

Local Development Scheme

March 2025

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local planning authorities to publish and maintain a Local Development Scheme which identifies the development plan documents that it intends to produce and sets out a timetable for their production.
- 1.2 A review of the LDS is warranted by the need to set out a revised programme for Local Plan preparation in light of the government's revisions to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and standard method housing figure.
- 1.3 In addition to the usual requirements, the government has required that all LPAs produce a new LDS and submit it to them by the 6th March 2025. They set out that the updated LDS should include clear, realistic, and specific dates for consultation and submission of the local plan.
- 1.4 The Scheme reflects the need to respond at the local level to the need for housing and other growth in the county over the next 20 years and possibly beyond – taking into account the Council's various other strategies, including the [County Plan 2024-2028](#), which has just completed a consultation. The County Plan is a high-level document developed by the Council to address key strategic issues across the county. It outlines the ambitions and objectives over the next four years and highlights how those ambitions will be delivered. The Local Plan must align with the broader strategic policies of the County Plan to ensure coordinated development across the county.
- 1.5 Herefordshire's LDS has been revised several times as the council has kept its plans under review. The latest previous version was in February 2024. This document is regularly reviewed in order to keep it up to date and to maintain a 3 year forward programme of work. This LDS will cover the 2025 – 2028 period.

What is in the Local Development Scheme?

- 1.6 The Local Development Scheme lists the suite of documents that make up the Herefordshire Development Plan. Each listing includes an explanation of the document's subject matter, where it fits into the Local Plan structure and indicative timescales for its development.

National, regional and local context

- 1.7 The national context has changed following the update of the NPPF in December 2024, and subsequent Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Online continuous updates are being made to the PPG since the publication of the NPPF. The Localism Act introduced a series of measures for statutory planning at the local level. In Herefordshire this gives parish and town councils plan making powers.
- 1.8 The Marches Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) was set up to address economic issues at a wider than local level. This body was made up of Herefordshire, Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Councils along with various business interests. However, it has now ceased

trading and transferred all its functions to Shropshire Council working with Telford & Wrekin Council and Herefordshire Council, in line with the UK Government's plans for devolution. The LEP published a [Strategic Economic Plan \(SEP\) and evidence](#) for the Marches region, which was renewed in 2023, and this represents the most recent growth strategy for the areas covered by the councils

- 1.9 With respect to minerals and waste planning; two former regional bodies, namely the West Midlands Aggregates Working Party and the West Midlands Resource Technical Advisory Body, are continuing to meet, providing "larger than local" advice and monitoring for minerals and waste planning authorities respectively.
- 1.10 Herefordshire Local Nature Partnership is also a body that has government recognition. Its role is to strengthen local action, enable local leadership, raise awareness about the services and benefits of a healthy natural environment and contribute to the green economy, in particular by complementing the work of the LEP. The Council is currently seeking views on the Herefordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The purpose of the LNRS is to draw together existing information on the current state of nature and the environment within Herefordshire and to work with local partners to develop and agree a strategy that explains the approach, the goals and intended outcomes. This strategy will contribute to the Local Plan.
- 1.11 At the local level, the Local Plan must reflect and integrate with other council (and other public sector) plans and strategies including the **County Plan, Local Transport Plan** and [Big Economic Plan](#). The Local Transport Plan is a statutory document required by the Department for Transport for maintaining and improving all aspects of local transport. It is not part of the Development Plan for Herefordshire, but it will be strongly aligned with the Local Plan. The LTP is being developed with the County's new growth targets. The aim is to adopt the LTP by Autumn 2025.
- 1.12 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a tier of plan-making opportunities for parish councils, who can prepare Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs), Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. Herefordshire enjoys a high take-up rate of Neighbourhood Planning. The Council has taken a proactive approach to neighbourhood planning, and reference is made to the production of NDPs within this LDS. Within Herefordshire, only town and parish councils are the responsible bodies for producing NDPs.
- 1.13 Any NDP must be in general conformity with Herefordshire Core Strategy and, when adopted, will form part of the Local Plan. The additional measures within the Localism Act; Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders will, if approved, have the effect of granting planning permission for development.

2.0 The Local Plan

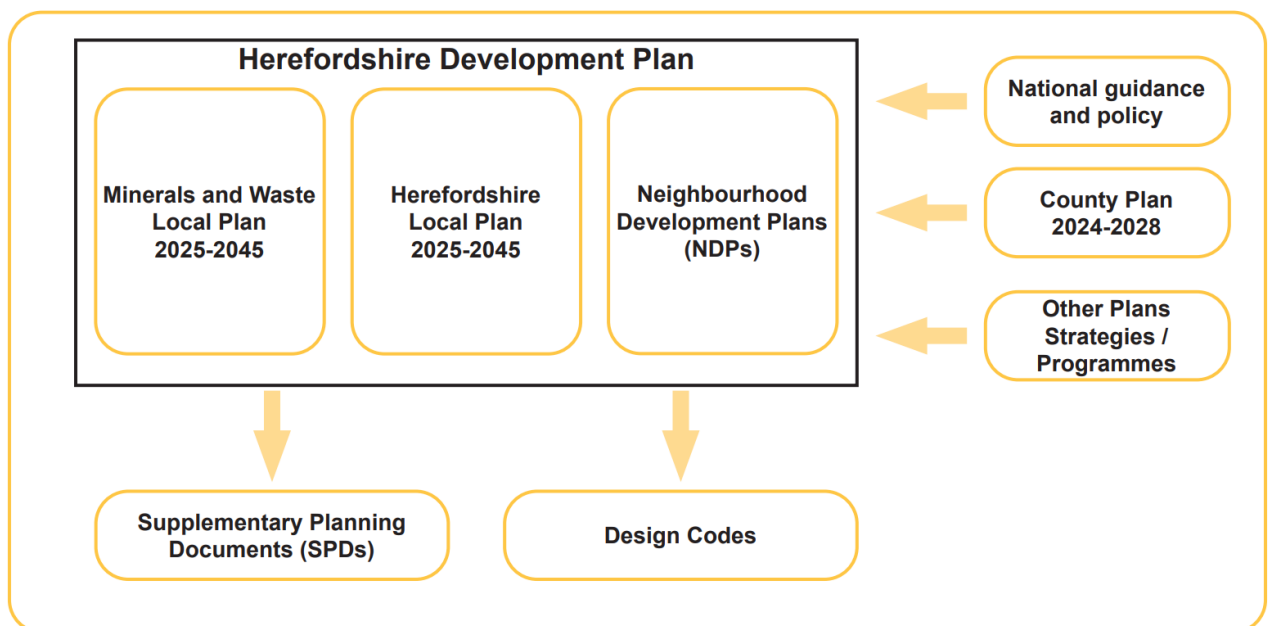
- 2.1 The current adopted Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy was adopted in October 2015 and outlines the overarching strategic proposals and planning policies for the county, to be delivered by the Local Plan up to 2031. Paragraph 34 of the NPPF requires Local Plans to be reviewed every 5 years, which is currently underway.
- 2.2 Three other planning policy documents were being prepared as part of the Local Plan in line with the existing Core Strategy. These comprised of:

- Hereford Area Plan (HAP) – policies and strategic proposals relating more specifically to the city of Hereford and surrounding.
- Rural Areas Site Allocations Development Plan Document (RASADPD) – strategic site allocations and development boundaries for rural growth settlements listed in the Core Strategy that are not producing NDPs, to deliver proportional housing growth targets.
- Bromyard Development Plan – policies and strategic proposals relating more specifically to the market town of Bromyard.

2.3 The preparation of these documents was discontinued, as they were being produced to comply with the policies of the existing Core Strategy and will therefore be out of date.

2.4 The structure of the Local Plan and the relationships between the documents that it comprises of, with other Council strategies and with associated non-policy documents are explained in the below diagram.

Figure 1.1: A diagram setting out the structure and relationships between the documents that form Herefordshire's Local Plan



2.5 This Local Development Scheme, Statement of Community Involvement and Authority Monitoring Reports do not contain any policies, but they are part of the package of documents that form the Local Plan.

2.6 A feature of the planning system is the need for **sustainability appraisal** (SA) and **habitats regulations assessment** (HRA) in respect of development plan documents. Neighbourhood development plans do not require sustainability appraisals but will require an environmental statement to show that the sustainability objectives in the NPPF have been met. Depending on the circumstances, they may require a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) and/or a habitats regulation assessment (HRA).

Evidence Base

- 2.7 There will be a need to develop a substantial evidence base covering a comprehensive list of topics which will inform an emerging new Local Plan. They should include but is not limited to studies of economic viability, housing, employment, transport, open space, green infrastructure, water studies, minerals and waste, gypsies and travellers, and a variety of landscape and heritage documentation.

3.0 Schedule of Documents

Below are details of the documents that form the Local Plan, and the indicative timescales for their development.

Local Plan review

- 3.1 The existing Core Strategy (2011-2031) was adopted in 2015 and has, in line with national policy, been reviewed following 5 years. The review concluded that a comprehensive revision to the Core Strategy was required at the time.
- 3.2 The Regulation 18 Draft Herefordshire Local Plan 2021-2041 conducted a public consultation between March and May 2024. Following the update to the NPPF and the mandatory housing targets published in December 2024, the council made a decision to cease any further work on the Draft Regulation 18 Local Plan as a new spatial strategy is required to address the significant uplift in housing growth. The Council is therefore progressing the Local Plan under the Levelling up and Regeneration Act (LURA) 2023 System. The following indicative stages and timetable are based on the preparation stages set out in the previous Governments planning reform consultation, 2023. The timetable will be updated once further details of the new plan-making process are published by the current Government.
- 3.3 The new Local Plan will set out the overarching objectives, spatial development strategy and strategic proposals for the county over the period from 2025-2045.
- 3.4 The Local Plan revision will include:
- A vision for Herefordshire at 2045
 - A set of objectives to deliver that vision
 - A strategy which explains the approach to all development in the county
 - Strategic policies that set out requirements for how development must be delivered across the whole county and
 - Place shaping policies which are specific to development for Hereford, for the market towns and in the rural areas.
 - The Local Plan is likely to include National Development Management Policies (awaiting publication in Spring 2025). A consultation on Development Management policies is expected Spring 2025.
- 3.5 The current timescales for delivering the Herefordshire Local Plan are as follows: Progressing a local plan under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 plan making system to a certain extent is unknown as the secondary legislation will not be published until the Autumn 2025. This system comprises of three Gateways in a 30-month end to end process.

Timescales for Plan Preparation

Stage	Date
Preparatory Work and evidence gathering	To be completed by October 25
Gateway 1 Plan Visioning and Strategy Development 8-week consultation	March 26
Gateway 2 Draft Plan 6-week consultation	February / March 27
Gateway 3 Submit	January 28

Travellers' Sites Development Plan Document

- 3.6 The Travellers Sites DPD forms a separate plan that sets out to deliver on the objectives of policy H4 of the current Core Strategy. It plans for the needs of the Traveller Community (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People) for the plan period to 2031. It makes site-specific allocations for new pitches and sets out planning policies for the consideration of additional pitches for Travellers and Travelling Show People.
- 3.7 Following receipt of the Examiner's Report on 24 June 2019, the Travellers' Sites DPD was adopted by Council on 11 October 2019.

Minerals and Waste Local Plan

- 3.8 [The Minerals and Waste Local Plan \(MWLP\)](#) sets out planning policies relating to mineral resources and waste management development across the county, and any land allocations for this purpose up to 2041 and beyond.
- 3.9 The Herefordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (MWLP) was adopted by Full Council on 8 March 2024. The MWLP strategic spatial strategy is interlinked with the Core Strategy and its strategic policies refer to those in the Core Strategy and rely on them where they provide general development guidance and are added to where more specific minerals and waste policy guidance is required. Therefore, as soon as the Core Strategy is replaced by an adopted LP, the MWLP will become out of date and will need replacing. The significant uplift in allocated housing growth will have an impact on aggregate demand and waste management capacity. Therefore, it is intended to produce a new Minerals and Waste Plan concurrently with the Local Plan.

Herefordshire Neighbourhood Development Plans

- 3.10 Herefordshire has a high take-up rate of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs). These vary in the areas they cover, from different sized rural parishes to market towns. These allow communities to shape planning policy and guide development in their local areas, conforming to the strategic proposals and policies of the Core Strategy.
- 3.11 At February 2024, there were 113 Neighbourhood Plan areas designated across the county, with 92 NDPs adopted/made and forming part of the statutory Local Plan.
- 3.12 For the most up-to-date list of areas involved in Neighbourhood Planning and the respective progress of their NDPs, please consult this [webpage](#)

Planning and Infrastructure Bill

- 3.13 The Planning and Infrastructure Bill is expected to be introduced in Spring 2025. This bill will focus on streamlining the process of delivering housing and critical infrastructure and will inform future policy making.

New Infrastructure Levy

- 3.14 Herefordshire Council does not have a Community Infrastructure Levy in place. It is acknowledged that levy or equivalent will be required to assist with bringing forward the necessary infrastructure to accommodate growth as part of the new Local Plan. The [Levelling Up and Regeneration Act](#), which became law in 2023, included a provision for the [introduction of a new infrastructure levy](#), designed to replace the existing community infrastructure levy (CIL) and section 106 systems for securing developer contributions. However, following the publication of the NPPF the future of an infrastructure levy is in doubt. Therefore, it is recommended that the outcome of these reforms is certain before any decision is taken to allocate resources to developing a new CIL or equivalent for Herefordshire.

4.0 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

- 4.1 There are also existing supplementary documents, to support the current Core Strategy . These provide additional guidance and expand upon the policies of the local plan. Unlike the policy documents they support, these are not subject to formal examination process but do undergo public consultation.
- 4.2 At the time of writing, there are currently 2 SPDs that are adopted and in use.
- The “Planning Obligations SPD” was adopted in 2008 to support the Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which as of October 2015 has been replaced by the Core Strategy. There is a section in the document entitled “Affordable Housing” and it sets out how affordable housing can come forward as part of Section 106 agreement. As policy and guidance on affordable housing has moved on since then, the council prepared an Affordable Housing SPD to update the position, which was adopted in 2021.
 - “Polytunnels planning advice” note was written in 2018 although subject to consultation this was not aligned to specific local plan policies and therefore has not been adopted as an SPD.

SPDs currently paused:

- Environmental Building Standards SPD – A public consultation was carried out between March and April 2022. The finalised SPD has been drafted but not yet adopted. A decision to pause further work on this has been taken to allow capacity for the progression of the Local Plan.
- Agricultural Planning SPD – A public consultation was carried out between November 2022 and February 2023. Parts of the SPD relating to phosphate modelling have been carried forward by the Environmental Services team who are currently reviewing this work.
- Hereford Design Guide – a draft was produced in 2019 and will be revised following the adoption of the Local Plan.

5.0 Design Codes

- 5.1 New NPPF guidance states that design guides and design codes can be prepared at different levels, however, they must be tailored to the circumstances and scale of change and reflect the local character. Herefordshire will support Neighbourhood Development Plans that choose to include a design code within their plans. Any design guidance or design codes produced by Herefordshire Council will be in line with guidance contained in the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code and will likely come forward through inclusion within Local Plan policies.

Contact Details

If you require any help understanding the above or have any questions regarding the Local Development Scheme, please contact us on the below details.

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