

Guildford borough Local Plan Local Development Scheme March 2025

Summary

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is the timetable and project plan for the new Guildford borough Local Plan. The LDS explains what Development Plan Documents we will be preparing and when, to plan for future development in the borough.

To see the latest progress against the LDS timetable, view our webpage at www.guildford.gov.uk/lDs.

Use the LDS to see when you can get involved in planning for the area. You can also sign up for details and notifications of all our consultations at <https://guildford.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/system/listConsultations?type=all>.

1. Background

There are two different types of planning policy documents:

- Development Plan Documents (DPDs) - the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 refers to these as Local Plans. These are the main planning policy documents produced by the Council and form part of the statutory development plan for the area; and
- Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – these are designed to expand on policies in DPDs or provide additional detail.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires councils to prepare and maintain an LDS setting out the DPDs that it intends to prepare, together with details and a timetable for their preparation. Following publication of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024, Government requested that all local planning authorities prepare an updated LDS within 12 weeks of this, i.e. by no later than 6 March 2025. This LDS was adopted by Executive at its meeting on 27 February and came into effect on 7 March 2025.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that the LDS must specify the documents which, when prepared, will comprise the Local Plan for the area. It must be made available publicly and kept up-to-date as it is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress.

The current Local Plan for Guildford comprise of two parts; the Local Plan: Strategy and Sites 2019 (LPSS) and the Local Plan: Development Management Policies 2023 (LPDMP). In accordance with Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, the LPSS was reviewed in early 2024 (prior to its five year anniversary) and a decision¹ was made that it requires updating.

The Government is in the process of reforming the plan-making system as set out in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act. The updated Local Plan is intended to be prepared as a 'new style' Local Plan

¹ Available online at: [Agenda for Council on Wednesday, 21st February, 2024, 7.00 pm - Guildford Borough Council](#)

with secondary legislation currently expected to be enacted in summer/autumn 2025. The Government also intends to consult on a set of National Development Management Policies (NDMP) in spring 2025. Any development management policies contained in the Local Plan update should not repeat these but can add further detail if justified by local circumstances. Any local development management policies must be consistent with the NDMP. This LDS will need to be updated once the secondary legislation is in place and the framework for preparing ‘new style’ local plans is known. This LDS has been prepared on the basis of the existing regulations (i.e The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012).

The composition of the existing and future development plan, are illustrated in Figure 1 below.

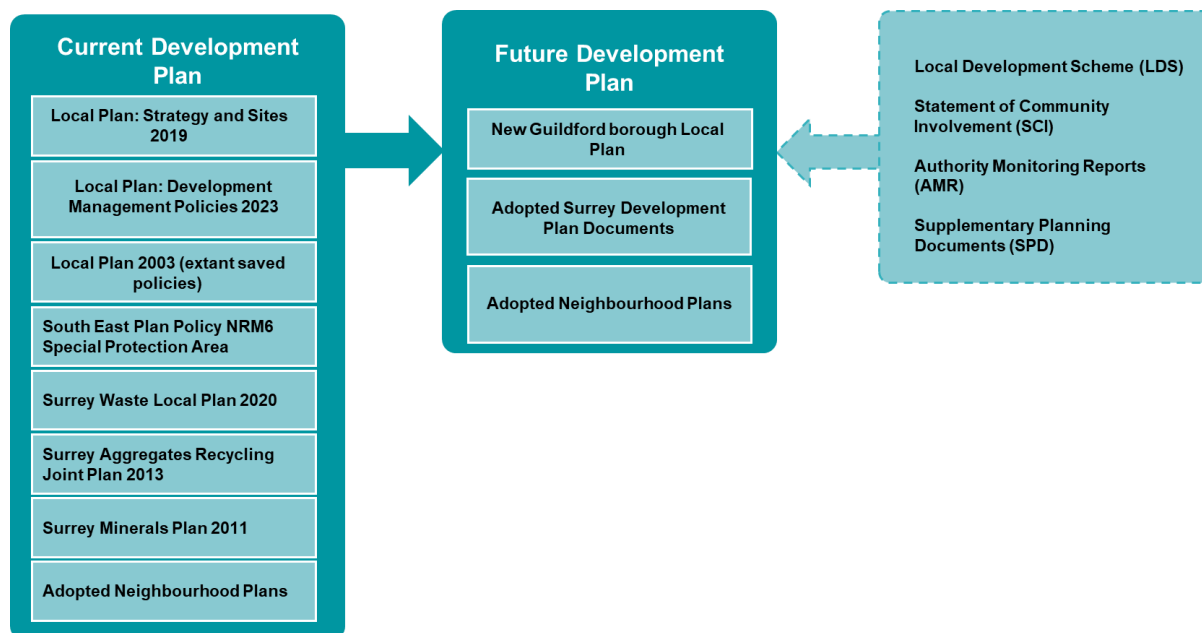


Figure 1: the proposed future development plan for Guildford borough, including the new Local Plan

2. The current planning policy position

The development plan currently comprises the LPSS, the LPDMP and the residual policies from the Local Plan 2003. These are listed in Appendix 8 of the LPSS. All Local Plans are available here: <https://www.guildford.gov.uk/guildfordlocalplan>.

Policy NRM6 contained within the South East Plan 2009 that deals with the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area is still relevant to the determination of planning applications.

The Government published the latest National Planning Policy Framework² (NPPF) in December 2024. Annex 1 of the NPPF states that the Council can continue to give weight to relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan according to the degree to which those policies are consistent with the NPPF (paragraph 232). Any new Local Plan being prepared must be consistent with national planning policy.

National Planning Practice Guidance³ (NPPG) sets out how the NPPF should be implemented in planning decisions and development plans. It is an online resource that is capable of being updated regularly.

² Available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

³ Available online at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Planning for minerals and waste is the responsibility of Surrey County Council, which produces its own LDS for the future production and review of its Waste and Minerals Plans. For more details, see www.surreycc.gov.uk/land-planning-and-development/minerals-and-waste. We are a consultee during the preparation of these documents for Surrey County (including our area).

3. Supplementary planning guidance and documents

We have adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) providing additional information on a range of topics. These documents do not create policy but provide additional guidance on existing policies. You can view these at www.guildford.gov.uk/localplan/spd.

We will continue to produce SPDs as required and these will be available on the same link.

4. Community engagement

Planning shapes the environment that we live in, where we live, work, shop and play. Planning decisions determine where new homes, offices, shops and leisure facilities go and what happens to our countryside, open spaces and historic environment. You can be involved in how our borough develops from the early stages of local planning policy formulation to the end stage of commenting on planning applications. What you think matters and we will try to reflect this in the documents we produce and the decisions we make. Whilst there will not always be a consensus of views, we will always listen to what you have to say.

The Council will be reviewing its Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) during the Local Plan update process. You can read this at www.guildford.gov.uk/sci.

5. Evidence base

A comprehensive list of the Evidence Base that informed plan making to date is set out in Appendix 7 of the LPSS. This will need to be reviewed and updated accordingly as part of preparing the new Local Plan. The existing evidence base, together with any new evidence commissioned to inform the forthcoming Local Plan can be viewed at www.guildford.gov.uk/localplan/evidencebase.

6. Community Infrastructure Levy

For the latest information on Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) please visit our website www.guildford.gov.uk/localplan/developercontributions.

7. Policies Map

A Policies Map geographically illustrates the land use designations, policies and site allocations of DPDs on an Ordnance Survey base map⁴.

The current Policies Map forms part of the adopted LPSS, LPDMP and the residual policies of the Local Plan 2003.

⁴ This is in accordance with Regulation 9 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Any Local Plan must be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)). These will be published simultaneously as part of any consultation on the Local Plan.

There is also a legal requirement⁵ to consider whether new planning policy documents are likely to have a significant effect on European sites of nature conservation importance, prior to the Plan being given effect. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will be produced for the Local Plan.

Equalities impact assessment (EqIA) screening (and if necessary an EqIA) or similar will also be used to consider the potential differential effects of the Local Plan policies on sections of the community as we prepare these.

In preparing the Local Plan, we will comply with the requirements of the legal duty to co-operate, introduced by the Localism Act 2011. This requires local councils and other prescribed organisations to work together to cooperate on relevant strategic and cross boundary planning matters. Guildford Borough directly adjoins six other local planning areas – Woking, Elmbridge, Waverley, Mole Valley and Surrey Heath in Surrey and Rushmoor in Hampshire. Some strategic issues may require us to cooperate on an even wider basis and the organisations we need to work with will vary depending on the strategic issue. Our progress on complying with the duty to cooperate is reported through our Authority Monitoring Report (www.guildford.gov.uk/localplan/monitoring).

Preparation of the Local Plan will also involve co-operation with Surrey and Hampshire County Councils, Highways England, the Environment Agency and a number of other prescribed bodies⁶.

8. Monitoring

Progress against the LDS will be reviewed and reported in the Authority Monitoring Report. In doing so we will consider what changes, if any, need to be made and will bring forward such changes through a formal review of the LDS.

9. More information

This document was produced by the Planning Policy Team, Guildford Borough Council, Millmead House, Millmead, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 4BB.

If you have any questions about the LDS or the Local Plan, please contact the Planning Policy team:

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Email: planningpolicy@guildford.gov.uk

⁵ Through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitat Regulations)

⁶ The prescribed bodies are set out in the Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Appendix 1: Detailed timetable

New Guildford borough Local Plan	
Note – the following dates are estimates only	
Scope	Will set out the spatial vision, objectives and strategy together with site allocations for the development of the borough in the plan period up to 2045. It may also include local DM policies where justified and consistent with the suite of National Development Management Policies.
Which saved policies will it replace?	It will replace the Local Plan: Strategy and Sites, Local Plan: Development Management Policies and the residual policies in the Local Plan 2003
Geographical coverage	Borough wide
Status	Development Plan Document
Conformity	Consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework
Timetable	
Evidence base gathering, early engagement with relevant internal and external stakeholders, draft the plan, sustainability appraisal and governance processes	Current – August 2026
Consultation on draft Local Plan (minimum six weeks) (Regulation 18)	September – October 2026
Analysis of representations, preparation of submission plan, sustainability appraisal, governance processes	November 2026 – March 2028
Pre-submission publication and consultation (minimum six weeks) (Regulation 19)	Spring 2028
Submission to the planning inspectorate for Examination (Regulation 22)	Autumn 2028
Examination in public – hearings (Regulation 24)	Winter 2028/29
Anticipated adoption (Regulation 26)	Mid 2029