



# **Timetable for a New Local Plan**

## **Local Development Scheme**

**February 2025**

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. By law, Rushmoor Borough Council must keep under review matters that affect the development of the borough and the planning of its development.<sup>1</sup> It is also obliged to review any Local Plan that it has adopted within five years from the date of its adoption, that is, by 21<sup>st</sup> February 2024.<sup>2</sup>
- 1.2. The Council undertook a review of the adopted Local Plan in 2023 and decided that an update of the Local Plan policies is required and that this is expected to affect one or more strategic policy, which would require a full review of the Plan.<sup>3</sup> The consequence of this decision is that a new Local Plan will need to be prepared for Rushmoor.
- 1.3. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023<sup>4</sup> paves the way for reforms to the plan-making process and the form and content of local plans. In 2023, the previous Government consulted on some of the detail of these reforms. It is expected that many of these proposals will be carried forward by the new government, but the full implications of the reforms will not be known until more information (including secondary legislation) is published. The Government has indicated that there will be a consultation on future policy changes in Spring 2025 and a new plan-making system will be implemented later in 2025. The Council is progressing preparatory work on the Local Plan, where clarity exists, and aims to formally start the process of preparing a new Local Plan once the above information is available.
- 1.4. As a result, the Council is awaiting further clarity on this system prior to confirming the timetable for the preparation of the new Local Plan. However, on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the new Government published a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In light of this, the Deputy Prime Minister has requested that all local planning authorities produce an updated Local Development Scheme (LDS) within 12 weeks of the publication of the NPPF (i.e. by 6 March 2025).
- 1.5. On 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024, the Government published the English Devolution White Paper<sup>5</sup>. This announced the facilitation of a programme of local government reorganisation. This may result in Rushmoor Borough Council becoming part of a combined authority and may have implications for how the new Local Plan is prepared.
- 1.6. The updated LDS should include clear, realistic, and specific dates for consultation and submission of the local plan. However, it is important to note that, as further details on the planned reforms to plan-making are published by the Government and the potential

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<sup>1</sup> s13 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

<sup>3</sup> <https://democracy.rushmoor.gov.uk/documents/s13477/Review%20of%20the%20Rushmoor%20Local%20Plan%202014-2032%20-%20Report%20No.%20PG2334.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55/enacted>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/english-devolution-white-paper-power-and-partnership-foundations-for-growth/english-devolution-white-paper>

outcomes of changes resulting from the English Devolution White Paper are known, this LDS will need be reviewed.

### **What is the Local Development Scheme and what must it include?**

- 1.7. An LDS must specify<sup>6</sup> the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) (such as the Local Plan) which, when prepared, will comprise part of the development plan for the area. The LURA 2023 requires that the Council prepares a single Local Plan.
- 1.8. An LDS must also set out a council's timetable for producing DPDs, including key production and public consultation stages. This enables the community, businesses, landowners/developers, service and infrastructure providers and other interested organisations to know which DPDs are to be prepared for the area and when they will be able to participate.
- 1.9. However, as noted above, the Council intends to prepare a new Local Plan under the new plan-making system. The LURA 2023 does not prescribe timescales for plan making and these are expected to be brought forward in regulations later this year. However, in July 2023,<sup>7</sup> the previous Government consulted on the likely stages that we will need to follow to prepare a new Local Plan and indicated that we will be required to prepare and adopt a plan within 30 months. We have based this Local Development Scheme on these proposals, but this will need to be reviewed once details are set out in policy, guidance and regulations expected during 2025.
- 1.10. Councils 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 LDS must be made available publicly and kept up to date so that that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress. The Council must publish its LDS on its website.
- 1.11. The LURA 2023 also sets a requirement for us to prepare a Borough-wide Design Code. However, the new Government's consultation on changes to the planning system published in July 2024, proposed shifting the focus onto the preparation of localised design codes, masterplans and guides for areas of most change and most potential (e.g. regeneration sites, areas of intensification, urban extension and the development of large new communities). The Government's response to this consultation has stated that they will keep under review the provisions contained in the LURA 2023 on authority wide design codes and national policy and guidance on design in relation to how the use of localised design codes and other design tools, including masterplans and design guides, can be embedded as part of the plan-making process.
- 1.12. A decision on the scope of the Design Code and the extent to which it is incorporated within the new Local Plan will be made once further detail on planning reforms is available.

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<sup>6</sup> s15 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation>

### What period does this LDS cover?

1.13. This LDS covers the period from 2025 to 2028. It updates the previous LDS published in 2024.

### What is the existing development plan for Rushmoor?

1.14. The Rushmoor Local Plan 2014 to 2032 (the Local Plan)<sup>8</sup> is the adopted DPD for Rushmoor Borough.

1.15. The Borough is also covered by the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan 2013 (HMWP)<sup>9</sup> which Hampshire County Council has produced. This also forms part of the development plan for Rushmoor. Hampshire County Council is currently preparing a Partial Update of the HMWP. The Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan: Partial Update was submitted for independent examination on 29th July 2024<sup>10</sup>.

1.16. There are currently no Neighbourhood Plans in Rushmoor. The former South East Plan (2009) Policy NRM6 specifically covers development in the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area and is also part of the development plan for Rushmoor.

### What other documents has the council produced to support decision-making?

1.17. Rushmoor Borough Council has prepared a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which explain how the Council will apply Local Plan policies. At the time of drafting this LDS (January 2025), the following SPDs have been adopted. These are all available online at [www.rushmoor.gov.uk/spds](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/spds).

**Table 1 – Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)**

Title of SPD	Date adopted
<a href="#">Affordable Housing</a>	2019
<a href="#">Aldershot Town Centre Prospectus</a>	2016
<a href="#">Locally Listed Heritage Assets</a>	2020
<a href="#">Car and Cycle Parking Standards</a>	2024
<a href="#">Development Affecting Public Houses</a>	2015
<a href="#">Farnborough Civic Quarter Masterplan</a>	2015
<a href="#">Farnborough Town Centre</a>	2007

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policies/the-rushmoor-local-plan/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://documents.hants.gov.uk/mineralsandwaste/HampshireMineralsWastePlanADOPTED>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.hants.gov.uk/landplanningandenvironment/strategic-planning/hampshire-minerals-waste-plan/minerals-waste-plan-partial-update-consultation/hmwp-reg22>

<a href="#">Home Improvements and Extensions</a>	2020
<a href="#">Shop Front Design Guide</a>	2015
<a href="#">Transport Contributions</a>	2008
<a href="#">Biodiversity</a>	2024

1.18. In addition, the Council has adopted the following documents:

- [First Homes Interim Policy Statement \(2022\)](#)<sup>11</sup>
- [Financial Contributions for Open Space Interim Advice Note](#)<sup>12</sup>
- [Rushmoor Green Infrastructure Strategy \(2022\)](#)<sup>13</sup>

1.19. The Council periodically reviews and updates these documents in response to changes in legislation and national policy.

1.20. The LURA 2023 introduced a new style of plan, named Supplementary Plans, which will effectively replace SPDs and have the same weight in decision-making as Local Plans. However, the new Supplementary Plans will be of limited scope and not intended to be used routinely (i.e., to create area-wide design codes and/or to set out site-specific policies on affordable housing or infrastructure).

1.21. Our existing SPDs can remain in place until we have adopted a Local Plan under the new plan-making system. Therefore, during the preparation of the Local Plan and Design Code, we will review the content of our existing SPDs and consider whether they will be incorporated within the new Local Plan or the Design Code.

## 2. The New Local Plan for Rushmoor

2.1. In accordance with the requirements set out in the LURA 2023, the Council will produce a single Local Plan for Rushmoor. This new Local Plan will cover the whole of the Borough. The LURA 2023 introduces the legislative basis for the Government to produce National Development Management Policies (NDMP) which will contain nationally set and general policies on issues that apply in most areas (such as general heritage policies). Local Plans will not be able to repeat or conflict with the NDMPs. The Government intend to consult on future policy changes, including a set of national policies for decision making in Spring 2025.

2.2. On this basis, the scope of local plans will be limited to ‘locally specific’ matters. The LURA 2023 sets out the following requirements for local plans. Local Plans must:

<sup>11</sup> [https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/media/1tznhy0/adopted\\_first\\_homes\\_interim\\_policy\\_statement\\_-\\_january\\_2022.pdf](https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/media/1tznhy0/adopted_first_homes_interim_policy_statement_-_january_2022.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/media/lunhmbze/financial-contributions-for-open-space-interim-advice-note-accessible.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policies/green-infrastructure-strategy/>

- Be designed to secure that the use and development of land in the LPA’s area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change;
  - Take account of any local nature recovery strategy;
  - Take account of an assessment of the amount, and type, of housing that is needed in the LPA’s area, including affordable housing.
- 2.3. The Government may prescribe further matters for Local Plans through regulations. Therefore, until further detail on the proposed reforms is published, the Council is unable to confirm the scope and contents of the new Local Plan.
- 2.4. When preparing the new Local Plan, the Council will be required to carry out certain activities, including:
- Preparing a suite of research and evidence to support the new Local Plan.
  - Formal stages of public consultation as we prepare the draft Plan.
  - Engagement with a wide range of public bodies and infrastructure providers.
  - Demonstrating that the new Local Plan is sustainable and protected species and habitats, including the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (TBHSPA).
  - Demonstrating that we have complied with our public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998.
- 2.5. The requirements for the above activities have been changed through the LURA 2023 or are expected to change as part of the wider planning reforms, for example:
- The streamlining of the evidence requirements for new Local Plans
  - The LURA removes the current Duty to Cooperate requirement<sup>14</sup> and replaces it with a new ‘alignment policy’
  - The LURA secures powers to replace the existing system of environment assessment (including sustainability appraisals) with a new form of environment assessment known as Environment Outcome Reports (EOR).
  - Two formal mandatory public consultations at particular stages of the Local Plan process (see more information below).
  - The introduction of mandatory gateway assessments (‘gateways’) throughout the plan-preparation process. The first two gateways would be advisory, and the final gateway would be binding (‘Stop/Go’) and determine whether a plan can be submitted for examination.

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<sup>14</sup> Where plans are being prepared under the old system (i.e. within neighbouring local authorities), the duty to cooperate will still apply.

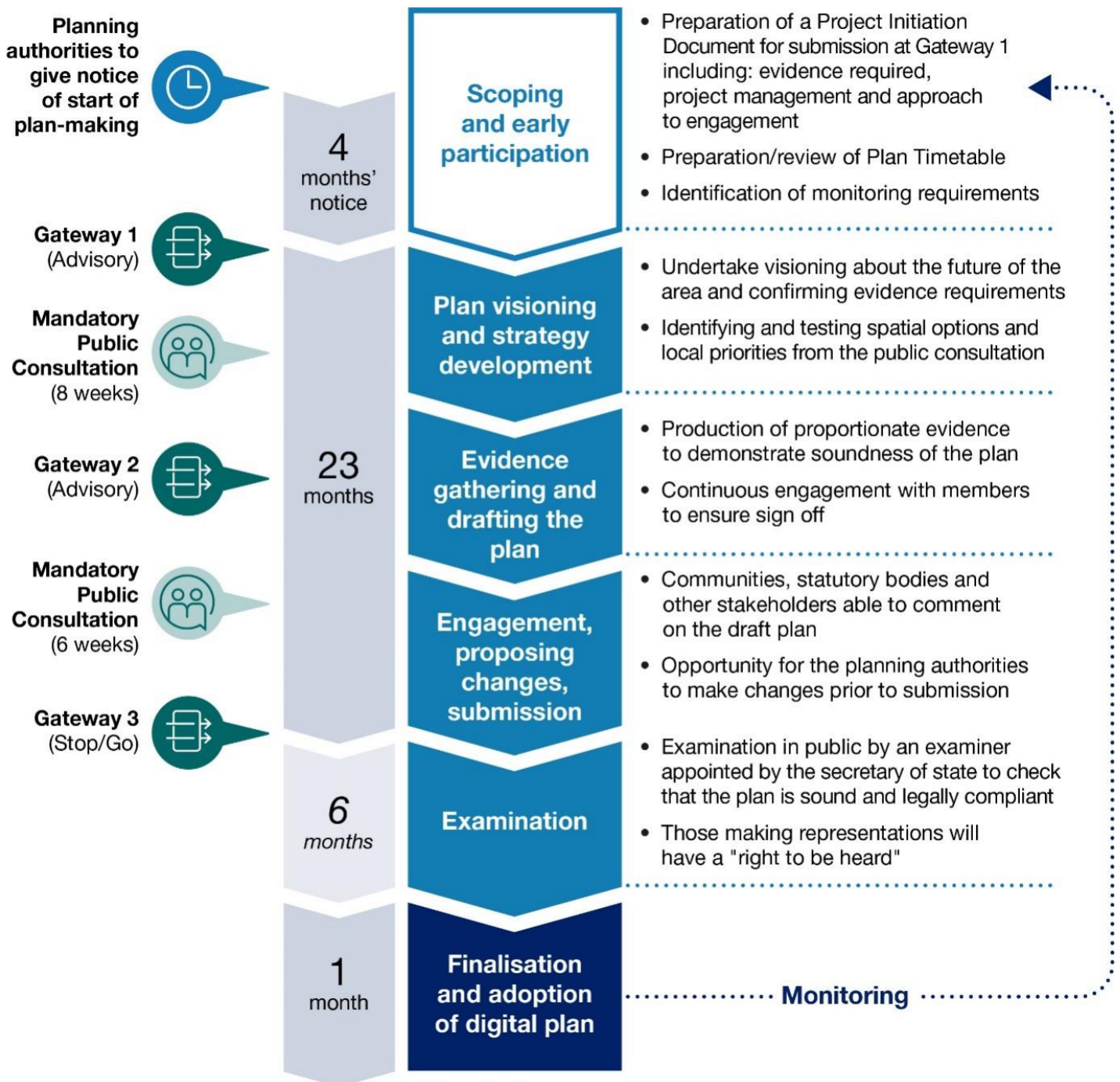
- 2.6. The expected procedure for developing and adopting the new Local Plan is set out below. This is based on the stages of Local Plan preparation set out in the previous Government's consultation in July 2023.<sup>15</sup>
- 2.7. The following flow diagram (taken from the government consultation) summarises the key stages being proposed as part of the new 30-month plan timeframe.

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation>



**Figure 1 – The proposed 30-month plan preparation timeframe (Source: Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: consultation on implementation of plan-making reforms (July 2023)<sup>16</sup>**



<sup>16</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/plan-making-reforms-consultation-on-implementation/levelling-up-and-regeneration-bill-consultation-on-implementation-of-plan-making-reforms#chapter2>

### **3. Timetable for the Preparation of the New Local Plan for Rushmoor**

- 3.1. We have set out an indicative timetable in order to meet the requirement to publish an up-to-date Local Plan timetable as requested by the Government in December 2024. This is based on the stages of Local Plan preparation set out in the Government's consultation in July 2023 (see Figure 1 above). However, as noted in the introduction to this LDS, we require further clarity on the new plan-making system prior to confirming this timetable. This timetable reflects our ambition to prepare a new Local Plan under the new plan-making system as soon as we can. However, for reasons beyond our control (e.g., delays to the regulations or changes as a result of devolution), this may not be possible, and this LDS will need to be revised. As soon it becomes clear that the LDS needs to be revised, the Council will publish an amended timetable on its website at [www.rushmoor.gov.uk/lDs](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/lDs).

**Table 2 – Indicative Timetable for preparing a new Local Plan for Rushmoor**

Stage	2025				2026												2027												2028							
	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	
Scoping and Early Participation	█																																			
Plan Visioning and Strategy Development					█																															
Evidence Gathering and Drafting the Plan											█																									
Engagement, Proposing Changes and Submission																						█														
Examination																													█							
Finalisation and Adoption of Plan																																		█		
Maximum Timescale <sup>17</sup>	4 months <sup>18</sup>				23 months																							6 months								
Expected Gateways <sup>19</sup>					①								②								③															
Consultations (Mandatory)					8 weeks																6 weeks															

<sup>17</sup> See Figure 1 above.

<sup>18</sup> The Council will be required to give 4 months’ notice before starting the formal 30-month plan preparation timetable.

<sup>19</sup> Gateways 1 and 2 are expected to be advisory. Gateway 3 is expected to be a binding (‘Stop/Go’) and determine whether a plan can be submitted for examination.

## 4. Finding Out More

- 4.1. You can find out more about the documents we produce online at [www.rushmoor.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policies](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policies). If you have any questions or would like further information, you can contact the Council's Planning Policy team in the following ways:

**Telephone:** 01252 398789

**Email:** [planningpolicy@rushmoor.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@rushmoor.gov.uk)

**Address:**

Rushmoor Borough Council  
Planning Policy  
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- 4.2. You will be able to get copies of any documents that we publish from our website at [www.rushmoor.gov.uk](http://www.rushmoor.gov.uk), or they will be available on deposit at our offices in Farnborough. During consultation periods, you will be able to view documents at the libraries in Aldershot and Farnborough.