



North Somerset Council

Local Development Scheme 2025-2028

The Council's project plan for the
preparation of new planning
policy documents

December 2025



Foreword

This Local Development Scheme (LDS) has been prepared by North Somerset Council in its role as Local Planning Authority (LPA). The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, (as amended by section 111 of the Localism Act 2011) requires local planning authorities to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme (LDS).

This LDS identifies the development plan documents to be produced for the period 2025-2028.

It explains:

- The new Development Plan Documents the Council intends to produce;
- The subject matter and geographical area for each of the documents;
- The timetable for the preparation and the revisions of each document; and
- How the Council will resource the preparation of the documents.

This LDS was approved by the Cabinet Member for Planning and the Environment on 19 December 2025 subject to formal sign off. The decision will be available on the Council website.

Should you have any queries about the LDS, please contact the Planning Policy Team via e- mail planning.policy@n-somerset.gov.uk



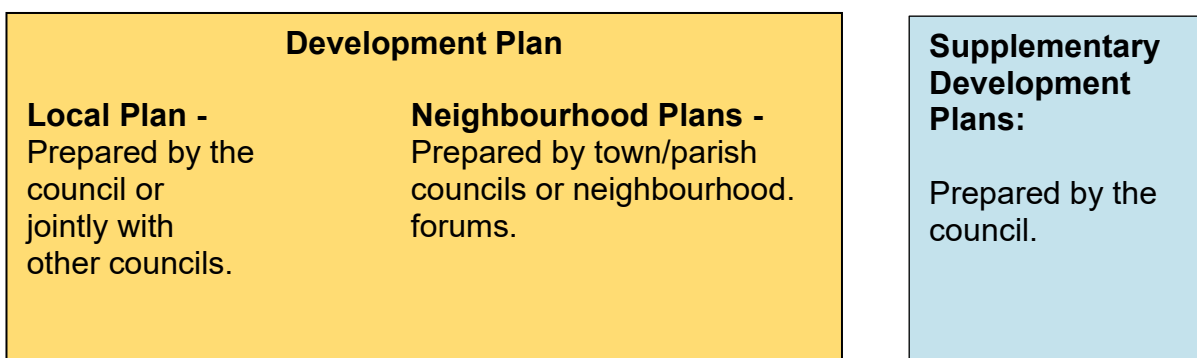
Contents

Foreword	1
1. Introduction	3
2. Plan Production.....	7
North Somerset Plan 2026– 2041	7
Duty to Co-operate and Statement of Common Ground	7
Neighbourhood Plans	8
3. Other Documents	9
4. Development Plan Profiles	10
APPENDIX 1: SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS	12
APPENDIX 2: PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS	16



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is the program for the preparation of the Council's suite of planning policy documents. It sets out details of which documents will be produced, in what order and when. It is the starting point for residents and other stakeholders to find out what planning policies relate to their area and how these will be reviewed.
- 1.2 Local planning policy documents prepared by the Council comprise the Local Plan which sets out the main policies, and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), which add further detail. The Local Plan currently comprises a number of separate documents which include:
- [North Somerset Core Strategy \(2017\)](#)
 - [Site Allocations Plan \(2018\)](#)
 - [Development Management Policies \(2016\)](#)
- 1.3 Along with Neighbourhood Plans prepared by parish or town councils, the Local Plan forms part of the Development Plan. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act stipulates that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This gives considerable weight to the documents that comprise it. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are not part of the Development Plan but carry weight as a material consideration in determining planning applications. The diagram below explains the relationship. Documents forming part of the Development Plan follow a more formal preparation process and are subject to independent examination.



- 1.4 The Development Plan for North Somerset currently comprises:

- North Somerset Core Strategy (2017)
- Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (2016)
- Sites and Policies plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018)
- West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011)
- Backwell Neighbourhood Plan (2015)
- Long Ashton Neighbourhood Plan (2015)



- Claverham Neighbourhood Plan (2018)
- Yatton Neighbourhood Plan (2019)
- Congresbury Neighbourhood Plan (2019)
- Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano Neighbourhood Plan (2021)
- Portishead Neighbourhood Plan (2023)
- Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan (2024)
- Policies Map



2. Plan Production

North Somerset Local Plan 2026 – 2041

- 2.1 A new Local Plan is being prepared by North Somerset Council to cover the period 2026 - 2041.
- 2.2 It will:
- Set out the spatial strategy and the requirements for housing, employment and other land uses over the plan period.
 - Allocate sites to provide the housing, employment and other land uses and the supporting infrastructure needed, including transport and active travel routes, schools and other facilities and green infrastructure, to create sustainable communities.
 - Contain policies and designations for the protection of the natural and built environment.
 - Contain policies to guide the use or development of land and buildings where planning consent is required in relation to requirements such as low carbon, renewable energy, retail, employment, residential, design, flooding, drainage, local waste and minerals, community facilities, transport and infrastructure.
- 2.3 The plan will update and replace the existing Core Strategy (2017), Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (2016) and Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018). It will supersede the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011) in so much as it applies to North Somerset.

Duty to Co-operate and Statements of Common Ground

- 2.4 Section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires local authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in any process by means of which development plan documents are prepared. This is termed the 'duty to cooperate'. It states that cooperation should take account of the most appropriate functional geographies. However, a Written Ministerial Statement issued on 27 November 2025 has removed the requirement for plans in the current system to undertake the Duty to Co-operate, although there is still the expectation that local planning authorities continue to collaborate across their boundaries in line with policies in the NPPF on 'maintaining effective co-operation'.
- 2.5 The NPPF (2024) requires local authorities to '*maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these*'. The accompanying Planning Practice Guidance outlines what a Statement of Common Ground should contain and explains that it should be 'maintained on an on-going basis throughout the plan making process'.
- 2.6 A statement of common ground can identify matters that are agreed, yet to be agreed, or further information that is required before matters can be agreed. It will identify those areas where cooperation is required to deliver the strategic policies of both authorities.
- 2.7 A Statement of Compliance has been published for each stage of plan-making setting out cross-boundary working for each stage. Statements of common ground are now



being prepared between North Somerset Council and neighbouring authorities and statutory consultees where strategic cross-boundary issues have been identified.

Neighbourhood Plans

- 2.8 The Localism Act introduced Neighbourhood Plans. As these are prepared by local communities and not the Council, they are not listed as part of the Local Development Scheme. However, the policies contained in any Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan once it has been formally adopted by North Somerset Council following an examination and a positive referendum.
- 2.9 Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan and must not promote less development than is set out in the strategic policies for the area. Whilst the new Local Plan is being prepared any new neighbourhood development plans will have to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Core Strategy as the adopted development plan.
- 2.10 Eight neighbourhood plans have been made in North Somerset. These are Backwell NDP; Long Ashton NDP; Claverham NDP; Yatton NDP; Congresbury NDP; Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano NDP; Portishead NDP and Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan.

Progress on other Neighbourhood Development Plans and more information can be found [here](#).



3. Other Documents

- 3.1 [Supplementary Planning Documents](#) (SPDs) do not have Development Plan status. They add detail and are used to help applicants prepare effective planning applications or aid infrastructure delivery. Appendix 1 lists the existing and proposed SPDs in North Somerset. The need to update any SPDs to align with the new Local Plan when adopted will be kept under review.
- 3.2 Following an examination the Council introduced a [Community Infrastructure Levy](#) (CIL) in January 2018. This enables the council to secure contributions from new development in order to support infrastructure provision.
- 3.3 The council also has a [Statement of Community Involvement](#) (SCI) adopted in September 2019. It sets out the consultation procedures which should be followed when the Council prepares local planning policy documents, including Supplementary Planning Documents, and in the consideration of planning applications.
- 3.4 The [Authority Monitoring Report](#) (AMR) monitors plan preparation and the extent to which policies in local planning documents are being implemented. It monitors key data such as housing completions, growth in office space and losses in industrial space. The AMR is based upon the period 1 April to 31 March each year.
- 3.5 The [Policies Map](#) identifies all the allocations and designations set out in the Local Plan. It will be revised when a new plan is formally adopted where there are specific allocations or designations. Proposed amendments to the Policies Map will be publicised alongside the appropriate plan.



4. Development Plan Profiles

4.1 The following table provides a schedule of the Local Plan:

NORTH SOMERSET LOCAL PLAN 2026-2041

Role and Content	The Local Plan will set out the overall development strategy for North Somerset for the period 2026-2041 to meet the district's growth requirements through the plan period. It will include strategic, locational and development management policies. The plan will identify site allocations for different forms of land use such as housing, employment, infrastructure, leisure, open spaces, health, education and community uses. The Local Plan will provide a policy context for Neighbourhood Plans. An adopted Policies Map will sit alongside the Local Plan. The current plan period runs until 2026. A new Local Plan is needed to plan for future growth and to conform with the updated requirements set out in the latest NPPF.
Documents to be replaced	The new North Somerset Local Plan will fully supersede the Core Strategy (2017), Sites and Policies Plan Part 1: Development Management Policies (2016) and the Sites and Policies Plan Part 2: Site Allocations Plan (2018). It will supersede the West of England Joint Waste Core Strategy (2011) in so far as it affects North Somerset.
Status	Development Plan Document
Chain of conformity	National Planning Policy
Geographic Coverage	North Somerset
TIMETABLE AND MILESTONES	
Pre-Commencement Document (Reg 18)	March 2020
Issues and Options Consultation (Reg 18)	
- Challenges consultation - Choices consultation	July-September 2020 November-December 2020
Consultation on Draft Plan (Reg 18)	March/April 2022
Consultation on Pre-Submission Plan 2039 (Reg 19)	November/December 2023
Approval of revised Reg 19 with	July 2024



new plan period	
Interim consultation on additional sites to meet new housing requirement	February/March 2025
Consultation on Pre-submission Plan 2041 (Reg 19)	October 2025
Submission to Secretary of State (Reg 22)	March 2026
Examination Hearings Period (Reg 24)	July 2026
Inspector's Report (Reg 25)	October 2026
Adoption (Reg 26)	December 2026
ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRODUCTION	
Resources required and management arrangements	Prepared by the Council's planning policy team with other relevant services
Community and stakeholder involvement	In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations.
POST PRODUCTION	
Monitoring and review	The implementation of the objectives and policies will be monitored as part of the Authority Monitoring Report.



APPENDIX 1: SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) and other guidance provide greater detail on policies in the Local Plan and support decisions on planning applications. Adopted SPDs carry more weight than other guidance and are a material consideration in decision-making. The council currently has 18 adopted SPDs which are listed below.

SPD (Newest to oldest)	Relevant Local Plan Policy	Purpose
Biodiversity SPD – January 2024	CS4: Nature Conservation and DM8: Nature Conservation	To guide developers, planners, and consultants on how biodiversity will be integrated into the development process to ensure that legislation, policy, and best practice standards are met. It identifies how biodiversity needs to be protected by the planning system including when, what, and how to conduct surveys; use of the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy and how a measurable net gain to North Somerset's biodiversity will be achieved.
North Somerset Travel Plans - February 2023	CS10: Transport and Movement and DM26: Travel Plans	The SPD provides detail of when and what type of travel plan is required to support development proposals, options for implementing the travel plans as well as setting out the fees, monitoring, review and enforcing of travel plans. The SPD also supports the delivery of the Active Travel Strategy.
Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places - 2021	CS1: Addressing Climate Change and Carbon Reduction and CS2: Delivering Sustainable Design and Construction.	The SPD details the measures and aspects which need to be considered in order to achieve sustainable buildings and places across North Somerset including Sustainable Design Principles, the implementation of renewable and low carbon energy generation, BREEAM compliance for non-residential buildings, a guide to Sustainable Drainage Systems and on future proofing design through implementing climate change adaptation measures. These policy requirements are accompanied by guidance on appropriate implementation.



SPD (Newest to oldest)	Relevant Local Plan Policy	Purpose
Parking Standards - November 2021	CS11: Parking.	Provides further clarification and interpretation of Core Strategy Policy CS11: Parking setting out parking standards for various types of development.
Shopfront Design Guide – September 2019	General.	Produced in conjunction with Historic England as part of the Heritage Action Zone scheme which aims to promote and enhance the heritage of Weston-super-Mare. It sets out detailed design principles and standards which will preserve or enhance the appearance of both historic and modern shopfronts.
Landscape Character Assessment - September 2018	CS5: Landscape and the historic environment and DM10: Landscape	Landscape character assessment involves identification of those features or combinations of elements that contribute to the character of the landscape, thereby enabling the special character and qualities of a particular area to be understood.
Accessible and Adaptable Housing – April 2018	DM42: Accessible and adaptable housing and housing space standards	Sets out that 17% of all new homes across all types and tenures should meet the building regulation standard M4(2) in terms of accessibility.
North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC Guidance on Development – January 2018	CS4: Nature Conservation and DM8: Nature Conservation	Sets out guidance explaining how development activities can impact the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC and the steps required to avoid or mitigate any impacts.
Weston-super-Mare Town Centre	CS29: Weston-super-Mare Town Centre	The SPD sets out the principles and overall plan for this area. Provides a Masterplan to guide future planning of the town centre and identifies the key development sites



SPD (Newest to oldest)	Relevant Local Plan Policy	Purpose
<u>Regeneration – February 2017</u>		and infrastructure projects which the council are proposing.
<u>Development Contributions – January 2016</u>	CS34: Infrastructure delivery and development contributions	Provides more detailed guidance on the principles and operation of development contributions to support Core Strategy Policy CS34: Infrastructure delivery and development contributions.
<u>Employment-led Delivery at Weston-super-Mare – November 2014</u>	CS20: Supporting a Successful Economy	Provides further guidance on the implementation of policy CS20 which provides the strategic policy context to the employment-led strategy and sets out the broad principles of the policy which seeks to improve the balance between jobs and homes in WSM, through controlling the release of new housing in tandem with the provision of employment to ensure the imbalance is not exacerbated.
<u>Wind Turbines – July 2014</u>	CS1: Addressing climate change and carbon reduction, CS2: Delivering sustainable design and construction and DM2: renewable and low carbon energy generation.	This SPD provides information to help applicants select and design proposals that can be appropriately sited in the locality. It offers guidance on the key considerations that shall be taken into account when siting wind energy developments. This guidance is for larger turbines that are subject to planning permission.
<u>Residential Design Guide: Section 2: Appearance and character of house extensions and alterations – April 2014</u>	General.	To provide consistency and detailed guidance for those involved in designing proposals for house extensions.
<u>Affordable Housing - November 2013</u>	CS16: Affordable Housing and CS17: Rural Exception Schemes	To advise applicants on how the council applies its affordable housing policies, setting out guidance on the detailed approach. It also informs applicants on nil public subsidy arrangements and sets out



SPD (Newest to oldest)	Relevant Local Plan Policy	Purpose
		the council's definition of affordable housing and preferred methods for ensuring delivery.
Solar Photovoltaic Arrays – November 2013	CS1: Addressing climate change and carbon reduction, CS2: Delivering sustainable design and construction and DM2: renewable and low carbon energy generation.	To provide more detailed guidance to to facilitate renewable and low carbon energy development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily.
Residential Design Guide: Section 1: Protecting living conditions of neighbours - January 2013	North Somerset Replacement Local Plan GDP/3 (now superseded).	Provide consistency and detailed guidance for those involved in designing proposals for residential development within existing residential areas.
Weston Villages – June 2012	CS30: Weston Villages	Providing more detailed guidance to support the delivery of sustainable development at Weston Villages through a masterplan-led approach.
Dolphin Square – May 2008	Replacement Local Plan Policy E1/A (now superseded).	To provide a detailed planning policy framework for the redevelopment of the site to try and accelerate the comprehensive regeneration of the site.



APPENDIX 2: PROPOSED SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

Supplementary planning documents (SPDs) and other guidance provide greater detail on policies in the Local Plan and support decisions on planning applications. Below is a list of SPDs that are proposed to be produced as updates to existing SPDs or new SPDs to accompany policies in the emerging Local Plan. Additional SPD's maybe required for the strategic development locations identified in the local plan depending on the timing of these developments. This list may need to be reviewed in the light of national planning changes.

Topic	Policy Context and Purpose
Trees	The Biodiversity and Trees SPD was superseded by the recently adopted Biodiversity SPD. The tree element needs to be replaced with a new Trees SPD.
Bats	New up to date evidence has been produced on bat activity and the SPD needs to be updated to reflect this. The drafted updated SPD is currently being consulted on and is due to be adopted in February 2026.
Residential Design Guide 1 - Protecting living conditions of neighbours.	This SPD needs to be updated to reflect changes to BRE standards. Work is underway to assess the level of change needed to bring it up to date.
Wolvershill Masterplan	Preparation on the masterplan framework to support emerging Local Plan policy LP1: Wolverhill Strategic Development Location has begun and a draft will be prepared alongside the Local Plan as evidence that work is progressing in terms of delivery of the site. This will be in the form of either a Masterplan Framework or SPD.
Affordable Housing	The current Affordable Housing SPD will need to be updated to reflect national policy changed and the requirements in emerging Local Plan policy DP43: Affordable Housing (including Rural Exception Sites).
Developer Contributions	The current Developer Contributions SPD will need to be updated to reflect the requirements in emerging Local Plan.
Creating Sustainable Buildings and Places	This is a review of the existing SPD but will consolidate a number of other SPDs and areas of guidance into one comprehensive document. It will incorporate the Wind Turbines and Solar Photovoltaic Arrays SPDs with updated guidance, as well and including guidance on climate change adaptation and resilience and net zero construction providing more detail to policies DP5 and DP6 in the emerging Local Plan.



Bristol Airport	This is additional guidance to support emerging Local Plan policy LP9: Bristol Airport to provide detailed guidance to the approach to managing flying activities and development at the airport.
Health Impact Assessments	Additional guidance to support emerging Local Plan policy DP49: Healthy Places. The requirements in the emerging policy are the same as the current requirements so work on the guidance could start now ready for adoption following the Local Plan adoption. It will provide detail to applicants as to when an HIA will be required and what level of HIA it would be.



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