



Report to: Cabinet Meeting - 10 December 2024

Portfolio Holders: Councillor Claire Penny, Sustainable Economic Growth

Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director - Planning & Growth

Lead Officer: Matthew Norton, Business Manager - Planning Policy & Infrastructure, Ext. 5852

Report Summary	
Type of report	Open Report, Key Decision
Report Title	New Local Plan for Newark & Sherwood
Purpose of Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To update Cabinet on progress on the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD. • To set out the proposals in relation to the development of a new Local Plan for Newark & Sherwood. • To propose amendments to the Local Development Scheme to reflect these.
Recommendations	<p>That Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) note the report; b) agree to bring preparation of a new Local Plan for Newark & Sherwood; and c) adopt amendments to the Local Development Scheme as set in Section 2 of this report and Appendix A, to come into force on 17 December 2024.
Alternative Options Considered	The Inspectorate has requested that the Council confirm its position on Plan Review, therefore in order to meet these requirements it is necessary to review the Local Development Scheme.
Reasons for Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) To allow Cabinet to note progress on the Plan Review. b) To agree to begin preparation of a new Local Plan for Newark & Sherwood so that the Council can demonstrate to the Planning Inspector that it is committed to producing one. c) To allow the Council to publish an amendment to the timetable so that the Local Development Scheme can be updated to

	comply with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and appropriate regulations.
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1.0 Background

1.1 The Council's Development Plan provides direction for future growth of Newark & Sherwood, including making allocations for new housing employment and community facilities and sets out the planning policies which the Council uses to determine planning applications. Our Development Plan is made up of two parts:

- Amended Core Strategy
- Allocations & Development Management Development Plan Document (DPD)

1.2 The Council has been going through a process of reviewing these documents known as the Plan Review. The Core Strategy has already been updated and the Amended Core Strategy was adopted in 2019. Since then the Council has been updating its Allocations & Development DPD focusing on the following four elements:

- 1) Ensuring that the housing, employment, retail allocations continue to be deliverable and that any settlement specific planning policy issues continue to be appropriately addressed.
- 2) Ensuring that the Development Management policies are in line with the Amended Core Strategy and the latest national planning policy.
- 3) Updating housing policies contained in the Amended Core Strategy to reflect the latest Housing Needs Assessment and national planning policy
- 4) The development of a strategy to deliver enough sites and pitches to meet the future needs of our Gypsy, Roma, Traveller (GRT) communities.

1.3 Work on the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD (*hereafter referred to as the DPD*) has gone through the various statutory stages culminating in the examination of the Draft DPD by a Planning Inspector. The formal examination process is currently in progress, hearing sessions have been held and the Inspector has now indicated that he may have questions on particular matters, where no one wished to speak, by way of written representations.

1.4 Since the DPD was submitted the Amended Core Strategy has reached the fifth anniversary of its adoption and national policy requires the authority to consider if the plan is up to date. Given that current housing target within the Amended Core Strategy is 454 dwellings per annum and the local housing need target is 437 it is considered that it remains up to date. At the Examination Hearing it was discussed that given the anniversary the Council needs to update the DPD to reflect the age of the Amended Core Strategy and the need to do a review. The DPD already has a section on reviewing the various elements of the development plan, but this now needs to be strengthened, and the Council needs to formally commit to producing a new replacement Local Plan along with a timetable of production agreed.

1.5 The issue with preparing a timetable is that the Government is preparing to introduce the new system of plan making which was included within the Levelling Up and

Regeneration Act. The intention is that the regulations and guidance will be introduced in the summer/autumn 2025. We would be able to formally prepare the plan under the new regulations and guidance until this was undertaken. The Government have also set out that transitional arrangements will exist for plans prepared under the current regulations. This is the 31 December 2026.

- 1.6 This means that if we were to prepare the plan under the current regulations, we would have two years to complete a comprehensive review of the plan. This is particularly challenging as we will need to find significant numbers of new sites for housing across the District – with the proposed new housing figures consulted alongside the NPPF requiring 730 dwellings per annum (these figures are not yet finalised and the current DPD is not being examined against the draft figure). Therefore, there are time constraints on either option for preparing a review.

2.0 Proposed Timetable for a New Local Plan

- 2.1 It is proposed therefore to prepare two timetables for review committing the Council to prepare a review as quickly as is possible. Both timetables are based on assumptions and therefore present risk, but it is considered that whilst the systems may be different the overall task of preparing a plan for the district means that preparation work undertaken will not be wasted. The proposed approaches are:

- **Timetable 1** - a local plan under the current regulations starting in the new year. This assumes that because of the amount of work required for the new regulations and guidance to be produced that the transitional arrangement will be extended for a further period of time allowing a current regulation plan to be developed. If the Government stick to their announced approach, then any work completed next year will inform a document developed under timetable 2 below.
- **Timetable 2** – a Local Plan under the new regulations. For this purpose, we have assumed that the proposed approach consulted upon last year will be carried forward by the current Government as it has indicated that this will be the case in the summer 2024 NPPF consultation.

- 2.2 A timetable under the current regulations would follow a similar pattern as the previous DPDs that we have produced and is set in table 1 below:

Table 1

Timetable 1 Local Plan under current arrangements	
Issues & Options	October/November 2025
Draft Local Plan	September/October 2026
Pre-submission Local Plan	March/April 2027
Submission	June 2027
Examination Process	June 2027 – December 2027
Adoption	January 2028*

* Based on the new Plan Making regime being delayed and the transitional arrangements being in place for an additional 6 months (i.e. cut of in June 2027 not December 2026)

If the new regulations come into effect in summer – autumn 2025 we can use the proposed Issues & Options consultation as a way of launching a plan under the new system.

2.3 A timetable under the new system would follow the process set out in the diagram overleaf:



This translates to the following timetable in table 2 below:

Table 2

Timetable 2 Local Plan under new regulations	
4 Month Notice of Plan Making	
Scoping & Early Participation	September – December 2025
23 Months Preparation	
Gateway 1	January 2026
8 Week Public Consultation – Plan Vision and Strategy	Spring/Summer 2026
Gateway 2	December 2026
6 Week Consultation on Draft Plan	April/May 2027

Gateway 3	November 2027
6 Month Examination Process	December 2027 – May 2028
Adoption	June 2028

- 2.4 It should be noted that the previous government had suggested that it would only allow 25 authorities to start the new plan process immediately, however it present it is not known if this remains the case and in any event Newark & Sherwood could well become one of the 25 authorities.
- 2.5 Initial production work will include ‘calling for sites’ (i.e. asking developers and landowners to put forward potential site for development) commissioning evidence base studies to support plan making and doing initial engagement with stakeholders and communities about the new plan.
- 2.6 It is proposed that both timetables are included within an updated Local Development Scheme which is attached at **Appendix A**. It is proposed that the new Local Development Scheme will come into force on the 17th December 2024. The preparation of a new Local Plan will require significant resources, both officer and member time and the support of external consultants. At present it is hard to estimate total costs and officers will need to commission studies for various elements for example a strategic flood risk assessment and a transport study. The Council has a budget for Plan production and there is a Planning Cost Reserve which may need to be used. Officer will prepare future reports to Cabinet setting out these costs when there is more certainty.

3.0 Implications

In writing this report and in putting forward recommendations officers have considered the following implications; Data Protection, Digital and Cyber Security, Equality and Diversity, Financial, Human Resources, Human Rights, Legal, Safeguarding, Sustainability, and Crime and Disorder and where appropriate they have made reference to these implications and added suitable expert comment where appropriate.

Financial Implications - FIN24-25/8102

- 3.1 There are significant financial resources involved in developing an evidence base to support a new local plan. Some elements of this can be undertaken by the Planning Policy Business Unit and colleagues within the Council, however a significant level will need to be undertaken by external consultants. The proposed budget for 2025/26 allows for £60,000 of spend however some Inspectorate costs for the current Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD could be included within this. It is likely that some elements of the review may have to be funded from the Planning Cost Reserve although its exact levels will not be known until detailed procurement has been undertaken. At present, the Planning Cost Reserve holds available funds of £119,940 to which, after the procurement, a commitment would be sought at a further Cabinet meeting.

Equality & Diversity Implications

- 3.2 An Integrated Impact Assessment is being prepared alongside the Plan Review process to ensure that the impact on groups with protected characteristics of the proposals are considered as part of the policy making process. It is clearly extremely important that housing provision in line with identified need is identified for the Gypsy and Traveller community.

In developing a new Local Plan for the District consideration of equalities will be undertaken as part of policy development work and the equality elements of the Integrated Impact Assessment. It will be important to ensure that access to the consultation process is as open as possible given those who have limited or no digital access.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Newark & Sherwood Local Development Scheme July 2023