

Report to: Cabinet Meeting: 15 September 2026

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Claire Penny - Sustainable Economic Development

Director Lead: Matt Lamb, Director – Planning & Growth

Lead Officers: Matthew Norton, Assistant Director of Planning & Economy
Matthew Tubb, Planning Policy Team Leader

Report Summary	
Type of Report	Open Report/Key Decision
Report Title	Newark & Sherwood Local Plan – Gateway 1
Purpose of Report	• To update Cabinet on progress towards meeting the Council's Local Plan timetable. • To seek approval for the various delegated authorities required to progress the Local Plan in line with the agreed timetable. • To seek approval to progress through gateway 1 and publish the Gateway 1 self-assessment and Scoping Consultation summary.
Recommendations	That Cabinet agree: a) the proposed decision-making arrangements for the New Local Plan set out in Table 1, including delegated authority to the Portfolio holder where specified; b) to progress through gateway 1 and commence the 30-month programme for preparing the New Local Plan; and c) to publish the Gateway 1 self-assessment findings and the Scoping Consultation summary.
Alternative Options Considered	If all Local Plan decisions were required to be taken by Cabinet, progress would be unlikely to align with the Government's requirement to prepare a Local Plan within 30 months. Progressing through Gateway 1 will commence the 30-month plan-making process in accordance with the Council's published Local Plan timetable.
Reason for Recommendations	To enable progression through Gateway 1 and support delivery of the new Local Plan within the 30-month programme.

1.0 **Background**

- 1.1 On 31 March 2026, the District Council gave notice of its intention to prepare a new Local Plan under the new plan-making system. A timetable was published alongside the notice, setting out the key stages of the process. The new system is structured around three Gateways: Gateway 1 requires self-assessment by the Council, while Gateways 2 and 3 involve the Planning Inspectorate. Subject to passing through Gateway 1, the Council will commence a 30-month plan-making programme.
- 1.2 Key milestones (Gateways denoted in bold) include:
- Scoping Consultation (1 July – 31 July 2026)
 - **Gateway 1 (1 September 2026)**
 - Public Consultation on the Proposed Plan Content and Evidence (1 June -28 July 2027)
 - **Gateway 2 (16 November 2027)**
 - Public Consultation on the Proposed Local Plan (3 March – 12 April 2028)
 - **Gateway 3 (1 July 2028)**
 - Public Examination of the Proposed Local Plan (4 September 2028 – 5 March 2029)
 - Adoption (2 April 2029)
- 1.3 The timetable extends beyond the life of this Council, with responsibility for the new Local Plan to transfer to the successor local authority after 1 April 2028. Under the current timetable this would occur after publication of the Proposed Local Plan in March 2028.
- 1.4 In accordance with the timetable, a Scoping Consultation was undertaken during July, resulting in 88 responses. The consultation sought early views on the key issues facing the District, the matters the Local Plan should address, and how stakeholders (including Town and Parish Councils, residents, developers and landowners etc) wish to be consulted. An approach to engagement was set out and this will be formalised into an Engagement Strategy following Gateway 1.
- 1.5 The Scoping Consultation forms part of the pre-plan-making stage and therefore sits outside the formal 30-month plan-making process. The responses received are currently being reviewed and, in accordance with the regulations, a consultation summary will be published once Gateway 1 has been passed. The timetable anticipates publication of the summary in October, and this report seeks approval for its publication once complete.
- 1.6 Gateway 1 is therefore the next milestone in the process, enabling the Council to commence the formal programme for production of the new Local Plan.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The Council may progress through Gateway 1 following publication of a Local Plan timetable, the provision of at least four months' notice of plan-making, and completion of a scoping consultation.
- 2.2 In addition to these requirements, the Council must publish a self-assessment summary. This records the preparatory work undertaken for Gateway 1 and identifies activities that will continue to be developed throughout the plan-making process, including project management arrangements, baseline information gathering, early work on the draft Local Plan vision, land availability assessment and evidence gathering.
- 2.3 The draft self-assessment summary is attached at Appendix A. It confirms that the Council has taken the necessary preparatory steps to support production of the new Local Plan within the Government's 30-month timeframe. These include publication of the timetable, early scoping consultation, establishment of governance and project management arrangements, and commencement of evidence and environmental assessment work.
- 2.4 To inform the Council's understanding of land availability, the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment is being progressed. Three rounds of the Call for Sites have been undertaken, the most recent of which coincided with the Scoping Consultation, and initial assessments of submitted sites are now underway.
- 2.5 The principal risks to the programme are well understood and include the challenging 30-month timeframe, securing an up-to-date and proportionate evidence base, managing environmental assessment requirements and responding to the potential implications of local government reorganisation during the plan-making process.
- 2.6 These risks are being managed through a realistic timetable and consideration of the budgetary and resource implications of the 30-month programme. Early engagement has been undertaken through the scoping consultation, and a clear programme is in place to secure the timely commissioning of specialist evidence and assessment work, including Strategic Environmental Assessment, to support preparation of the Local Plan.
- 2.7 Once established, engagement with the shadow authority will be undertaken to support continuity of plan preparation during reorganisation.
- 2.8 Notwithstanding these measures, suitable governance arrangements will need to be put in place to support effective and efficient decision-making within a challenging programme, while ensuring appropriate oversight is maintained at key stages of the process. This will require clear decision-making responsibilities and appropriate use of delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder to maintain progress against the published timetable.

- 2.9 Accordingly, the following approach to decision-making on the new Local Plan is proposed.

Table 1 Proposed Decision-Making Arrangements

Decision-Making	Proposed Method
The Local Plan timetable should be reviewed on a monthly basis.	Given the requirement to quickly update the timetable it is proposed that Cabinet give delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder to be able to update the timetable This will be published in the usual way and reported to the next available Planning Policy Board
Publish Gateway 1 findings	Cabinet Approval (15 September 2026)
Publish the Summary of the Scoping Consultation	Cabinet Approval (15 September 2026)
Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) – Draft Findings Winter 2026/27 The SHELAA is a technical assessment of land potentially available for development. Ahead of consultation on the Local Plan next summer, it is proposed that submitted sites are made publicly available to view.	A two staged approach is proposed. Ward members will be invited to provide feedback on technical issues, identified through their local knowledge. This input will then be considered by officers. It should be emphasised that the SHELAA will not determine site selection decisions. Given the technical nature of the SHELAA the proposed approach for approval to publish will be; a) Members will be provided with details of all sites in their wards to allow them to feedback on issues they believe exist. This feedback together with the assessment findings will be presented to the Planning Policy Board for consideration and endorsement. b) Subject to delegated authority being granted, the Portfolio Holder would then approve publication of the Draft SHELAA results.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report Consultation The SEA will provide an assessment of the significant effects of the new Local Plan on the environment, helping to ensure that these considerations are integrated into the plan-making process. Consultation on the Scoping Report will help establish the environmental baseline, identify relevant sustainability issues, and set the framework for assessing the likely significant effects of the emerging Local Plan.	It is proposed that Cabinet give delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Planning Policy Board to publish the SEA Scoping Report for consultation.
Proposed Local Plan content and evidence base consultation Public consultation on plan proposals and evidence base results	Cabinet Approval following consultation with all members through the Planning Policy Board.
Proposed Local Plan Consultation Public consultation on the Proposed Local Plan (i.e. the Draft Local Plan)	Full Council Approval following consideration by Cabinet and the Planning Policy Board.

- 2.10 Subject to approval of the decision-making arrangements set out above, the Council can be confident that the necessary preparatory work, governance and project management arrangements are in place to proceed through Gateway 1. This will establish the foundations required to progress the new Local Plan within the 30-month plan-making programme.

3.0 Implications

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

Implications Considered			
Yes – relevant and included / NA – not applicable			
Financial	Y	Equality & Diversity	n/a
Human Resources	n/a	Human Rights	n/a
Legal	Y	Data Protection	n/a
Digital & Cyber Security	n/a	Safeguarding	n/a
Sustainability	Y	Crime & Disorder	n/a
LGR	Y	Tenant Consultation	n/a

Financial implications FIN26-27/2255

- 3.1 In April 2026, the Council received £108,474.57 from the MHCLG Local Plan Implementation Funding programme. This funding will be used to provide additional capacity within the Planning Policy and Infrastructure Service for a two-year period to support delivery of the new Local Plan.
- 3.2 The Planning Policy and Infrastructure Service has an existing budget to support the commissioning of evidence base work and environmental assessment and other Local Plan activity.
- 3.3 Any additional budget pressures in the future will be considered through the Council's budget-setting process.

Legal Implications - LEG2627/8249

- 3.4 Once adopted the New Local Plan will provide the statutory Development Plan for the District. The statutory requirements have been identified throughout the report and the necessity to adhere to the planning making timetable.

Sustainability Implications

- 3.5 The new Local Plan will provide the framework for delivering sustainable development across the District, supported by Strategic Environmental Assessment. The plan-making process will ensure that environmental, social and economic considerations are embedded in the plan.

Local Government Reorganisation

- 3.6 Government has been clear that councils should continue to prepare Local Plans notwithstanding local government reorganisation. Any order establishing a new authority will provide that the adopted Development Plan continues to apply to the part of the area it covers.
- 3.7 Based on the current timetable for the new Local Plan, this would comprise the Amended Core Strategy, the Amended Allocations & Development Management DPD, subject to adoption, 'made' Neighbourhood Plans, and the Nottinghamshire Minerals and Waste Local Plans. The order is also expected to set a deadline for preparing a new development plan covering the whole area, which has typically been five years from vesting day.
- 3.8 The successor Local Authority would assume responsibility for the new Local Plan following Public Consultation on the Proposed Local Plan in March 2028. Once established, engagement with the shadow authority is proposed to support continuity of plan preparation during reorganisation.

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.

[New Local Plan Timetable](#)
[Scoping Consultation](#)