

Meeting Executive
Portfolio Area Environment and Regeneration
Date 16 September 2020



LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME (LDS)

KEY DECISION

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1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To inform members of updates to the Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 1.2 To seek the Executive's approval of a revised LDS.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the LDS 2020 (attached as Appendix A) be approved as the programme for the new Stevenage Local Development Documents, subject to any necessary minor editorial modifications agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation having consulted with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration.
- 2.2 That the LDS 2020 is brought into effect from 24 September 2020 and published on the Council's planning web pages.

3 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council is required to prepare a Local Development Scheme (LDS) under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The LDS must specify the local development documents which are to be “Development Plan Documents” and sets out the programme for the preparation of those. It is a statutory requirement to maintain an up-to-date LDS.
- 3.2 The Council’s current LDS was approved by Executive in April 2019 and came into effect on 13 May 2019. It scheduled the adoption of the Local Plan to take place after the holding direction on the Local Plan had been lifted.
- 3.3 The current LDS also proposed an outline timetable for the production and adoption of an Area Action Plan for the railway station and the adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule.

4 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

Recommendation 2.1: That the LDS 2020 (attached as Appendix 1) be approved as the programme for the new Stevenage Local Development Documents, subject to any necessary minor editorial modifications agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation having consulted with the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regeneration

- 4.1 The updated LDS sets out updated milestones for the production and adoption process of the Area Action Plan (AAP) for the Railway Station and introduces the new timeframes for the production of a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which will be produced to support policies in the adopted Local Plan.
- 4.2 There is a statutory requirement to keep the LDS up-to-date. The timeframes for planning policy documents, including the Area Action Plan, within the current LDS are out-of-date and it is essential, to ensure we continue to meet our statutory obligations, for a new and updated LDS to be adopted as soon as possible.
- 4.3 There is no statutory requirement to include details of SPDs within the LDS although the Council’s annual monitoring obligations require us to publish an update on the progress with Local Plan and SPD documents, specifically those stated in an authority’s LDS. Therefore for completeness, the updated LDS provides details on the timetable of a number of SPDs that the Planning Policy Team will be producing in the next couple of years.
- 4.4 The revised LDS 2020 comprises a brief document and chart, appended to this report. It updates and sets the following timetables:

Area Action Plan – Railway Station

- 4.5 As a consequence of discussions with MHCLG in relation to the Holding Direction on the Stevenage Borough Local Plan, the Council committed to produce an Area Action Plan for the Railway Station area (within the TC3 and

TC4 Major Opportunity Areas designated in the Local Plan) to be adopted by December 2020 (or sooner if at all practicable).

- 4.6 Owing largely to restrictions enforced by the Covid-19 epidemic and due to a recent focus on the adoption and implementation of a new Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule for the Borough, the timetable for the AAP adoption has slipped, albeit not significantly. The Council has been in constant contact with MHCLG who are aware and supportive of the timeframe for progress of the AAP.
- 4.7 As a result of the delays, the AAP timetable has been updated to:
- January 2021: Regulation 18 consultation
 - June 2021: Regulation 19 consultation
 - August 2021: Submission
 - September/October 2021: Examination
 - January 2022: Adoption
- 4.8 To achieve this, it is expected that the emerging AAP will be taken to the following Executive and Budget Policy Meetings:
- November 2020 Executive: to approve consultation on the draft AAP in line with Regulation 18
 - May 2021 Executive: to approve publication of the draft AAP in line with Regulation 19 and subsequent submission to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination
 - November 2021 Executive: to approve the outcome of the Examination and the recommendations of the Planning Inspector and recommend adoption of the AAP
 - January 2022 Full Council: to adopt the final AAP to become a part of the Development Plan for Stevenage

Supplementary Planning Documents

- 4.9 The Planning Policy Team are preparing to produce a number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to take account of changes to local policy, national guidance, planning regulation as well as to give additional guidance to policies within the Local Plan. These SPDs are:
- Parking Provision and Sustainable Transport SPD
 - Biodiversity SPD
 - Developer Contributions SPD
 - Design SPD
- 4.10 The statutory process of preparing and adopting SPDs is less exhaustive than for Local Plan or for Area Action Plan documents. Therefore, the updated LDS sets out approximate year-long adoption timetables with an allowance for six months preparation for each stage involved. Officers don't expect the SPDs to take this 12 months each but as with any planning policy document subject to public consultation engagement, the it is not known exactly how long it will take to process and take account of representations.

Local Plan / Community Infrastructure Levy / Statement of Community Involvement

- 4.11 These timetables have been updated to reflect their recent adoptions and/or approval. The start of a 5-yr review has been included within the timetable, where appropriate.

Recommendation 2.2: That the LDS 2020 is brought into effect from 24 September 2020 and published on the Council's planning web pages

- 4.12 Upon receiving approval from the Executive, no further stages of production are required other than placing the updated LDS on the Council's webpages.

5 IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 5.1 The preparation of planning policy documents is funded from within an agreed departmental budget.

Legal Implications

- 5.2 The statutory duty to produce a Local Development Scheme is placed upon LPAs by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, as amended by provisions contained within the Localism Act 2011.
- 5.3 The updated LDS will ensure compliance with statutory requirements.

Risk Implications

- 5.4 There are no significant risks associated with updating the Local Development Scheme.
- 5.5 If updated, the LDS will provide a timetable for the production of Local Development Documents, including Development Plan Documents. It will not prejudice the content of those documents.

Policy Implications

- 5.6 The statutory Development Plan for the Borough forms part of the Borough Council's over-arching policy framework. It has potentially wide-ranging policy implications beyond the field of spatial planning.
- 5.7 There will be a need for positive interaction between the Plan and other plans and strategies of the Borough Council (and other stakeholders) as they are revised and updated to ensure that a consistent and holistic approach emerges.

Planning Implications

- 5.8 The LDS specifies future Development Plan Documents and other Local Development Documents and sets out the timetable for their production.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.9 Whilst the Local Development Scheme does not have any direct climate change implications itself, climate change will be a significant consideration of the Local Development Documents quoted within the LDS and the preparation of these documents will provide an opportunity to ensure that the need to reduce climate change will feature prominently in future developments within the Borough.

Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 5.10 The Local Development Scheme itself does not have any direct equality or diversity implications. When implementing any of the proposals the delivery body will need to consider the potential impacts on different community groups, in particular those who are less mobile or disabled.

Community Safety Implications

- 5.11 Whilst the Local Development Scheme does not have any direct community safety implications itself, safety will have to be considered when preparing the Local Development Documents quoted within the LDS, and implementing any of the proposals within those documents.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- BD1 [Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004](#)
BD2 [Localism Act 2011](#)
BD3 [Town and Country Planning \(Local Development\) \(England\) Regulations, 2012](#)
BD4 [Stevenage Borough Local Development Scheme, 2019](#)

APPENDICES

- A Local Development Scheme - September 2020