



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	URGENT OFFICER DECISION MEETING
Subject	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME
Wards affected	All
Accountable member	Councillor Joe Harris Leader of Cotswold District Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning policy, infrastructure and the Local Plan Email: joe.harris@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Robert Weaver – Chief Executive Email: robert.weaver@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Matthew Britton – Interim Head of Planning Policy and Infrastructure Email: matthew.britton@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To approve a new Local Development Scheme
Annexes	Annex A: Cotswold District Local Development Scheme (March 2025)
Recommendation(s)	Approval of the Local Development Scheme
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responding to the Climate Emergency• Delivering Housing• Supporting Communities• Supporting the Economy
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Leader of the Council, Director of Governance and Development, (Monitoring Officer), Deputy Chief Executive (S151 Officer) Business Manager for Democratic Services, Opposition Group Leader, Vice Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee



BACKGROUND

- 1.1** All local planning authorities are required by law to prepare a Local Development Scheme. The Local Development Scheme explains what planning policy documents the council already has in place and the planning policy documents it will prepare in the future. It must also include the timetable for producing these documents.
- 1.2** National policy expects councils to review and update their Local Development Scheme at least annually, although it may need updating more frequently if there are any significant changes in the timescales or the plans being prepared.
- 1.3** The council last updated its Local Development Scheme in January 2024. Since then, the Government has implemented major changes to national planning policies¹. These have affected the timetable for delivering the Local Plan Update.
- 1.4** On 13th December 2024, Joanna Averley (Chief Planner, MHCLG), wrote to all local planning authorities² to convey that the Deputy Prime Minister had asked that all local planning authorities produce an updated Local Development Scheme within 12 weeks of the publication of the revised NPPF, i.e. by no later than 6th March 2025. It was requested that the updated Local Development Scheme includes clear, realistic, and specific dates for consultation and submission of the local plan.
- 1.5** Consideration has been given to the revised NPPF, how the changes affect the Local Plan project plan, and any additional work that is now required and available resources to deliver the additional workload. The Local Development Scheme has been updated accordingly.
- 1.6** The Council is producing a:
 - Partial update of the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031) (the Partial Local Plan Update); and
 - A Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026 to 2046).
- 1.7** The Partial Local Plan Update and the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan cover different parts of the Local Plan. The aspiration is to combine the two Local Plan projects into a single Local Plan document at a later date. However, given

¹ [Government response to the proposed reforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and other changes to the planning system consultation](#) (MHCLG, 12 December 2024)

² [Planning Newsletter from Joanna Averley, Chief Planner \(MHCLG, 13th December 2024\)](#)



changing national planning policies, the Council is progressing the two Local Plan projects separately at present.

- 1.8** The Council is also producing several Supplementary Planning Documents and will need to update its Community Infrastructure Levy, which are discussed later.

Partial update of the adopted Cotswold District Local Plan (2011 to 2031)

- 1.9** The Partial Local Plan Update was previously scheduled to have a consultation on the pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 19) in winter 2025; submission of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 22) in spring 2025; examination in public between spring 2025 and spring 2026; and adoption by the Council in summer 2026.

- 1.10** Subject to government grant funding agreements, the following timescales are proposed:

- Consultation: Publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg. 19) – Q4 (autumn) 2025
- Submission of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg. 22) – Q3 (summer) 2026
- Examination – Q3 (summer) 2026 to Q3 (summer) 2027
- Adoption – Q1 (winter) 2027

Local Plan Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026 to 2046)

- 1.11** The Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan was also previously scheduled to have a consultation on the pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 19) in winter 2025; submission of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg 22) in spring 2025; examination in public between spring 2025 and spring 2026; and adoption by the Council in summer 2026.

- 1.12** In order to submit the Local Plan for examination before a government-imposed deadline of June 2025³, this timetable did not include an informal consultation stage on the draft Local Plan (Reg.18). However, not including this stage of consultation was identified as a risk.

- 1.13** Subject to government grant funding agreements, the following timescales are proposed:

³ The former June 2025 deadline was for the Local Plan to be examined under the existing Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 system. This has now been extended to December 2026.



- Consultation: Second Issues and Options (Reg. 18) – Q4 (autumn) 2026
- Consultation: Preferred Options: Draft Local Plan (Reg. 18) – Q3 (summer) 2027
- Consultation: Publication of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg. 19) – Q2 (spring) 2028
- Submission of pre-submission draft Local Plan (Reg. 22) – Q3 (summer) 2028
- Examination – Q3 (summer) 2028 to Q3 (summer) 2029
- Adoption – Q4 (autumn) 2029

1.14 This timetable includes a second ‘Issues and Options’ consultation to take account of revised national policies. It also includes a consultation stage on the Preferred Options: Draft Local Plan (Reg. 18).

1.15 Cotswold is among many local planning authorities in a similar situation where the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has led to delays. In recognition of this, the government has set up the Local Plans Delivery Fund 2024/25. This aims to ensure that local authorities are well-equipped and supported to implement the changes of the revised NPPF and to accommodate increased local housing need figures resulting from the changes to NPPF⁴.

Community Infrastructure Levy

1.16 The Community Infrastructure Levy will be updated alongside the Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan. This will include the following stages:

- Draft charging schedule consultation – Q2 (spring) 2027
- Submission – Q3 (summer) 2027
- Examination – Q4 (autumn) 2027 to Q4 (autumn) 2028
- Adoption – Q1 (winter) 2029

Supplementary Planning Documents

1.17 The Council will also produce three Supplementary Planning Documents. These will expand upon the Local Plan policies by providing further detail and guidance about how policies should be used. These are:

⁴ [Funding to support local authorities with the costs of local plan delivery and Green Belt reviews \(MHCLG, 16th December 2024\)](#)



- Cirencester Town Centre Framework Masterplan – this document help to ensure development in Cirencester Town Centre is undertaken in a holistic manner, balancing the need to manage traffic and improve the appearance of the public realm with other competing, environmental, social and economic objectives. The timeframe for producing this document is:
 - Second public consultation – Q3 (summer) 2025
 - Adoption – Q4 (autumn) 2025
- Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document – this document will provide guidance on the Council’s approach towards the use of and inter-relationship between planning obligations, planning conditions and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The timeframe for producing this document is:
 - Informal consultation – Q4 (autumn) 2025
 - Further consultation – Q3 (summer) 2026
 - Adoption – Q4 (autumn) 2026
- Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document – this document will assist the Council in meeting its objective of delivering affordable housing to meet the identified housing needs by providing guidance on the Local Plan’s affordable housing policies. The timeframe for producing this document is:
 - Draft affordable housing consultation – Q4 (autumn) 2025
 - Adoption – Q1 (winter) 2026

1.18 Consideration will be given to producing further Supplementary Planning Documents in future. The may, for example, include managing climate change (i.e. buildings, flooding, energy generation) and local nature recovery.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

2.1 The MHCLG’s request to update Local Development Schemes is informal, so there are no specific consequences for not updating the Local Development Scheme at this stage. However, in the spirit of cooperation, this is not recommended.



3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1** As part of the 2024/2025 Budget and Medium-Term Financial Strategy £0.500m was transferred to the Local Plan reserve to support the ongoing preparation of the Council's Local Plan. A further £0.250m was transferred as part of the 2025/2026 Budget approved by Council on the 24 February 2025 providing a total reserve £1.157m. With changes to the revised NPPF, this balance may not be sufficient across the medium term. Officers will review spending plans in detail to ensure the Council receives value for money from the planned activity on the Partial Local Plan Update.
- 3.2** The report to Full Council on the 'Cotswold District Local Plan Update', considered on 24 January 2024 resulted in Full Council voting to continue with the partial update of the Cotswold District Local Plan (2011-31) and commence a Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan (2026-46) separately, noting that the Council retained an option to merge the two Local Plan projects further down the line, which may have cost savings. This continues to be the case in the current Local Development Scheme.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** The preparation of a Local Development Scheme is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). This must specify (among other matters) the development plan documents (i.e. local plans) which, when prepared, will comprise part of the development plan for the area. Local planning authorities are encouraged to include details of other documents which form (or will form) part of the development plan for the area, such as Neighbourhood Plans. The Local Development Scheme must be made available publicly and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress. Local planning authorities should publish their Local Development Scheme on their website.
- 4.2** The Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan will be submitted for examination after December 2026. This is after the December 2026 deadline for Local Plans to be examined under the existing Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 system. The Development Strategy and Site Allocations Plan will instead be produced as a 'new style Local Plan' in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023).



5. RISK ASSESSMENT

5.1 The Local Development Scheme contains a full risk assessment in Section 9.

6. EQUALITIES IMPACT

6.1 The emerging Local Plan is supported by an Integrated Impact Assessment that considers these legal duties and requirements. An updated Integrated Impact Assessment will be available to review and comment on during the public consultation.

7. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Delivering a Local Plan that is green to the core is a corporate priority in the Council's efforts to tackle the climate change and ecological emergencies and the consultation proposals may impact this.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None