



**NORWICH**  
City Council

# **Indicative Local Development Scheme for Norwich**

**March 2025**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Local development scheme (LDS) must be prepared under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). It must identify the documents that will be prepared to set out the strategy for the development and use of land in the local planning authority's area – collectively called **development plan documents (DPD)**. An LDS is a project plan which identifies the documents which, when prepared, will make up the Local Plan for the area. It must be made publicly available and kept up to date. It allows the public and stakeholders to find out about planning policies in their area, the status of any emerging policies in the development plan, and the details of and timescales for production of all relevant documents.
- 1.2 This indicative LDS applies only to the area of the city for which Norwich City Council is the local planning authority. It should be noted that part of the administrative area of Norwich (namely the tidal river Wensum downstream of New Mills and an area of land at Cremorne Lane) falls within the planning jurisdiction of the Broads Authority, which is subject to a separate local plan and LDS.

## 2. The adopted local plan

- 2.1 Two plans are already in place to guide the council's decisions on planning applications. These are the **Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP)** and the **Development Management (DM) Policies Plan**. These form the existing adopted local plan for Norwich. Both have been through a formal process of consultation and independent examination before adoption.
- 2.2 The **GNLP** sets the strategic planning agenda for the wider Greater Norwich area and plans for growth of homes and employment up to 2038. This plan also includes site allocations and a monitoring framework. Upon its adoption in March 2024, the GNLP replaced the Joint Core Strategy for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk (2014).
- 2.3 The **DM Policies Plan** sets out a range of more detailed policies applying throughout Norwich to be used in the council's assessment of development proposals and to guide future council decisions on applications for planning permission up to 2026. Its 33 policies cover a range of topics, the principles for which are set out in the NPPF. In certain cases, the policies also set out local criteria and standards for different kinds of development. The DM Policies Plan was adopted in December 2014.
- 2.4 The local plan documents fit into a hierarchy with broad strategic policies at the top and more detailed policies interpreting the strategic approach at a district and small area level. This is illustrated in Figure 1.

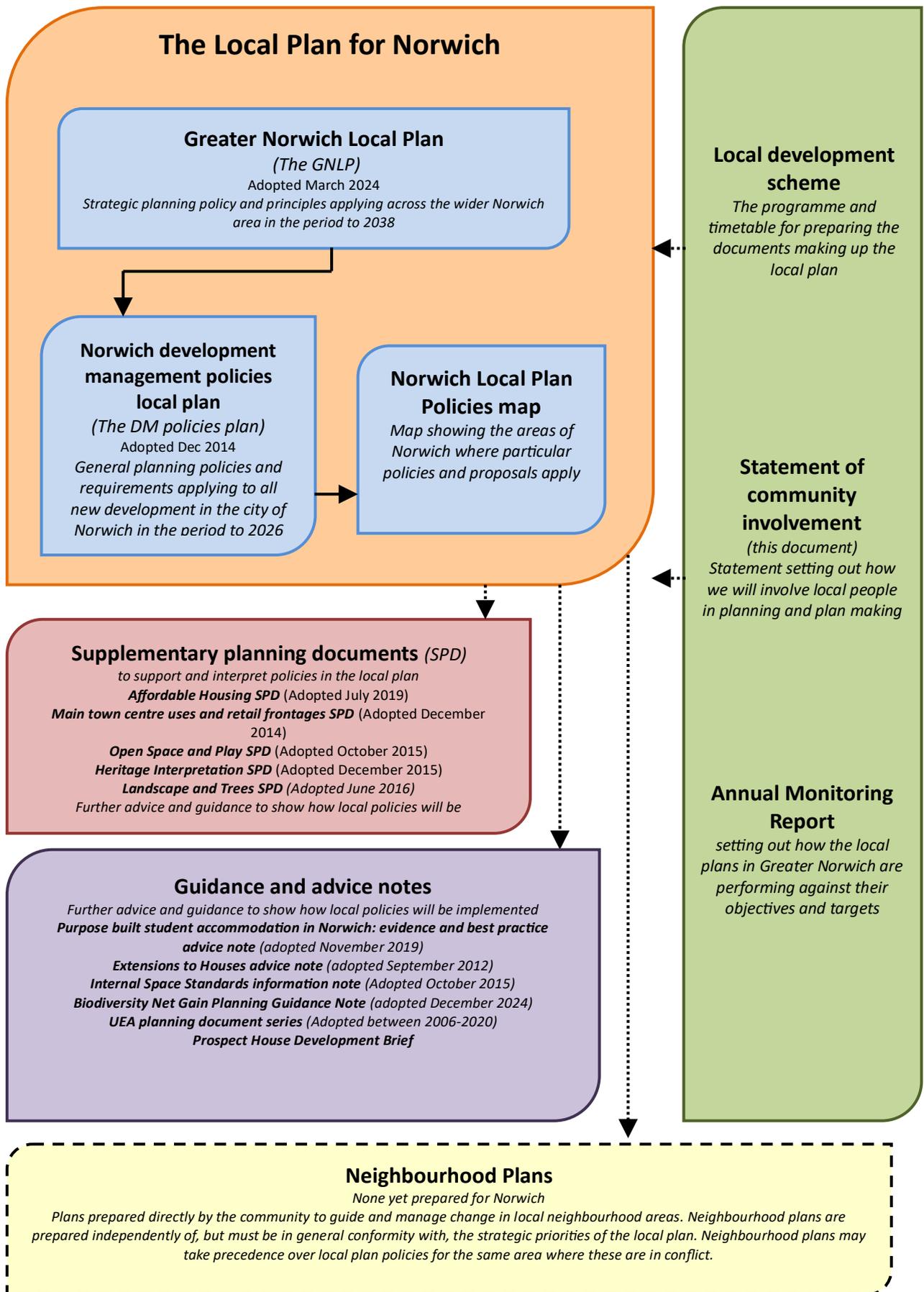


Figure 1: Figure 2: Documents making up the current 'development plan' for Norwich.

2.5 Certain other documents must be published alongside each DPD, including:

- the **sustainability appraisal (SA)** report of the plan at each stage (a **sustainability appraisal scoping report** is prepared and consulted on at the start of the process to set out what sustainability issues and objectives the SA should cover and what evidence it will use);
- A **habitats regulations assessment (HRA)** if policies and proposals in the plan are likely to have impacts on important natural and wildlife habitats protected by national and international legislation. This is also known as the “Appropriate Assessment”.
- a **policies map**, setting out the DPDs policies and proposals on a map base (if relevant);
- a **statement of consultation** summarising public representations made to the plan and how they have been addressed (called the “Regulation 22(c) statement”);
- copies of any representations made;
- any other supporting documents considered by the council to be relevant in preparing the plan;
- an **adoption statement and environmental statement** (when the plan is adopted).

2.6 The Localism Act 2011 allows for community led **neighbourhood plans** to be brought forward to complement the adopted local plan, and this is reflected in Figure 1. A neighbourhood area and neighbourhood forum have been designated for the northern city centre area in Norwich. However, no neighbourhood plans are yet adopted within the city boundary although a number of neighbourhood plans are now formally in place (“made”) for the adjoining suburban parishes of Cringleford in South Norfolk, and Sprowston, Hellesdon and Old Catton in Broadland. A neighbourhood plan for Trowse is also due to go to referendum shortly. The city council remains open to working in cooperation with community-led groups to produce neighbourhood plans where these help to promote beneficial development, regeneration or neighbourhood enhancement in accordance with the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the general principles set out in the NPPF.

2.7 **Supplementary planning documents (SPDs)** help to support and explain in more detail how the city council will implement particular policies and proposals in the Local Plan. SPDs can also take the form of master plans, detailed design briefs or development briefs for sites identified for future development (“allocated”) in the plan, as well as for other emerging sites.

2.8 National **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)** states that SPDs should build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on the policies in the Local Plan and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development. SPDs should not introduce new or include excessively detailed policy guidance, but ought to be used only where it can clarify and amplify existing policy and set out how it will help to bring forward sustainable development.

2.9 SPDs do not form part of the statutory development plan although they

are a material consideration in decision making. SPDs can be reviewed frequently and relatively straightforwardly to respond to change.

- 2.10 There are currently five adopted SPDs in place, which support the policies in the DM Policies Plan. Other planning guidance may also be produced during the lifetime of this indicative LDS and the existing adopted SPDs and Guidance Notes are outlined in Figure 1.

### 3. The LDS programme

- 3.1 Following publication of the new **National Planning Policy Framework** (NPPF) in December 2024, the resulting increase in housing targets for the Greater Norwich authorities means a review of the GNLP will be needed. This LDS has therefore been prepared to set out the profile and timetable for review of the GNLP and is set out in Section 4 and appendix 1. This review is programmed under the current plan-making system. However, the previous Government consulted on a proposal for Local Plans to be adopted within a 30-month time period from start of production, which has not yet been confirmed by the current Government. Given the remaining uncertainty around planning reforms and changes to the plan-making process, this version of the LDS has been titled “Indicative”. Further updates to the LDS can be made in due course.
- 3.2 In addition to the GNLP, further consideration will also need to be given to the timescales for reviewing the Norwich DM Policies Plan. The Government intends to publish National Development Management Policies covering issues that affect the whole country. It is possible that some of the existing content of the DM Policies Plan will be covered by the National DM policies, therefore there is a need to wait until the draft content of the national policies is published before reviewing the Norwich DM policies. Given the existing uncertainty around Government timeframes for publishing this content, the timeline for reviewing the DM Policies Plan is not included in the indicative LDS at this time. However, when further information becomes available the indicative LDS can be reviewed to set out the relevant timescales.
- 3.3 In addition to the GNLP review there are a number of SPDs which are currently being prepared. These are not part of the statutory development plan so are not included on the indicative LDS timetable but for information they are:
- East Norwich Masterplan
  - Greater Norwich Sustainable Communities SPD
  - Greater Norwich Green Infrastructure SPD
- 3.4 Norwich does not currently have any made neighbourhood plans. However, the Norwich Over the Wensum Neighbourhood Forum are

currently preparing their draft plan for the northern city centre area. The forum previously produced a project plan for this workstream which indicated the Regulation 14 pre-submission consultation would take place before the end of 2024. The Regulation 14 consultation did not take place as anticipated (along with subsequent stages of the plan) due to additional work in relation to Environmental Regulations (Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment). Therefore, the work programme for the plan will need to be revised. At present a new timetable has not been worked up by the forum and therefore has not been included on the indicative LDS timetable. However, when further information becomes available the indicative LDS can be updated with the relevant timescales.

#### 4. Document profiles

Document Title		Review of GNLP	
<b>Role and content</b>			
<b>Status</b>		Development Plan Document/Local Plan	
<b>Conformity</b>		The document must conform with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the GNLP and should also accord with standing advice in national the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) and other Government Policy Statements.	
<b>Geographical coverage</b>		Greater Norwich	
<b>Joint working arrangements (if any)</b>		Greater Norwich Authorities (Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council, South Norfolk Council)	
<b>Relationship with adopted local plan(s)</b>		Review of adopted GNLP	
<b>Evidence required</b> <i>May include selective reviews of the evidence base already in place for the adopted Local Plan and new or updated studies where necessary.</i>		<p>The evidence base may include (but may not be limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA), aka Site Assessments;</li> <li>• Viability Study;</li> <li>• Health Impact Assessment;</li> <li>• Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA);</li> <li>• Water Cycle Study;</li> <li>• Heritage Impact Assessment; and,</li> <li>• Landscape Character Assessment;</li> </ul>	

<b>Document Title</b>		<b>Review of GNL</b>	
		The plan must also be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) which will draw on, and themselves be part of, the evidence base.	
<b>Production milestones</b>		<b>Date</b>	
Scoping and early preparation, including call for sites		October 2025	
Gateway 1*		March 2026	
Mandatory Public Consultation (8 weeks) (Reg18)		September/October 2026	
Gateway 2*		February 2027	
Mandatory Public Consultation (6 weeks)(Reg19)		July 2027	
Gateway 3*		March 2028	
Examination		September 2028 – February 2029	
Finalisation and adoption of digital plan		March 2029	

\* Gateways have been included to provide an indication of how this process may look under the proposed reformed plan-making system.

#### **Arrangements for Production**

To be agreed.

#### **How will stakeholders and the community be involved?**

In accordance with approved Statements of Community Involvement (SCI)

#### **How will the document be reviewed?**

The document will be monitored and reviewed as part of the Annual Monitoring Report process.

In accordance with the NPPF, Local Plans should be reviewed every 5 years. Such a review will need to determine whether any significant matters have arisen, for example through changes to national policy or the identification of additional development needs, that mean the Plan needs to be updated or replaced.

The process of monitoring and reviewing may change in the future subject to any reforms announced by the Government to the statutory process for writing local plans.

## 5. Other documents related to the Development Plan Documents

- 5.1 In addition to the progress report provided by this indicative LDS, a number of other documents must be prepared alongside the local plan, but do not form part of it.
- 5.2 A **Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)** must show how the council intends to involve the community in plan preparation and planning decision-making. It is not a local development document but legally it must set out how documents specified in the LDS will be consulted on.
- 5.3 To ensure that plans and policies are effective, an **Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)** must also be prepared to record progress on implementing the local plan and how new development and change taking place in the previous year has contributed to achieving its targets. From 2011, the AMR for Norwich has been incorporated within a combined monitoring report prepared jointly by Norfolk County Council and the three district authorities covering Greater Norwich.
- 5.4 The **Norfolk Strategic Planning Framework (NSPF)** is a non-statutory strategic policy statement which sets broad targets and priorities for the next round of statutory Local Plans for individual districts and wider areas in Norfolk, facilitating joint working across district boundaries and helping to fulfil the statutory Duty to Co-operate. Consultation on the initial NSPF took place from July-September 2017, and the document was subsequently endorsed by all of the Norfolk authorities. During 2019 it was updated to reflect the requirements of the revised NPPF, in particular (a) so that it fulfils the remit of a 'Statement of Common Ground' and (b) so that it reflects the new 'standard' housing methodology and Version 2 was endorsed by all of the authorities in late 2019. In order to keep the document relevant and up to date, Version 3 of the NSPF was prepared and endorsed by all relevant partner organisations in May 2021. A further review is taking place and is expected to be agreed in 2025.
- 5.5 Local Planning Authorities must publish and maintain a statutory **Brownfield Land Register**. The register is intended to include details of any previously developed land suitable for housing, which is capable of accommodating five or more dwellings. The first Register was prepared for December 2017 and is reviewed annually.

# Appendix 1: Norwich City Council Indicative Local Development Scheme Timetable January 2025

ANNEX	INDICATIVE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR NORWICH, 2025-2029 KEY DOCUMENT PROGRAMME																																																											
	2025												2026												2027												2028												2029											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Greater Norwich Local Plan Review																																																												

- Preparation of document/evidence gathering to inform Reg 18 consultation
- Reg. 18 Consultation
- Pre-submission publication of the plan (Reg. 19)
- Submission to Secretary of State for Independent Examination (Reg. 22)
- Examination
- Adoption

