



North Somerset Local Plan

2018 - 2036



Pre-commencement Document



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An initiation document setting out the proposed scope and programme for the preparation of the North Somerset Local Plan 2018-2036

North Somerset Council

June 2016

Introduction

1. The existing timeframe for planning documents within North Somerset is to 2026. This is the end period of both the Core Strategy and the more detailed Sites and Policies Plan. The latter is being progressed in two parts, part 1 Development Management Policies will be adopted in July 2016 and Part 2 Site Allocations Plan which is currently at the earlier consultation draft stage with a predicted adoption date of spring 2017. The Core Strategy includes a commitment to an early review of the housing requirement by the end of 2018. This review is being undertaken in conjunction with the other authorities in the West of England through a new development plan document, the Joint Spatial Plan (JSP) which will cover all four UA areas. This will provide a new strategic planning context for North Somerset to 2036 in the form of a new district housing target and strategic locations.
2. The production of the JSP requires work to progress on a new Local Plan in parallel with it, in order to provide detailed policies and additional housing, employment and other land allocations beyond 2026 and up to the new 2036 end date. This will support production of the JSP and ensure that an updated local policy context is brought forward at the earliest possible opportunity to meet the new development needs to 2036. This will mean that the new Local Plan will begin preparation before the Site Allocations Plan is adopted. It is acknowledged that this may lead to some confusion, however the Local Plan will incorporate the allocations contained within the Site Allocations Plan as they are finalised and adopted, as well as bringing forward new allocations to meet identified needs further ahead to 2036. The table at paragraph 12 sets out how the timescales of these plans will marry up.

Purpose of a pre-commencement document

3. This Pre-commencement document is the notice of intent that a new Local Plan will be prepared for North Somerset for the period 2018-2036 and sets out its scope, methodology and programme. It will be a development plan document prepared in accordance with Regulation 18(1) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

Duty to co-operate

4. The Council has a duty to co-operate on planning issues that cross administrative boundaries. Where strategic issues are identified the Council will seek to work collaboratively with neighbouring authorities and other bodies.

Scope of the North Somerset Local Plan

5. The plan area will be the administrative area of North Somerset Council and the plan period will be 2018-2036. This time period is consistent with the plan period of the JSP and that of the wider Bristol Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
6. The purpose will be to review and roll-forward policies and allocations in existing development plan documents (Core Strategy and Sites and Policies Plan parts 1 and 2, including waste and minerals) and to deliver the strategic requirements of the Joint Spatial Plan. It will be consistent with the JSP in terms of delivering the higher level vision and objectives, delivering as appropriate any strategic locations/allocations and the North Somerset residential and economic development requirements.
7. Those elements which are likely to be contained within the JSP and therefore will not be within scope for the Local Plan are as follows:
 - The overall housing requirement to be accommodated in North Somerset.
 - The broad strategic distribution of housing and employment land/floorspace, including strategic locations and key sites.
 - Identification of strategic infrastructure proposals, including transport.
 - Strategic green belt assessment.

This will need to be reviewed as work on the JSP progresses.

8. The scope of the Local Plan will cover all other issues, detailed policy development and allocations, including waste and minerals. The plan preparation process will assess existing evidence as well as, where appropriate, commissioning new studies or updating existing evidence bases. This will include the following:
 - Annual Monitoring Report
 - Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
 - Strategic Housing Market Assessment – Evidence on housing numbers, type and tenure.
 - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.
 - Infrastructure Delivery Plan
 - Parking Study
 - Transport Study
 - Economic Development Needs Assessment
 - Viability Assessment

- Retail Assessment
- Design/Place-making
- Local Green Belt assessment
- Sustainability of settlements
- Review of strategic minerals/waste requirements

Relationship to neighbourhood planning

9. North Somerset has two adopted ('made') neighbourhood development plans at Backwell and Long Ashton, several others in preparation, and others being considered. As work on the new Local Plan progresses, and the strategic context for the neighbourhood plans changes these plans may become increasingly out of date. Communities may wish to review them to take account of any implications arising, or to work with North Somerset Council to incorporate elements of neighbourhood planning into the emerging local plan.
10. It is proposed that at the start of the process there is consultation with interested parties on how the local plan and neighbourhood plans will progress in tandem. This will cover issues such as the scope of the plans, evidence, consultation and sharing of resources.

Sustainability appraisal

11. A framework for sustainability appraisal will be agreed at the beginning of the project and used to assess and inform the plan-making process. It is intended to publish a Sustainability Scoping Report.

Timescales

12. The proposed timetable is set out below. This is indicative at this stage and may change as plan preparation progresses:

Plan				
North Somerset Local Plan 2018-2036			Joint Spatial Plan	Site Allocations Plan
Plan phase	Time period	Stage	Stage	Stage
Plan preparation	June 2016	Pre-commencement document published (regulation 18).		
	Summer 2016	Assessment of evidence base; gap analysis; undertaking of additional studies.		

Plan				
North Somerset Local Plan 2018-2036			Joint Spatial Plan	Site Allocations Plan
Plan phase	Time period	Stage	Stage	Stage
	Autumn 2016		Draft plan consultation	Publication consultation
	December 2016			Submission
	January 2017	Consultation on issues and options.		Examination
	Spring 2017		Publication consultation	Adopt plan
	Summer 2017	Preparation of, and consultation on, draft plan.	Submit plan	
	Autumn 2017		Examination	
	Spring 2018		Adopt plan	
	Summer 2018			
	Autumn 2018	Preparation of, and consultation on, publication document. (regulation 19/20)		
Examination	Spring 2019	Submission (regulation 22)		
	Summer 2019	Examination hearings (regulation 24/25)		
Adoption	Autumn 2019	Adoption (regulation 26)		

13. The timetable is dependent on progress with the Joint Spatial Plan which will set the overall strategic context to which the new local plan needs to conform. The JSP envisages submission to the Secretary of State in summer 2017 with potential adoption early 2018. Submission of the JSP will provide a clear steer on the proposed strategic direction of travel to support draft plan preparation. Once the JSP is adopted, the new plan needs to progress through to examination and adoption as quickly as possible.

Consultation

14. The plan will be prepared with community and stakeholder engagement in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Formal consultation stages will take place over a minimum of 6 weeks. A Consultation Statement will be prepared and updated as the project progresses.

Let us know what you think

15. Views are being sought on the proposed content, scope and programme. Consultation on this pre-commencement document runs from **14 June – 21 July 2016**. If you have any comments on the Pre-commencement document you can comment [online](#) or via e-mail to planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk. Please let us have any comments by 21 July 2016. Representations will be taken into account through the plan preparation process.

Contact Details:

Claire Courtois: 01934 42 6816

Celia Dring: 01934 42 6244

E-mail: planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk

Post: Town Hall, Walliscote Grove Road, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 1UJ