

Hastings Borough Council Local Development Scheme

Update to the 3-year programme for preparation
of local plan documents

January 2026 update

How to contact us

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Summary

The Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the Council's planned programme for the preparation of the local plan and other local development documents. Its main purpose is to provide a publicly available and up-to-date timetable for the preparation of these documents. Importantly it sets out the opportunities for contributing to plans for all interested parties. It is prepared in accordance with legal requirements.

The Hastings Local Plan currently comprises the following documents (shown in figure 1):

- [The Hastings Planning Strategy](#) (adopted 19 February 2014)
- [The Hastings Local Plan Development Management Plan](#) (adopted 23 September 2015)
- [The Waste and Minerals Plan](#) (adopted 19 February 2013)
- [The Waste and Minerals sites Plan](#) (adopted 07 February 2017)
- [The Waste and Minerals Local Plan – Revised Policies](#) (adopted 24 October 2024)

The Council has also adopted a number of 'supplementary planning documents' which provide additional guidance for applicants on local plan policies: <https://www.hastings.gov.uk/planning/policy/guidance/>

Other planning documents include:

- [Local Plan Monitoring Reports](#)
- [Statement of Community Involvement](#)
- [Brownfield Register](#)

The Council is working on the Hastings Local Plan for the period 2023 to 2041. This will set out the spatial development strategy for the borough to deliver the Council's social, environmental and economic priorities. It will also set out development management policies and specific requirements for development sites in the borough. It will replace the Hastings Planning Strategy (2014) and Hastings Development Management Plan (2015).

The **draft Local Plan** was consulted upon in Quarter 4 2020/21 with consultation closing on 24 March 2021. Responses to this consultation are being used where relevant to inform the **Regulation 18 - Preferred Options version of the Local Plan** which will now be published for further comments in February 2026 for a 6 week period.

This Regulation 18 – Preferred Options version of the Local Plan and any comments will be considered and responded to in order to form the Regulation 19 – Proposed Submission Version of the Local Plan. The Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan seeks comments on whether this version is legally sound. Comments received on the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination. Submission of the Local Plan to the Planning Inspectorate is timetabled for December 2026 with the independent examination anticipated to take place in the municipal year 2026/2027.

Subject to the outcomes of the independent examination, and based on advice from the Planning Inspectorate regarding the time needed between submitting the draft Plan for independent examination and the Council adopting the Plan, it is expected that the new Plan will be adopted June 2028.

In addition, the Council will support communities on any Neighbourhood Plans. The Council will consider the need for any new supplementary planning documents as it progresses work on the Local Plan. The LDS will be updated to take account of this.

A risk assessment and mitigation measures for the LDS programme is included at appendix A.

Figure 1: The documents that make up the Hastings Local Plan



Introduction

1. The Council is the local planning authority for Hastings and is responsible for preparing a Local Plan for its area to guide development in the borough in accordance with relevant Regulations¹ and in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)² and national Planning Practice Guidance³.
2. The Hastings Local Development Scheme (LDS) has been produced to give local residents, statutory consultees / key stakeholders and any other interested parties information on the:
 - local development documents the Council is currently preparing, as well as those the Council intends to produce
 - subject matter of the documents, and the geographical area they cover
 - timetable for the stages of preparation and adoption of these documents
3. The LDS has been prepared in accordance with legal requirements⁴ and updates the last version which was published in December 2025.
4. The local plan and timetable addressed in this version of the Local Development Scheme is based on the current plan-making system. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act which became law on 26 October 2023⁵ includes changes to the plan-making system. The Local Planning Authority continues to prepare planning policies under the current system whilst monitoring the new Act and any transitional arrangements.

Current Local Plan Documents

Development Plan Documents

5. At present the 'Development Plan' for Hastings comprises the following documents.

The Hastings Planning Strategy

6. The [Hastings Planning Strategy](#) (HPS) was adopted in February 2014. The Planning Strategy is the principal development plan document for the borough and sets out the overall vision and strategic objectives for the delivery of growth in Hastings between 2011 and 2028. It also includes development management policies which will help shape new development over the lifetime of the Plan.

The Hastings Development Management Plan

7. The [Hastings Development Management Plan](#) (DMP) which was adopted in 2015, identifies sites proposed for development and protection in line with the HPS. It also included development management policies against which planning applications are assessed.

¹ [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

² https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/15>

⁵ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/enacted>

Policies Map

8. In parallel with the development of the Hastings Planning Strategy and Hastings Development Management Plan, a Policies Map was produced. This shows the location of designated policy areas in the adopted Local Plan (HPS & DMP) on an Ordnance Survey based map. The interactive Policies Map is available to view on the Council's website at: <http://www.planvu.co.uk/hbc2015/>

Waste and Minerals Plans

9. East Sussex County Council, the South Downs National Park and Brighton & Hove City Council are the responsible authorities for preparing the Minerals and Waste Local Plans. The East Sussex, South Downs, and Brighton & Hove Waste and Minerals Plan was adopted in 2013.
10. A 'part 2' document – the Waste and Minerals Sites Plan was adopted in February 2017 and the Waste and Minerals Local Plan - Revised Policies was adopted in October 2024. These are part of a series of documents known as the East Sussex, South Downs and Brighton and Hove Waste and Minerals Local Plan and form part of the adopted Hastings Local Plan along with their accompanying policies maps.
11. More information about all the above can be found on the County Council webpage [Waste and minerals plans and monitoring reports | East Sussex County Council](#)

Neighbourhood Plans

12. Regulations⁶ concerning neighbourhood planning came into force in April 2012 and were revised in 2017. These make provision for:
 - Neighbourhood Development Plans
 - Neighbourhood Development Orders
 - Community Right to Build
13. There are no adopted Neighbourhood Plans at present. More information can be found about Neighbourhood Planning on our website [Neighbourhood planning guidance | Planning | Hastings Borough Council](#)
14. The West St Leonards Neighbourhood Forum and the West St Leonards Neighbourhood Area were approved under delegated authority on 06 February 2024. The West St Leonards Neighbourhood Forum have authority to create a Neighbourhood Plan for the West St Leonards Area. The development of this plan is in progress. More information about this can be found on our website [West St Leonards Forum | Planning | Hastings Borough Council](#)

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

15. Other local plan documents include Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which provide more detailed guidance on the application of policies and proposals in the statutory development plan. SPDs are not part of the development plan – and as such do not create new policies - but can be a material consideration in determining planning applications. The Council has prepared six SPDs:
 - Roof Materials for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas SPD (July 2005)
 - Replacement Doors and Windows for Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas SPD (July 2005)
 - Householder Development SPD (February 2007)
 - Shopfronts and Advertisements SPD (September 2007)
 - Employment Land Retention SPD (December 2015)

⁶ The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and later versions, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/20/contents>

- Visitor Accommodation SPD (December 2015)

16. Copies of these SPDs are available on our [website](#)
17. The Council is currently progressing a Development Brief and Masterplan for the site at the former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus which will be a Supplementary Planning Document. Details of timetable can be found in table 3 of this LDS.

Local Plan Monitoring Report

18. The Council also publishes a Local Plan Monitoring Report. The role and purpose of this report is to publish data on housing, employment and other development statistics; plan making progress against the LDS; consultations on planning forums and duty to cooperate matters. The most recent monitoring report can be viewed at: <https://www.hastings.gov.uk/planning/policy/localplanmonitoring/>
19. As a result of future monitoring, the Council will decide what changes, if any, need to be made to the Local Plan and will bring forward any such changes through a review of this LDS.

Brownfield Land Register

20. The Housing and Planning Act (2016) places a duty on local planning authorities to prepare, maintain and publish a register of brownfield land (also known as previously developed land) which the Council has assessed as being potentially suitable for residential development. The register is used to monitor the Government's commitment to the delivery of brownfield sites. This register can be accessed on the Council's website: <https://www.hastings.gov.uk/planning/policy/BrownfieldRegister/>

Local Plan Documents to be prepared over the next 3 years

Updating the Existing Local Plan: Hastings Local Plan 2023–2041

21. The new local plan will cover the 18-year period from 2023 – 2041 and is being produced in compliance with the latest Government guidance and the National Planning Policy Framework. Before it can be adopted it will need to be subject to an independent examination (which is held in public) by the Planning Inspectorate. This independent examination will 'test whether the local plan is:
- **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the areas objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
 - **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
 - **Effective** – deliverable over the plan period, and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
 - **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework and other statements of national planning policy, where relevant.

Hastings Local Plan 2023–2041 – Content

22. The preparation of a new Hastings Local Plan provides an opportunity to refresh the existing statutory development plan to deliver on Council objectives and community priorities. It will set out the Council's spatial strategy for growth and new development in Hastings along with specific requirements for infrastructure. It will also include detailed development management policies setting out the form development in Hastings will need to take and any measures required to mitigate the impact of development.
23. The vision, objectives and approach of the plan is being informed by evidence, engagement and consultation with key stakeholders but some of the priority themes and issues that it will respond to include:
- addressing climate change and the low carbon agenda
 - supporting a diverse thriving economy
 - protecting the natural, built and historical environment
 - increasing the delivery of housing and sustainably designed homes including responding to the Government's annual housing target figure
 - maximising delivery of affordable housing that meets local need
 - promoting more sustainable transport
 - creating healthy places with opportunities for more active lifestyles
 - achieving growth while mitigating any impacts on and enhancing valued natural environment assets
24. Several of these issues overlap and are complementary, but in some cases, a balanced approach will need to be taken where these priorities conflict. These balanced policy approaches will be clearly set out through the Local Plan. In addition, the Local Plan cannot undermine the viability of developments and must be deliverable – if the plan is not deliverable it will fail the independent examination.

25. It is critically important to the preparation of the new Local Plan that policies are balanced; that a robust evidence base including related to viability and deliverability is developed; that the sustainability impacts of the plan are considered and that effective community engagement is undertaken. These aspects of plan making process are explained below.

Hastings Local Plan 2023–2041 – The process for plan preparation

26. Evidence gathering to support the development of the new plan is taking place. This evidence is being used to inform the strategy and policies contained in the plan. Further information on the evidence base published so far is available on the Council [Draft New Local Plan Evidence Base](#)
27. The Local Plan is subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and, where required, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). Assessment of the sustainability implications of the policies will be prepared and published at the key stages of the Plan's preparation. This is in line with the Regulations⁷.
28. As part of the work to ensure the Sustainability Appraisal is undertaken correctly, the Council is working with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. Alongside this, the Council is also working with Rother District Council and East Sussex County Council.
29. During the first Regulation 18 consultation undertaken between 27th January and 24th March 2021, the Council engaged with a range of parties including residents, businesses, developers and other local groups to capture the diversity of views on key issues for the Local Plan and undertook the consultation in line with the [Statement of Community Involvement](#). This will be repeated for the next stages of formal consultation.
30. Comments received on the draft Local Plan have been used to develop, refine and improve the new Local Plan. This is an iterative process which means that at the Regulation 18 – Preferred Options stage, the same process of considering comments received will take place to inform the next version of the Local Plan which will be the Regulation 19 'proposed submission version Local Plan'. The proposed submission version Local Plan will be published for comments in August 2026 for 6 weeks. This proposed submission version of the Plan and any comments received on it are then submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination. We expect submission to take place in December 2026 with the independent examination following soon after.
31. Subject to the outcomes of the independent examination, the new Local Plan is expected to be adopted in June 2028. The Examination period is outside the control of the Council. We have assumed an 18-month period between Submission and Adoption of the Local Plan on Planning Inspectorate advice.
32. When adopted, the Hastings Local Plan 2023 – 2041, will replace the Hastings Planning Strategy (2014) and the Hasting Development Management Plan (2015).
33. A summary of the planned scope of the document and timeline for its production is provided in the table below.

⁷ Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a local planning authority to carry out a sustainability appraisal of each of the proposals in a plan during its preparation.

Table 1: Hastings Local Development Plan

Purpose and subject	To set out the vision, objectives and strategy for the type, scale, and priority locations for development. This will include strategic policies, development management policies and site allocations.	
Coverage	Borough-wide	
Status	Local Plan document – part of the statutory development Plan	
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework	
Key milestones	Plan Stage	Date
	Consulting statutory bodies on the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal	Quarter 1 2020/2021
	Public participation in the preparation of the Local Plan (Local Plan Regulations, Regulation 18 Stage)	Quarter 4 2020/2021
	Public participation in the preparation of the Local Plan (Local Plan Regulations, Regulation 18 Stage – Preferred Options)	February 2026 for 6 weeks
	Publication of the Proposed Submission of the Local Plan (Local Plan Regulations, Regulation 19 – Proposed Submission Version)	August 2026 for 6 weeks
	Submission to the Planning Inspectorate for Independent Examination	December 2026
	Adoption of the Local Plan	June 2028
Arrangements for production	<p>Organisational lead – Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive and the Chief Executive</p> <p>Political management - Executive decision (Cabinet), Full Council resolution required for publication and adoption stages</p> <p>Internal resources - Planning Policy team with wide ranging input across the Council</p> <p>External resources – Statutory consultees and other key stakeholders including East Sussex County Council, Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England, infrastructure and other service providers, specialist contractors where required to help develop the evidence base.</p> <p>Community engagement and involvement – Undertaken in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement.</p>	

Neighbourhood Plans

34. The West St. Leonard’s Neighbourhood Forum has confirmed that the timetable for the production of the West St. Leonard’s Neighbourhood Plan has been delayed. As such, whilst there is an indicative date for the Regulation 14 consultation exercise to come forward in the autumn of 2025, there is some uncertainty around when subsequent stages of the Neighbourhood Plan would be undertaken.

Table 2: Hastings Local Development Plan – West St. Leonard’s Neighbourhood Plan		
Purpose and subject	<p>The West St Leonards Neighbourhood Forum (WSLNF) and the West St Leonards Neighbourhood Area (NA) were designated in February 2024 and cover the West St Leonards ward and parts of the adjoining Maze Hill and Central St Leonards wards.</p> <p>The NP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan. The NP will include planning policies designed to deliver the Forum’s vision and objectives for the NA by guiding the shape and location of future development.</p>	
Coverage	West St. Leonard’s Neighbourhood Area	
Status	Development Plan Document – part of the statutory development Plan	
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework	
Key milestones	Plan Stage	Date
	Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation and publicity	To be confirmed
	The dates for subsequent stages are not yet known	N/A
Arrangements for production	<p>Organisational lead – Chair of West St Leonard’s Neighbourhood Forum</p> <p>Political management – N/A</p> <p>Internal resources – N/A</p> <p>External resources – Central government funding and other grants</p> <p>Community engagement and involvement – Undertaken in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement.</p>	

Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document

35. The Council is currently working with Historic England and the site owner to bring forward a development brief and site wide masterplan. Consultants have been appointed to undertake drafting the Masterplan document on behalf of the Council and will also support the Council in facilitating the consultation to be undertaken on the document before it is finalised and adopted by the Council.

Table 3: Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document		
Purpose and subject	The purpose of the SPD is to create a comprehensive heritage and landscape led approach required to enable the development of the site that secures the repair, restoration, active reuse, and on-going care and maintenance of the former Convent buildings and their associated gardens and the respectful protection and potential enhancement of the Nuns' Cemetery.	
Coverage	Site of the Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus	
Status	Supplementary Planning Document	
Conformity	National Planning Policy Framework	
Key milestones	Plan Stage	Date
	Public engagement in the preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document	Spring 2026
	Consideration and Adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document	Summer 2026
Arrangements for production	<p>Organisational lead – Director of Place/Deputy Chief Executive and Planning Policy Manager</p> <p>Political management - Executive decision (Cabinet)</p> <p>Internal resources - Planning Policy team with wide ranging input across the Council</p> <p>External resources – Statutory consultees and other key stakeholders including Historic England and design consultants to draft the masterplan</p> <p>Community engagement and involvement – Undertaken in compliance with the Statement of Community Involvement</p>	

Work on future planning documents

36. The Council will consider the need for further supplementary planning documents as the new Local Plan is progressed. This LDS will be updated and re-published to reflect any proposed new SPDs, setting out the timetable for production and including consultation and adoption dates.

Appendix A - Risk Assessment

The Council's Cabinet is authorised to approve documents for public consultation. However, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, statutory development plan documents that are to be published or adopted as Council policy are decided by Full Council.

The Portfolio Holder for Planning oversees the preparation of planning policy documents and is involved throughout, from the early stages of the process.

Management is overseen by the Head of Strategic Programmes. Day-to-day management of the production of the planning policy documents is undertaken by the Planning Policy Manager.

The main responsibility for the Local Plan preparation lies with the Planning Policy team. Beyond the expertise in the team, the support of other Council officers will be provided at key stages in the preparation process, notably in the production of detailed development management policies, where capacity exists.

External expertise has been required to assist with the preparation of specialist studies and assessments.

The resource requirements are regularly monitored in line with the Council's existing budgetary processes

A risk assessment is presented in the table below, with potential responses.

Risk factor	Likelihood / Scale of impact	Contingency actions and response	Impact
Work demands that are not programmed notably Neighbourhood Plans	High / High	Manage inputs to neighbourhood plans and strictly prioritise inputs to re-work demands Short-term extra resources Review programmes for priority policy documents	Delay Possible financial cost
Changes to Planning Legislation, Planning policy and Guidance	Medium / High	Monitor emerging Government papers, guidance, consultations etc. Retain a flexible approach to project planning and evidence review (e.g., DtC, housing requirements and SA) and reassess priorities through review of LDS	Delay

Risk Factor	Likelihood / Scale of impact	Contingency actions and response	Impact
Evidence relating to Duty to Cooperate	Medium / High	<p>Ensure all relevant prescribed bodies have been contacted on relevant cross boundary strategic matters. Review ongoing working arrangements. Ensure key issues are being addressed, including housing needs, economy and infrastructure.</p> <p>Produce MoUs as appropriate and general SoCG (draft and final). Create DtC Compliance Statement.</p>	<p>Delay</p> <p>Reputational and financial if Plan is found unsound</p>
Staff shortages e.g. unable to recruit, long term sick leave etc.	Medium / High	<p>Consideration with HR of recruitment and retention issues</p> <p>Subject to timing of absence, purchase expertise on short term basis via consultancy</p> <p>Seek shared staff resource if applicable from other authorities</p> <p>Review programme and priorities</p>	<p>Delay</p> <p>Financial cost</p>
Requisite expertise or capacity not available in-house	Medium / Medium	<p>Staff training/CPD. Identify evidence needs with other Local Planning Authorities (LPAs)</p> <p>Train staff</p> <p>Purchase expertise on short term basis</p> <p>Sharing expertise with other LPAs</p>	Financial cost

Risk Factor	Likelihood / Scale of impact	Contingency actions and response	Impact
Budgetary limitations	Medium / High	Council budgetary management processes Reassess department priorities through review of both the LDS and the department's work programme	Delay Non-achievement of other department priorities
Longer process times, especially due to high level of responses	Medium / High	Encourage online representations Early engagement Secure administrative assistance Review programme and priorities	Delay Missing December 2026 submission deadline
Neighbourhood Plan lacks sufficient resources to progress	Medium / Low	Assist Neighbourhood Forum in identifying potential funding streams and resources	Delay in the production of the West St. Leonard's Neighbourhood Plan
Former Convent of the Holy Child Jesus Supplementary Planning Document could be delayed by resources being diverted to the Local Plan	High / High	Additional resource identified to assist in completing and adopting the SPD	Delay could undermine attempts to bring forward a viable scheme and could mean the chance to restore the "Building at Risk" is missed and parts of a valuable heritage asset are lost