



Local Development Scheme

Work programme for the Local Plan Review

New Forest District (outside the National Park)

December 2025

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1 Introduction

1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) provides information about the production of the New Forest District Local Plan for the area outside the New Forest National Park (Figure 1) hereafter referred to as the 'plan area'. The New Forest National Park Authority is responsible for producing the Local Plan for the National Park area.

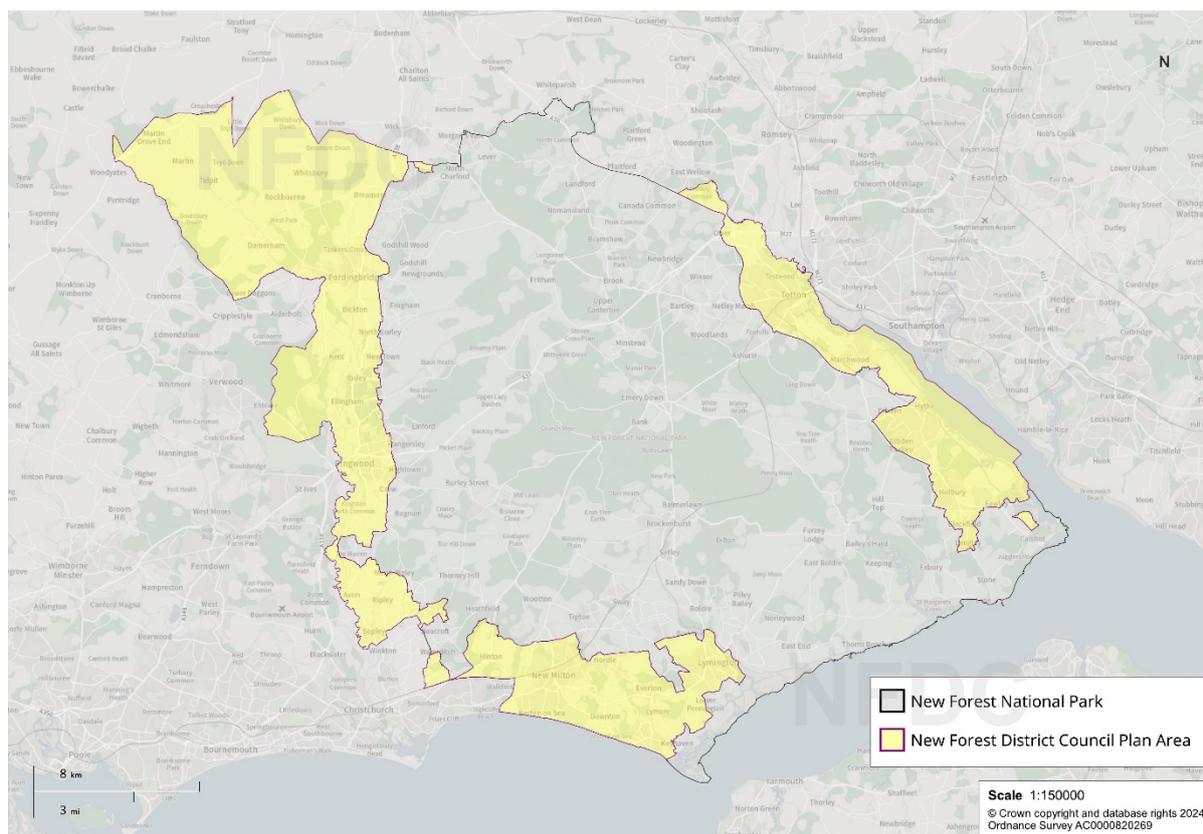


Figure 1: Map of the New Forest District Council Local Planning Authority Area

1.2 The LDS sets out the work programme for the Local Plan review and identifies when the public and other interested parties can get involved in the process of plan-making. It includes information about the content and production timetable for the Local Plan review, superseding the previous 2021 version which addressed preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 2016-2036. The Local Plan Part 2 is no longer being progressed; work undertaken so far will be included within the full Local Plan review.

1.3 The Local Plan is the most important part of the Development Plan for the plan area. The Development Plan is the statutory basis for deciding planning applications, provided that it is up to date. As of August 2025, the Development Plan for New Forest District (outside the National Park) comprises the following:

- the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy adopted July 2020
- Saved policies from the following earlier Local Plans as listed in Appendix A of the Local Plan Part 1: Planning Strategy (2020)
- the Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy adopted in October 2009
- the Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management adopted in April 2014
- Policy DW-E12: Protection of Landscape Features - saved from the Local Plan First Review (2005).
- the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan adopted by the Hampshire Minerals and Waste authorities in October 2013.
- 'Made' (Adopted by a supportive local referendum, after review by an independent examiner) Neighbourhood Development Plans - as at December 2025 these are for the Hythe & Dibden, New Milton and Ringwood neighbourhood areas.

1.4 As of December 2025, the following Neighbourhood Plans are being prepared or being considered for modification:

- Totton and Eling Town Council and Fordingbridge Town Council are both currently preparing a neighbourhood plan with consultation expected in late 2025 / early 2026.
- Fawley Parish Council have recently concluded consultation on their draft plan (Regulation 14) and consultation on the final plan (Regulation 16) is expected in early 2026.

- Lymington and Pennington Neighbourhood Plan – this was submitted by Lymington and Pennington Town Council on Friday 7th March 2025 and subsequently underwent the final (Regulation 16) public consultation from Friday 7th March 2025 to Friday 30th May 2025. The plan has been examined and is now awaiting council approval before proceeding to referendum.
- Sandleheath Neighbourhood Plan Parish Council – Sandleheath Parish are currently consulting on their Regulation 16 plan until the 17 December 2025 before looking to submit this for examination.
- New Milton Neighbourhood Plan – New Milton Town Council are currently reviewing their Neighbourhood Plan and have consulted on the initial modifications during 2025 with a Regulation 16 consultation taking place between 28 November 2025 and 23 January 2026.

1.5 If 'made' these Neighbourhood Plans would also become part of the Local Development Plan.

2 Context for the Local Development Scheme (LDS) update

- 2.1 **The Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1** was adopted in July 2020. It was prepared in a period of national planning policy transition, notably in respect of calculating housing need and the setting of housing targets. The Plan was found sound (subject to agreed modifications) with no requirement for early review in the light of the new planning guidance in place at the time of Local Plan examination.
- 2.2 Shortly after the adoption of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1 in 2020 the government consulted on wide-ranging changes to the planning system and the plan-making process. The Council paused work on the Local Plan Part 2 until it became clearer whether further work on it would be overtaken by events.
- 2.3 Significant changes were made to the **National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPF) in December 2024 which included a new methodology for calculating housing need.
- 2.4 An LDS for a Local Plan Review was originally published in March 2024 and revised in both October 2024 and August 2025. However, following publication of the revised NPPF, wider planning reforms and the timetable for Local Government Reorganisation becoming clearer, there has been a need to revise this.

3 Local Plan review approach and programme

Approach

3.1 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England)

Regulations 2012 set out the main requirements for preparing a local plan. The general process followed is shown in (Figure 2), this may evolve as further planning reforms details are introduced (including the scope of the draft Local Plan).

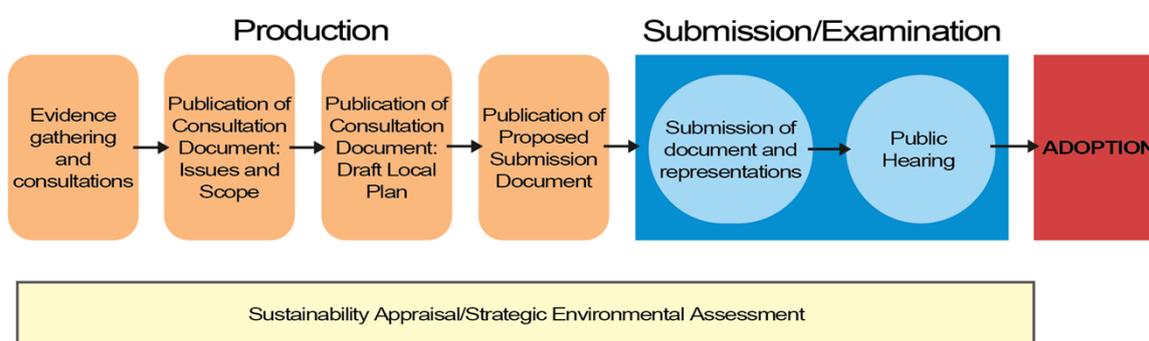


Figure 2: Local Plan Preparation stages

- 3.2 The next Local Plan review will comprise a single document, replacing the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1 and all policies ‘saved’ from earlier Local Plans.
- 3.3 There can be more than one public consultation before the Local Plan review is published in final ‘submission’ form (when it is open for further public consultation to inform the examination process).
- 3.4 The council held an early ‘Issues & Scope’ consultation in early 2025 on the issues the Local Plan review should cover and its scope. This consultation ran from 26th February 2025 to 4th April 2025. An update on this consultation was given to Cabinet in August 2025.
- 3.5 A spatial options ‘Regulation 18’ plan consultation was originally planned to be held in late 2025, however, with the government's LGR consultation now commencing in November, it was concluded that progressing both consultations simultaneously would not be helpful.

Programme

3.6 This revised programme recommends rescheduling the Spatial Options consultation to start in early February 2026 and run until mid-March, to take account of the LGR consultation. This is the earliest this consultation could take place and may need to be reviewed again pending further consultations the Government have planned, including consultation on National Development Management Policies expected towards the end of 2025.

3.7 The programme for the Local Plan Review will follow the following steps:

Step 1 - Initial Evidence Base Scoping and Commissioning (Completed Spring 2024)

3.8 This initial stage involved identifying and commissioning the necessary studies and data to inform the Local Plan Review.

Step 2 - Preparation of Issues and Scope Public Consultation Document (Completed February 2025)

3.9 The Issues and Scope document outlined the key planning issues and the scope of the Local Plan that the council considered important and sought the public views. The public were invited to comment on the identified issues and scope of the plan. This stage also included a “Call for Sites,” where landowners and developers could propose sites for potential development.

Step 3 - Consultation Review, Evidence Base Development, Option Testing, and Drafting of Regulation 18 Local Plan Document (February 2026)

3.10 Feedback from the initial Issues and Scope consultation has been reviewed, alongside further evidence. Additional evidence was gathered, and various development options tested.

3.11 This Regulation 18 plan will focus on areas of potential growth being illustrated on high level maps with limited, if any, preference on any one area.

3.12 In terms of the policy direction, this will focus on the emerging themes and principles that will shape the detailed planning policies in the Local Plan. At this stage, the council will not be finalising policies but rather seeking feedback on the direction they should take.

3.13 This plan will also take account of revised National policy updates, including any national Development Management policies which are due to be published for consultation before the end of 2025.

3.14 It is proposed that consultation on this Regulation 18 plan will begin shortly after the end of the consultation on Local Government Reorganisation, which ends mid-January 2026 and a Cabinet decision at the start of February 2026. The consultation will run for 6 weeks and conclude in mid-March 2026.

Step 4 - Consultation Review, Further Testing, and Preparation of Pre-Submission Plan

3.15 Responses from the second consultation will be reviewed alongside further technical evidence gathering. This work will then inform the preparation of the pre-submission version of the plan.

Step 5 - Public Consultation on Published Plan ('Regulation 19')

3.16 A draft Local Plan will be formally published for public consultation under Regulation 19. This will be the final opportunity for public comment before submission for examination.

Step 6 - Examination Period

3.17 The plan will be submitted for for Independent Examination (under Regulation 22) by the end of 2026. The dates for this will be set as part of the independent examination and cannot be defined as yet. However, this stage will include:

- Examination Hearing: Public hearings are held where the inspector examines the plan's soundness.
- In-Examination Modifications and Consultation (if recommended): If the inspector suggests changes, these are made and publicly consulted on.

- **Inspector's Report:** The inspector issues a report with conclusions and any final required modifications.

Step 7 - Adoption of the Local Plan

3.18 Once the inspector's report is received and any final changes are made, the Local Plan will be formally adopted by the local authority. This is expected to be around the end of 2027.

3.19 For areas where a Neighbourhood Plan is being actively prepared the council will proactively work with that neighbourhood planning group to include any community-led planning objectives within the scope of the plan. The aim will be to ensure the timely progression of a sufficient and consistent planning framework for the plan area as a whole, whilst avoiding unnecessary duplication.

4 Documents supporting the Local Plan

- 4.1 A full evidence base will be prepared to support the exploration and testing of key issues and feasible policy options for the Local Plan review.
- 4.2 A range of existing Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and other supplementary guidance supports the adopted Local Plan 2016-2036, although these are expected to cease to apply from 2027 under the provisions of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (2023). Further details on supplementary guidance can be found on our [Planning Policy guidance page](#).
- 4.3 The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (December 2024) sets out that all local planning authorities should prepare design guides or codes. In response to this, a plan area-wide Design Code will be prepared alongside the Local Plan. Further Design Codes for specific communities, sites or types of development will be considered.

Annex 1: programme for the preparation of the Local Plan review

New Forest District (outside the National Park) Local Plan review programme

Local Plan Review		2025				2026				2027			
		Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Winter
Initial evidence base scoping and commissioning (completed Spring 2024)													
Preparation of an Issues and Scope public consultation document (completed February 2025)													
Public consultation on the Local Plan Issues and Scope ('Regulation 18') (including a 'call for sites') (Completed April 2025)		█											
Consultation review, evidence base development, option testing, drafting of Regulation 18 Local Plan Document		█	█	█	█								
Public Consultation on ' Spatial Options and Policy Direction ' ('Regulation 18') (February / March 2026)					█								
Consultation review, further testing and preparation of pre-submission Plan					█	█	█						
Public Consultation on Published Plan (Regulation 19)							█	█					
Examination period ¹	Submit published local plan for independent examination (Regulation 22)							█					
	Examination hearing								█	█			
	In-examination Modifications and consultation, if recommended by the Inspector									█	█		
	Inspector's report										█	█	
Adoption													█

1. The timing and duration of the examination period is at the discretion of the Planning Inspectorate. Modifications of some form may be required. These may affect the final Local Plan adoption date and as such the examination period timeline is indicative.