

Board/Committee:	Policy and Organisation Board
Date of Meeting:	15 March 2023
Title:	Local Development Scheme for the emerging Gosport Borough Local Plan 2038
Author:	Manager of Planning Policy
Status:	For Decision

Purpose

The Council is required by legislation to prepare a Local Plan for its area. The timetable for the preparation of a Local Plan must be published in a Local Development Scheme (LDS). This report seeks approval to publish the latest version of the LDS.

Recommendation

That this Board:

- **Approves the Local Development Scheme (March 2023) (as set out in Appendix A).**

1 Background

1.1 The preparation of an LDS is a statutory requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). The current interim LDS was agreed by the Council in September 2021.

1.2 It is now necessary to update this LDS with a revised timetable to produce the Gosport Borough Local Plan 2038 (GBLP2038) which once adopted will replace the current Gosport Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 (adopted in October 2015). The revised LDS reflects a number of material considerations which have occurred since the initial consultation of the emerging GBLP2038 was produced in September 2021 (often referred to as the Regulation 18 stage).

1.3 Key considerations relating to the timetable include the following matters:

- The Government's Chief Planner has recently stated that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should continue with plan-making notwithstanding the Government's recent consultation on wholesale planning reforms.
- Ongoing work by the Partnership for South Hampshire (PFSH), which includes Gosport Borough, to prepare a Statement of Common Ground and a revised non-statutory spatial strategy to replace the PUSH Spatial Position Statement agreed in June 2016. Part of this work will aim to meet the unmet housing need for a number of LPAs on a sub-regional basis. This includes the unmet

need identified in the emerging GBLP2038.

- The consideration of a number of required evidence studies to support the Local Plan process including whole plan and site specific studies.
- Changes in availability of a number of key residential/mixed use sites since the Regulation 18 consultation (for example the Police Station and Haslar Barracks sites) as well as changes in the release dates for other key sites (such as Blockhouse 1).

2 Background to the role of a Local Plan

- 2.1 The proposed LDS is required to include a programme for preparing and adopting the Local Plan. The Local Plan is a form of Development Plan Document (DPD) and it is a statutory requirement for each local authority area to be covered by a DPD. It is a requirement set in law that planning decisions must be taken in accordance with the Local Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.2 The Local Plan sets out a vision and a framework for the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure. It is also used as a basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed places. The Local Plan is used by Development Management and the Regulatory Board to make decisions on planning applications.

3 Report

- 3.1 The LDS sets out the key stages of the Local Plan including when community involvement will take place and when it is anticipated to be examined by an independent Planning Inspector.
- 3.2 The LDS must be made publicly available and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress. LPAs should publish their LDS on their website. The LDS represents the best estimate based on the information known at the time and it is noted from the experience with the adopted Local Plan there may need to be further updates during preparation due to changing circumstances including additional Government requirements. In this instance the Government is proposing major changes to the planning system which may result in further amendments to the timetable.
- 3.3 In relation to the Local Plan, LPAs are now required to 'review' their plans every five years after adoption. This is a requirement set out in the NPPF since its 2018 review and was applied retrospectively to plans adopted prior to this date.
- 3.4 Members may recall that the current LDS approved in September 2021 was termed an interim report due to the proposed significant changes in

the planning system including the local plan process which at that time did not include any transitional arrangements and therefore there was significant uncertainty over whether the GBLP2038 would be able to reach adoption stage. On 22 December 2022 the Government published its latest proposals as part of the wider Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill. Whilst a significant amount of uncertainty still exists it has been made clear by the Government that LPAs should continue with preparing local plans under the current system. It is considered that the Council will be able to adopt the emerging GBLP2038 under the current system to ensure that it will be in a strong position to take a plan-led approach when determining planning applications.

- 3.5 Table 1 below sets out the proposed timetable included in the latest LDS. A detailed version is included in Appendix 2 of the LDS.

Table 1: Summary of the new Gosport Borough Local Plan 2038 Timetable

Stage	Timescale	Progress
Consultation on Draft Local Plan (Reg 18) (10 week informal consultation)	September – December 2021	Completed
Seek Policy and Organisation Board and Full Council approval for consultation and ultimately submission of Reg 19 draft Local Plan	November/December 2023	Work ongoing
Consultation on Publication Plan (Reg 19) (6 week consultation)	January – February 2024	N/A
Submission of Plan to Secretary of State	Summer 2024	N/A
Examination in Public	Autumn 2024	N/A
Adoption	January 2025	N/A

- 3.6 The Regulation 19 consultation Local Plan will include: the various land-use allocations relating to employment and residential uses, updates of the existing Local Plan policies as well as new policies which will relate to issues relating to the Government’s commitment to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, enhancing biodiversity, improving health and wellbeing and increasing the diversity of town centre uses (which is also reflected in the recent changes of the Use Class Orders). It will also take into account, where appropriate, representations received to the Regulation 18 consultation and it will be accompanied by a detailed consideration of all responses received.

- 3.7 For completeness the LDS includes provisions for other non-DPD planning documents although this is not a statutory requirement. This includes the revised Charging Schedule for the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) included in Appendix 2 of the LDS. The latest Government proposals published in December 2022 regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy state that it is likely to be abolished and replaced with a completely different mechanism and therefore the LDS will be amended once we are aware of

the details of the latest provisions.

4 Risk Assessment

4.1 The LDS includes a section on risk assessment and recognises that inevitably there will be various factors, mainly unforeseen, which will affect the programmes for the preparation of the Local Plan and associated documents. This could include the following:

- Staff retention
- Staff capacity and skills
- Any diversion of staff time to other Council corporate priorities
- Recruitment problems of qualified officers
- Staff illness
- Changes to Government guidance and legislation
- Budgetary constraints
- Lack of clarity from landowners on the extent and timescale of any land releases which can affect the evidence gathering process and ultimately the ability to allocate sites
- Capacity of external agencies to provide comment and guidance
- Programme slippage on evidence studies
- Level of representations received at each stage of consultation.

4.2 Consideration will be given to appropriate contingency arrangements, especially if this would lead to key milestone dates not being met. In certain circumstances it may be necessary to prepare a revised Scheme where the programmes in the LDS may not have been met. The LDS is kept under review via the Planning and Regeneration Service Management meetings. Any material revisions will be reported to the Policy and Organisation Board for approval.

5 Conclusion

5.1 The LDS has been updated in the light of significant uncertainty for plan-making in England with ongoing proposals for changes to national planning policy and guidance. Notwithstanding this, the Council is required to publish an LDS and if approved the LDS in Appendix A will be published to meet statutory obligations. It is acknowledged that the production of the emerging Local Plan will be a difficult process due to the uncertainty regarding key allocation sites which is further complicated by the proposed overhaul of the planning system in the context of the significant social and economic uncertainties currently facing the UK. However, a Local Plan based on sound planning principles which facilitates regeneration, provides homes and employment opportunities, and protects our environment should provide a firm strategy for sustainable development. The LDS therefore sets out the Council's proposed approach to continue work on adopting a new Local Plan.

Financial Services comments:	None arising from this report
Legal Services comments:	None received
Equality and Diversity:	Not applicable- This is a programme for producing the Local Plan which is accompanied by its own Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA). The consultations arrangements themselves are set out in the Statement of Community Involvement which is also being reported to this Board and has been subject to an IIA.
Climate Change:	Not applicable – This is a programme for producing the Local Plan which is accompanied by its own Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA).
Crime and Disorder:	This is a programme for producing the Local Plan which is accompanied by its own IIA.
Council Plan:	The delivery of the Local Plan requires an LDS to be published. The Local Plan will assist in developing the economy, enhancing the environment and raising aspirations.
Risk Assessment:	See Section 4
Background Papers:	None
Appendices:	Appendix A: Local Development Scheme for the emerging Gosport Borough Local Plan (March 2023)
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