

WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

25th October 2022

Councillor Rebecca Breese

Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning, Built Environment and Rural Affairs

Report Title	Updated West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme
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Contributors/Checkers/Approvers

West S151	Martin Henry Executive Director, Finance	Email approval obtained 6th October 2022
Director	Stuart Timmiss Executive Director: Place, Economy & Environment	Email approval obtained 6th October 2022
Legal	Neil Weeks Solicitor	Email approval obtained 6th October 2022
Communications	Becky Hutson	Email approval obtained 6th October 2022

List of Appendices

Appendix A – Updated West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1. To seek approval for an updated Local Development Scheme which sets out a timetable for local plan preparation.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 Local Planning Authorities are required to produce, and keep up to date, a Local Development Scheme (LDS) which sets out and timetables the local plans they will prepare to plan for development in their area.
- 2.2 Members may recall that the West Northamptonshire LDS was updated in July 2022. Now that the inspectors examining the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 (NLPP2) have found that it is necessary to consult the public on Further Main Modifications to the NLPP2 (see separate report elsewhere on this agenda), it is necessary to make further changes to the LDS as this will have an impact on when the NLPP2 can be adopted. Separately from this, it is also necessary to amend the LDS to take account of amended timeframes for production of the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan (WNSP).

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- a) Approves the updated West Northamptonshire Local Development Scheme (Appendix A) which is to be brought into effect upon the expiry of the call-in period for Planning Policy Committee decisions.
 - b) Delegates to the Assistant Director: Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Built Environment and Rural Affairs, authority to make minor editorial and presentational changes to the Local Development Scheme in its final published form.

4. Reason for Recommendations (NOTE: this section is mandatory and must be completed)

- 4.1 It is a statutory requirement for the Council to produce an LDS setting out the Local Plans which, when prepared, will comprise part of the development plan for the area. The LDS must be made available to the public and kept up to date. For West Northamptonshire, a new LDS is needed to set out revised timetables for the next stages in the preparation of the West Northamptonshire Strategic Plan and final stages in the preparation of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2.

5. Report Background

- 5.1 The Local Development Scheme needs to be updated for two main reasons. Firstly, following the Proposed Modifications consultation on the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 the planning inspectors examining the plan have informed us that they consider it necessary for us to consult on Further Main Modifications as set out elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting. As this is an additional stage of public consultation it has an impact on when the NLPP2 can be adopted. Secondly, further consideration is being given to the scope and focus of the Strategic Plan, including potential additional work to further assess the potential for urban regeneration and development on brownfield land, which will impact on the timetable. Whilst uncertainty remains about exactly when the next consultation stage will take place, it will not be possible to achieve the December date in the current LDS. Therefore, it is suggested that this date be moved

provisionally to June 2023. The Council is required to specify the date that the LDS will be brought into effect. It is suggested that this should be upon the expiry of the call-in period for Planning Policy Committee decisions.

- 5.2 The updated LDS attached at Appendix A sets out the anticipated timetable for the preparation of the WNSP and the examination and adoption stages of the NLPP2. The LDS envisages that the WNSP will be submitted for examination in May 2024 with adoption in September 2025. On the assumption that consultation on the Proposed Modifications to the NLPP2 starts on 7th November 2022 and the Planning Inspectors are able to produce their report in mid January 2023, it is anticipated that adoption of the NLPP2 will take place in March 2023, at Full Council, following consideration of a report by this Committee in February.

6. Issues and Choices

- 6.1 The updated LDS presented at Appendix A sets out a timetable for the completion of the remaining stages of the NLPP2 and a revised timetable for the preparation of the WNSP based on the resources currently available. It is a statutory requirement for the Council to publish an LDS and ensure that it is up to date. As such, failing to approve an LDS is not an option.
- 6.2 The Committee could consider options for preparing the WNSP more quickly, but this would necessitate additional resources and may also run the risk that the plan would not be thoroughly prepared and could be found unsound at examination.

7. Implications (including financial implications)

7.1 Resources and Financial

- 7.1.1 The costs of producing the updated LDS can all be met from existing resources.

7.2 Legal

- 7.2.1 Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act sets out the statutory requirement for local planning authorities to publish a Local Development Scheme and ensure that it is kept up to date.

7.3 Risk

- 7.3.1 Failure to maintain an up-to-date LDS could result in the WNSP and the NLPP2 failing legal tests.

7.4 Consultation and Communications

7.4.1 There is no requirement for formal consultation on the LDS. Once the LDS is published, communications and consultation activities will play a key role as the timetables move forward for preparing the local plans for development in their area.

7.5 **Consideration by Overview and Scrutiny**

7.5.1 Not applicable.

7.6 **Climate Impact**

7.6.1 The approval of the LDS does not have any direct implications for climate change. However, the NLPP2 includes policies to address climate change that will contribute to the Council's ambitions in this respect. The WNSP will include policies that will address climate change.

7.7 **Community Impact**

7.7.1 The LDS provides information to the community on the timetable for the preparation of Local Plans and opportunities to be involved.

8. Background Papers

None