

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

- The Council has a legal requirement to produce a Local Plan within 5 years of vesting day (by 1st April 2028).
- Officers were supported by a Critical Friend to identify ways in which this could be achieved. Conclusion that 5 years could be achieved but only with sufficient financial and staff resources.
- To meet this ambitious timetable requires a streamlined approach and relies upon:
 - i. one round of formal consultation at Regulation 18 stage supported by other targeted engagement activities
 - ii. the Regulation 18 consultation would be in the form of a Draft Plan not an options document.

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Local Plan timetable

Milestones	Dates
Commence project planning and evidence gathering	Apr 2023
Early engagement with internal and external stakeholders and further evidence gathering	Apr 2024 – Feb 2025
Regulation 18 consultation on Draft Plan	Apr 2025 – Jun 2025
Regulation 19 publication	Oct 2026
Submission for Independent Examination	Mar 2027
Inspector's Report	Feb 2028
Adoption	March 2028

Should it be necessary, the timetable can be extended through a revised LDS at a later date.

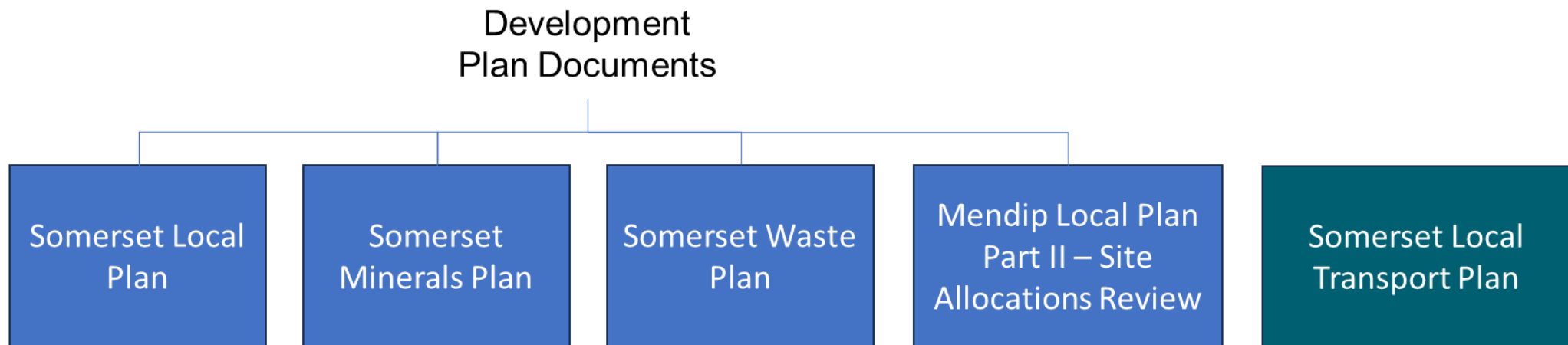
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The timetable of the Local Plan is dependent on a number of factors:

- The Mendip Local Plan Part II Site Allocations Review
- Budget constraints leading to resource pressures
- The requirement for any Main Modifications where the Inspector requires further work, evidence base and consultation
- Ensuring governance and consultation processes are effective
- Potential planning reform through the implementation of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill
- Potential for changes in government and government priorities over the course of plan production
- The timing of a Phosphates Mitigation Strategy to ensure integration with Local Plan production

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- The timetable assumes the Local Plan is produced as a separate work strand from the Minerals and Waste Plan reviews. This ensures that if a difficult matter complicates one Plan, it does not delay or derail another.
- They will share a common evidence base and will collectively create a land use plan for Somerset. There may be potential for them to be brought together in a later iteration.
- It is critical that the LDS is approved because the High Court has ordered the Council to follow a strict timetable for the Mendip Site Allocations Review and we must demonstrate that this is what we are doing otherwise the Council could be held in contempt of court.



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Climate Change policies

- The Local Plan is a key document that will help delivery on our Climate Emergency Strategy and its emerging policies will gain more weight as it moves through the production stages
- A separate climate change Development Plan Document is not recommended because:
 - a) It would divert resources away from the Local Plan significantly impacting the Local Plan timetable.
 - The Local Plan is a statutory requirement and the Council may face intervention by the Government if we fail to deliver a new Local Plan
 - A delayed Local Plan will mean a longer time without an up-to-date Local Plan meaning an increase in ‘planning by appeal’; reduced ability to deliver on other Council aspirations; and reduced chance of success in bidding for Government funding for projects
 - b) Considering climate change policies strategically within a Local Plan will ensure they are deliverable (viable) and that we can also deliver affordable housing and infrastructure requirements alongside
 - c) A DPD would have to follow the same production stages as a Local Plan with the added complexity of having to work within the remit of 5 adopted Local Plans

Planning and Transport Policy Sub-Committee

- To oversee and monitor on behalf of the Council the review of the Development Plan (approve drafts for consultation)
- To make a Neighbourhood Development Plan within 8 weeks of the referendum
- Approve drafts of documents for consultation and adopt (e.g. Local Transport Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents)
- To agree infrastructure priorities and approve Community Infrastructure Levy and s106 spending priorities
- To consider and comment on documents that relate to the Development Plan and Local Transport Plan that could include policy options and draft policies