



WIRRAL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

SECTION 15

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME FOR WIRRAL

REVISED DECEMBER 2017

**BROUGHT INTO EFFECT
BY RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL
ON XX XXXXX 2018**

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme for Wirral is a statutory document setting out the programme for the preparation of the Council's Local Plans, produced in accordance with Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 1.2 The Council's Local Plans will form part of the statutory Development Plan for the area and will play a major role in the determination of individual planning applications and in other decisions taken by the Council and by others under the Town and Country Planning Acts.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The first Local Development Scheme for Wirral was approved by the Secretary of State on 31 March 2005 and came into effect on 20 May 2005. Subsequent reviews took place in July 2006, July 2007, January 2010, February 2012 and December 2014.
- 2.2 This current document replaces the Local Development Scheme adopted by the Council on 6 July 2015.
- 2.3 Local Development Schemes no longer need to be approved by the Secretary of State before they can come into effect.

3 THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR WIRRAL

- 3.1 The statutory Development Plan for the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral currently comprises the 'saved' policies in the Unitary Development Plan for Wirral, adopted by the Council in February 2000 and the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton, adopted in July 2013.

Unitary Development Plan for Wirral (February 2000)

- 3.2 The Unitary Development Plan is an 'old-style' development plan that will gradually be replaced by documents contained within the emerging Local Plan for Wirral.
- 3.3 A list of the policies and proposals that are no longer in force, following the adoption of the Joint Waste Local Plan, can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan/written>
- 3.4 The remaining policies of the Unitary Development Plan, including the Written Statement and Proposals Map, can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan>

Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton (July 2013)

3.5 The Joint Waste Local Plan was adopted by each of the six partner councils to come into effect from 18 July 2013. The Joint Waste Local Plan was resolved to be adopted by Wirral Council on 15 July 2013 (Minute 17 refers).

3.6 The Joint Waste Local Plan can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/joint-waste-local-plan-merseyside>

4 THE WIRRAL LOCAL PLAN

4.1 The Local Plan for Wirral is part of a collection of documents that will set out the Council's policies for the development and use of land within the Metropolitan Borough of Wirral.

4.2 These documents currently include:

- the Local Development Scheme;
- a Statement of Community Involvement;
- the remaining policies in the Unitary Development Plan;
- the Joint Waste Local Plan for Merseyside and Halton;
- a series of Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes and Supplementary Planning Documents to support the delivery of existing adopted Development Plan policies;
- a Proposals Map; and
- a series of Monitoring Reports.

4.3 Over time, these documents will also include:

- a Core Strategy Local Plan;
- a Land Allocations and Heritage Local Plan;
- a series of Neighbourhood Planning documents, including Neighbourhood Development Plans, prepared by the local community;
- a series of additional and replacement Supplementary Planning Documents, to support the delivery of the Core Strategy Local Plan;

4.4 Adopted Local Plans, Neighbourhood Development Plans and the Proposals Map will have status alongside the Unitary Development Plan, as part of the statutory Development Plan for Wirral, until the Unitary Development Plan is fully replaced.

4.5 A list of the local development documents that have already been adopted is provided at Appendix 1.

4.6 This review of the Local Development Scheme provides for the completion of the Core Strategy Local Plan, which will set out the

strategic policies for the area, with which Neighbourhood Plans will need to be in general conformity.

- 4.7 The completion of the Core Strategy Local Plan is intended to be followed by the preparation of a site-specific Land Allocations and Heritage Local Plan, which will be the subject of a future revision to the Local Development Scheme.

Key Milestones

- 4.8 The future timetable for the preparation of the Core Strategy Local Plan is set out in Appendix 2.
- 4.9 A continuously up-dated record of progress is available on the Council's website at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/local-development-scheme>.

5 CORE STRATEGY LOCAL PLAN

- 5.1 The Core Strategy Local Plan is a Development Plan Document that is intended to set the long term vision, objectives and spatial strategy for future development in the Borough over the next 15 years.
- 5.2 The Core Strategy will also provide the strategic framework for other area-based or site-specific matters to be addressed in subsequent Local Plans and in Neighbourhood Planning documents.
- 5.3 The Core Strategy Local Plan is now at the final stages of preparation.
- 5.4 Public consultation on Issues, Vision and Objectives took place in February 2009; on Spatial Options in January 2010; on Preferred Options in November 2010; on Settlement Area Policies in January 2012; and on a Proposed Submission Draft Core Strategy in December 2012.
- 5.5 An initial series proposed modifications to the Proposed Submission Draft Core Strategy were made available for public comment between 24 July and 13 September 2013.
- 5.6 A further series of proposed modifications, to policies for Gypsies and Travellers and to policies for Town Centres, were made available for public comment between 8 December 2014 and 6 February 2015.
- 5.7 Reports of consultation are available for each stage of the process undertaken so far and can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/core-strategy-local-plan>
- 5.8 The revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy, in May 2013, required the Council to re-assess the Borough's housing needs, complicated by results for Wirral from the 2011 Census, which made previous population and household projections unreliable.

- 5.9 A revised housing needs assessment was finally completed in May 2016, following the publication of stage 2 household projections in December 2015; and further consultation on the Borough's housing needs and land supply was undertaken in August and September 2016.
- 5.10 The results of consultation were reported in February 2017 and a wider review of development options was approved, to include:
- a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment Update, for which a proposed revised methodology was published for consultation in July 2017;
 - an Initial Review of the Green Belt, for which a proposed methodology was published for consultation in October 2017;
 - a Liverpool City Region Strategic Housing and Employment Land Market Assessment, which was also published for public consultation in October 2017;
 - a Playing Pitch Strategy Update, which was published in November 2017;
 - an Employment Land and Premises Study Update, which is due to report in early 2018; and
 - a Development Viability Assessment Update, to begin in early 2018.
- 5.11 Further information on the development options review can be viewed at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/core-strategy-local-plan-6>
- 5.12 Appendix 2 sets out the amended timetable for the remaining stages of the production of the Core Strategy.
- 5.13 The timetable prior to the submission of the Core Strategy to public examination will largely be determined by the completion of key evidence base documents related to the review of development options, including housing requirements, land supply and development viability.
- 5.14 The timetable following the submission of the Core Strategy will be determined by the Planning Inspector appointed to undertake the independent public examination of the soundness and legal compliance of the proposals.
- 5.15 The estimated date for the adoption of the Core Strategy, following submission to public examination in January 2020, is now therefore January 2021.

6 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- 6.1 The Local Development Scheme is no longer required to set out the timetable for the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents.

- 6.2 The Council consulted on the proposed content of new documents for housing; employment; town centres; and telecommunications, to be brought forward alongside the Core Strategy Local Plan, in July 2013.
- 6.3 The latest progress on the preparation of Supplementary Planning Documents can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents>.

7 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING DOCUMENTS

- 7.1 Neighbourhood Planning documents are prepared by the local community and adopted by the Council, to provide further detail on planning proposals within local areas.
- 7.2 Five neighbourhood forums have so far been designated for neighbourhood areas at Devonshire Park; Hoylake; Leasowe; Birkenhead and Tranmere; and Birkenhead North; and neighbourhood plans have now been formally 'made' for Devonshire Park and Hoylake.
- 7.3 Progress on the preparation of neighbourhood planning documents can be viewed on the Council's website at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning>.

8 RESOURCES

- 8.1 Future land use planning policy documents are prepared by the Forward Planning Team in Environmental Services, which reports to the Council's Cabinet Member for Housing and Community Safety and Deputy Leader of the Council.

9 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 9.1 The principal risks to the delivery of the timetable set out in this Local Development Scheme are set out in Appendix 3 and will be kept under constant review.
- 9.2 The risk register will be regularly updated on the Council's web site at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/local-development-scheme>.

10 MONITORING & REVIEW

- 10.1 Progress on Local Plan preparation is reviewed annually in the Council's statutory Monitoring Reports.
- 10.2 Previous Monitoring Reports can be viewed on the Council's website at <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/development-monitoring>.

11 USEFUL CONTACTS

11.1 The Forward Planning Team can be contacted:

by post at:

Wirral Council Environmental Services, PO Box 290, Brighton Street,
Wallasey CH27 9FQ

by telephone at:

0151 691 8110

or at forwardplanning@wirral.gov.uk

12 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

12.1 The following documents provide additional information on local development document processes and requirements:

- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (HMSO 2004, Chapter 5) (as amended)
- Localism Act 2011 (HMSO 2011, Chapter 20) (as amended)
- Housing and Planning Act 2016 (HMSO, Chapter 22)
- Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017 (HMSO, Chapter 20)
- The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (HMSO SI 2012 No.767) (as amended)
- The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (HMSO, SI 2004 No 1633)
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994 (HMSO, 1994 No 2716) (as amended)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (HMSO SI 2010 No.490)
- The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) and associated practice guidance (as continuously updated) can be viewed at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

Appendix 1 – Adopted Local Development Documents

1. Local Plans

Unitary Development Plan for Wirral – Adopted February 2000

Written Statement - <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan/written>

Proposals Map - <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/unitary-development-plan/forward>

Joint Merseyside and Halton Waste Local Plan – Adopted July 2013

Written Statement - <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/joint-waste-local-plan-merseyside>

Maps and Plans - <http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/local-plans/joint-waste-local-plan-merseyside>

2. Neighbourhood Development Plans

Devonshire Park Neighbourhood Plan - Made December 2015

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/devonshire-park>

Hoylake Neighbourhood Plan – Made December 2016

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/hoylake>

3. Statement of Community Involvement

Statement of Community Involvement - Adopted March 2014

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/community-involvement-local-planning/statement>

4. Supplementary Planning Documents

SPD1 – Designing for Development by Mobile Phone Operators – Adopted October 2006

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/designing>

SPD2 – Designing for Self-Contained Flat Development and Conversions – Adopted October 2006

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/designing-0>

SPD3 – Hot Food Takeaways, Restaurants, Cafes and Drinking Establishments – Adopted October 2006

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/hot-food>

SPD4 – Parking Standards - Adopted June 2007

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/planning-and-building/local-plans-and-planning-policy/supplementary-planning-documents/parking>

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Appendix 2 – Core Strategy Timetable

Document Name: Core Strategy Local Plan		Status: Development Plan Document
Purpose: To provide the long-term vision, objectives and spatial strategy for the Borough and the framework for future Development Plan Documents		
Coverage: Borough wide		Time Period: 15 years
Chain of Conformity: National Planning Policy Framework		Post Adoption Monitoring & Review: Annual Monitoring Report 5 Yearly Assessment
Departmental Responsibility: Environmental Services (Forward Planning) forwardplanning@wirral.gov.uk		Contact: Andrew Fraser, Forward Planning Manager 0151 691 8218
Key Milestones		Key Stakeholders (Regulation 2 bodies): Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Sefton Borough Council Liverpool City Council Cheshire West and Chester Council Flintshire County Council Other Liverpool City Region Authorities Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership Liverpool City Region Local Nature Partnership Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service Homes and Communities Agency Highways Agency Merseytravel Environment Agency Natural England Natural Resources Wales Marine Management Organisation Historic England Merseyside Police and Crime Commissioner North West Ambulance Service Merseyside Fire & Rescue Service HM Coastguard and RNLI Office of Rail Regulation and Network Rail Civil Aviation Authority Health and Safety Executive National Health Service Organisations Conservation Area Advisory Committees Local Amenity Societies and Friends Groups Wirral Community Networks Wirral Wildlife Developers and Landowners Utilities and Infrastructure Providers Local Business Organisations Neighbourhood Forums Other General Consultation Bodies
Preparation (Regulation 18):		
Commencement:	July 2005*	
SA Scoping:	July 2006*	
Initial Consultation:	September 2007*	
Issues Vision and Objectives:	February 2009*	
Spatial Options: (Regulation 18)	January 2010*	
Preferred Options: (Regulation 18)	November 2010*	
Settlement Areas: (Regulation 18)	January 2012*	
Publication (Regulation 19)		
Proposed Submission Draft:	December 2012*	
Initial Modifications:	July 2013*	
Further Modifications:	December 2014*	
Re-Publication: (Regulation 19)	September 2019	
Representations: (Regulation 20)	September/October 2019	
Submission (Regulation 22)		
Submission: (Regulation 22)	January 2020	
Pre-Hearing Meeting:	March 2020	
Hearing: (Regulation 24)	May 2020	
Main Modifications (if required)	September 2020	
Inspectors Report: (Regulation 25)	December 2020	
Adoption: (Regulation 26)	January 2021	

An asterisk (*) indicates the stages that have already been completed. Dates shown in red are subject to the completion of a wider review of development options.

Appendix 3 – Risk Assessment

Risk	Description	Control Measures
Political	Risk of political approval being withheld and/or change of leadership and/or direction and/or political priorities	Consultation and involvement of Members in the Local Plan preparation process in order to provide ownership, leadership and commitment to future implementation
Procedural	Changes in national policy leads to amended requirements	Seek to future-proof requirements wherever possible
Financial - constrained Council budgets, increases in Planning Inspectorate fees	Risk of inadequate financial provision hindering progress and scope of work required	Regularly report on budget requirements and minimise financial expenditure to ensure value for money, including joint and partnership working wherever feasible
Staff turnover and recruitment difficulties	Staff turnover is difficult to predict. Risk of loss of key staff to other employment would severely affect our ability to progress the Local Plan work programme in a timely manner	Take prompt action to fill vacancies with staff with the appropriate skills. If considered appropriate, secure additional resources through use of consultants, temporary staff and internal secondment
Staff absence (e.g. long term sickness/maternity leave)	Reduced capacity causing slippage in programme	Consider interim arrangements such as temporary appointments, use of agency staff or secondment, subject to resources The adequacy of staffing levels will be evaluated through the ongoing monitoring of the preparation of the Local Plan
Lack of in-house skills for specialised areas of policy work/background studies	Slow progress causing a slippage in programme Evidence base challenged or undermined Quality compromised	Obtain training for areas where expertise is lacking Review staffing requirements as part of annual service reviews Expand partnership working, where possible In some cases it will be more efficient to engage consultants where specialist skills are required to short timescales and in-house development is unrealistic
Pressure on staff time due to competing work streams	Diverts team from Local Plan work causing slippage in programme	Ensure Local Plan is recognised as a corporate priority Identify key staff to be “shielded” from other work, wherever possible

Risk	Description	Control Measures
Legal	<p>Risk of non-compliance with legal procedures and requirements and/or judicial review leading to adopted Local Plan being quashed and additional workloads</p> <p>Changes in plan-making requirements/procedures can also result in delays</p>	<p>Ensure relevant legislation/ regulations are checked and complied with at each stage</p> <p>It is not possible to easily plan for further changes to the planning system. The Council will endeavor to deal with new requirements with minimum disruption to the timetable as part of ongoing monitoring</p>
Third Parties	<p>Risk of comments and representations from third parties causing delay (including lengthening of examination) and/or additional expense from unexpected volumes and/or unforeseen issues arising, with need for additional evidence and/or consultation</p>	<p>Consultation and involvement of relevant stakeholders</p> <p>Ensure timetable is realistic but has some flexibility built in and monitor progress against LDS</p> <p>Consider the need for additional resources as part of ongoing monitoring</p>
Joint working with other internal departments and/or external authorities causes delay	<p>Key milestones in programme not met</p> <p>Duty to Co-operate not met</p>	<p>Ensure timescales for Local Plan realistically reflect partner authorities ability to contribute to joint working</p> <p>Ensure commitment to milestone dates and resource allocation is obtained from relevant parties in advance</p>
Capacity of the Planning Inspectorate	<p>Examination and/or Inspectors Report is delayed</p> <p>Key milestones in programme not met</p>	<p>Close liaison with the Planning Inspectorate to ensure early warning of any problems</p> <p>The Council has sought to minimise the volume of issues to be resolved at examination, through ensuring a robust evidence base and wide pre-submission public consultation.</p>
Soundness – Local Plan found unsound by Planning Inspectorate	<p>Inspectors modifications required</p> <p>Local Plan cannot be adopted without significant additional work, possibly including repeated stages of preparation and consultation</p>	<p>Ensure Local Plan is legally compliant, founded on a robust evidence base, accompanied by appropriate assessments and appraisals and well-audited community and stakeholder engagement. Timetable allows for possible consultation on main modifications, if required.</p> <p>Use of self-assessment toolkit (published by national advisor PAS)</p> <p>Maintain awareness of best practice</p>