work programme. Any changes will be reflected in a future update to the LDS if required.

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Appendix A – Indicative Timetable

Document	Preparation Stage	LDS Target Date
New Local Plan	Issues & Options consultation	September 2022
	Preferred Option Consultation (non-statutory stage)	Early 2024
	Pre-Submission (Regulation 19) consultation	Early 2025
	Submission to PINS	Late 2025
Obligations Supplementary Planning Document	Update	As required, by early 2025 at the latest
Design Supplementary Planning Document	Update	As required, by early 2025 at the latest
Statement of Community Involvement	Review/update	As required, by August 2027 at the latest