

# East Suffolk Local Development Scheme

Timetable for the preparation of planning policy documents

March 2025

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# Introduction

- 1.1 A Local Development Scheme sets out the timetable for the planning documents that the Council will prepare to plan for development in its area.
- 1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a local planning authority to prepare and maintain a Local Development Scheme relating to the preparation of development plan documents.
- 1.3 Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out that a Local Development Scheme must specify:
  - the local development documents which are to be development plan documents;
  - the subject matter and geographical area to which each development plan document is to relate;
  - which development plan documents (if any) are to be prepared jointly with one or more other local planning authorities;
  - any matter or area in respect of which the authority have agreed (or propose to agree) to the constitution of a joint committee under section 29;
  - the timetable for the preparation and revision of the development plan documents;
  - such other matters as are prescribed.
- 1.4 The Council's most recent former Local Development Schemes were:
  - Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Local Development Scheme (October 2015, updated June 2020)
  - Waveney Local Development Scheme (September 2018)
  - East Suffolk Local Development Scheme (March 2024) (replaced the two Local Development Schemes above)
- 1.5 The first two of these Local Development Schemes related primarily to the preparation of the Council's now adopted 'development plan documents' which are the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan, 2020, and Waveney Local Plan, 2019. The March 2024 Local Development Scheme updated the Council's position in relation to the future preparation of an East Suffolk Local Plan.
- 1.6 On 12 December 2024, the Deputy Prime Minister wrote to local planning authorities<sup>1</sup>, asking them to update their Local Development Schemes by 6 March 2025. This Local Development Scheme sets out the current position of East Suffolk Council in relation to Local Plan preparation. East Suffolk Council is the local planning authority for East Suffolk, outside of the area covered by the Broads Authority Executive Area, as shown on the map overleaf.

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<sup>1</sup>[Letter from the Deputy Prime Minister to local authority leaders, mayors and chief executives of local authorities: Building the homes we need](#)

- 1.7 Whilst there is no requirement for the preparation of other planning policy documents such as Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans to be covered in the Local Development Scheme, the opportunity has been taken to include information on these, reflecting advice in the Government's Planning Practice Guidance. The focus is on planning policy documents; other important documents produced by the Planning Service such as Conservation Area Appraisals are not covered, but details are made available on the Council's website<sup>2</sup>.
- 1.8 This Local Development Scheme takes effect from 14<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

### Map of East Suffolk



<sup>2</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/)

## Development Plan

- 2.1 The East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (September 2020) and the East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (March 2019), ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans and the Minerals and Waste Local Plan prepared by Suffolk County Council form the current ‘development plan’ for East Suffolk. The Broads Authority prepare their own Local Plan and is the planning authority for their area.
- 2.2 The development plan is the starting point for the consideration of planning applications and legislation requires that applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

### Local Plans

- 2.3 The Council has two currently adopted Local Plans: the East Suffolk Council – Suffolk Coastal Local Plan (September 2020) and the East Suffolk Council – Waveney Local Plan (March 2019).

### Suffolk Coastal Local Plan

- 2.4 The Suffolk Coastal Local Plan<sup>3</sup> was adopted on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020. The plan covers the area of the former Suffolk Coastal district. The plan sets out the framework for growth across the former Suffolk Coastal district over the period 2018 – 2036. It comprises a vision and strategic priorities, a strategy for growth including to meet housing and employment needs, strategies for major centres and market towns, site allocations and development management policies on a range of topics. The Local Plan also contains an Infrastructure Delivery Framework and a Monitoring Framework.
- 2.5 The former Suffolk Coastal Local Plan Local Development Scheme (2015, updated 2020) also set out a timetable for the preparation of the Site Allocations and Area Specific Policies and the Felixstowe Peninsula Area Action Plan development plan documents. These were both adopted in January 2017, but were fully superseded by the adoption of the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan in September 2020.
- 2.6 Under the current planning system, the Council would need to review the Suffolk Coastal Local Plan to determine whether it needs to be updated before 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2025.

### Waveney Local Plan

- 2.7 The Waveney Local Plan<sup>4</sup> was adopted on 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019. The plan covers the area of the former Waveney district, outside of the Broads National Park. The plan sets out the framework for growth across the former Waveney district over the period 2014 – 2036. It

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<sup>3</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Local-Plans/Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/Adopted-Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/East-Suffolk-Council-Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan.pdf](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Local-Plans/Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/Adopted-Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan/East-Suffolk-Council-Suffolk-Coastal-Local-Plan.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Adopted-Waveney-Local-Plan-including-Erratum.pdf](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Waveney-Local-Plan/Adopted-Waveney-Local-Plan-including-Erratum.pdf)

comprises a vision and strategic priorities, a strategy for growth including to meet housing and employment needs, strategies for Lowestoft and the market towns, site allocations and development management policies on a range of topics. The Local Plan also contains an Infrastructure Delivery Framework and a Monitoring Framework.

- 2.8 Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires the Council to undertake a review to consider whether the plan needs to be updated by the fifth anniversary of its adoption. The Waveney Local Plan review assessment has been undertaken. This review, agreed by Cabinet on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2024, concluded that the plan remained effective and a review was not necessary. Following the introduction of the new standard method for assessing housing need in December 2024, and the resultant increase in the housing need number for East Suffolk, an addendum to the assessment has been prepared which concludes that the Plan does need to be reviewed<sup>5</sup>.

### **Planning reforms and future Local Plan preparation**

- 2.9 The Council supports having up to date plans in place, to maintain a plan-led approach to growth and development and to meet its communities' needs.
- 2.10 The Government is currently proposing significant reforms to the plan-making process, as well as to the content of future Local Plans, through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act which received Royal Assent in October 2023. These planning reforms are proposed to be implemented later in 2025. These include transitional arrangements under which any local plan being prepared under the current system would need to be submitted for Examination by December 2026. Plans not submitted by that date would need to be prepared under the new system.
- 2.11 The Council therefore anticipates that the future Local Plan will be prepared largely under the new system. Further secondary legislation, policy and guidance is needed before plans can formally begin to be prepared under the new system. The new system will also include provision for local authorities to prepare Supplementary Plans, which it is proposed would either relate to a small area (e.g. a site) or be a design code. These would form part of the development plan.
- 2.12 The Council does not envisage being able to undertake formal stages of plan preparation under the new system before Autumn 2025. However, where possible, early work will take place during 2025, anticipated to include preparatory work and potentially activities such as early evidence gathering, early engagement and Sustainability Appraisal scoping.
- 2.13 Under the current Duty to Co-operate (to be replaced with a new mechanism under the reformed system) the Council will also continue to actively engage with adjoining authorities and other Duty to Co-operate bodies on strategic cross-boundary matters. The current Suffolk Coastal Local Plan area is a part of the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area, which provides a forum for considering cross boundary strategic planning matters with Ipswich

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<sup>5</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/local-plans/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/local-plans/)

Borough Council and Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils, as well as Suffolk County Council. The local planning authorities anticipate working to broadly aligned timetables (Babergh and Mid Suffolk are preparing a joint plan reflecting their joint working arrangements), which will enable joint consideration of evidence and approaches to addressing cross-boundary matters including, as necessary, the consideration of any unmet housing needs under paragraph 27 of the 2024 National Planning Policy Framework. East Suffolk Council also has ongoing engagement with other adjoining authorities to the north (Great Yarmouth Borough Council, the Broads Authority, South Norfolk District Council and Norfolk County Council) and will also co-operate with these authorities on the consideration of any cross-boundary matters as relevant.

- 2.14 New and updated evidence will be needed to inform a new local plan, and this is anticipated to cover a range of topics such as housing needs including affordable housing, employment needs, retail and town centres, flood risk, coastal change, transport, infrastructure needs, natural environment and landscape, and viability. Where necessary or where opportunities arise, the Council will prepare evidence jointly with other adjoining local planning authorities.
- 2.15 The future Local Plan will be a comprehensive Local Plan review, although the policies addressed will depend on topics to be covered under future National Development Management Policies. National Development Management Policies will be introduced under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act and will be planning policies set by the Government, which the future Local Plan cannot in substance repeat or be inconsistent with. The Local Plan will cover the geographical area of East Suffolk excluding those areas within the Broads Authority Executive Area, and will update and supersede the current Waveney Local Plan and Suffolk Coastal Local Plan.

Key information is presented in the table below:

Document	East Suffolk Local Plan
Subject Matter	Comprehensive Local Plan review (dependent on topics to be covered under future National Development Management Policies). The Plan will update and supersede the current Waveney Local Plan and Suffolk Coastal Local Plan. The plan period will cover at least up to 2044, based on planning ahead at least 15 years from adoption.
Geographical area	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads Authority Executive Area)

*Table 1: East Suffolk Local Plan summary table*

- 2.16 The estimated timetable that the future Local Plan will be prepared to is set out in Table 2 below. This timetable is based on beginning some preparatory work on the new Local Plan in Spring/Summer 2025, to enable the Council to be ready for the new system. The timetable is based on our current understanding of the new system, as proposed in the consultation on

plan-making reforms held in July – October 2023<sup>6</sup>. At the time of writing, we are awaiting further detail on the new plan-making system and therefore the timetable will be reviewed and updated as necessary as further information becomes available. The timetable presented is an interim timetable in advance of full details of the new system becoming available. The timetable will be heavily influenced by the timing of the introduction of the new system – any delay to the ability to publish a notice of commencement would push back the later stages.

Key Stage	Interim Timetable
Preparatory work, scoping and early participation	April 2025 – March 2026
Local Plan Commencement Notice	November 2025
Gateway 1 (4-6 weeks)	March – April 2026
Consultation (8 weeks)	July – August 2026
Gateway 2 (4-6 weeks)	January – February 2027
Consultation (6 weeks)	July – August 2027
Gateway 3 and Submission (4-6wks)	January – February 2028
Examination	March – December 2028
Adoption	January 2029

Table 2: East Suffolk Local Plan interim timetable

- Under the scoping and early participation stage, it is anticipated that some activities can be undertaken prior to the formal Local Plan commencement notice. The specifics of the work undertaken during this phase will need to remain under review, pending further information from the Government, however it is anticipated that during 2025/26 work may involve activities such as evidence scoping/gathering, early engagement activities, an initial call for sites, Sustainability Appraisal scoping and liaison with adjoining authorities under the Duty to Co-operate to identify and scope strategic cross-boundary matters.
- Local Plan commencement notice – it is anticipated that a Local Plan commencement notice will be required under the new system, a minimum of four months prior to progressing through the formal stages set out in Table 2 above. Also at this stage, under the new system we anticipate preparing a new style Project Initiation Document and Local Plan Timetable. The Project Initiation Document and Local Plan Timetable are expected to replace the Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme.
- Gateway Assessments are proposed as part of the new system whereby a planning inspector (or other independent assessor at Gateway 1) would carry out an advisory assessment and a ‘stop/go’ assessment at Gateway 3.

<sup>6</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>



- Consultation stages – it is expected that the specific nature of the two mandatory consultations listed in the table will be set out in future legislation and guidance on the new system, however in summary we anticipate that the first consultation will relate to testing plan options and the second will be a consultation on a draft Local Plan.

## Neighbourhood Plans

- 2.17 Neighbourhood Plans are produced by communities (Town or Parish Councils, or a Neighbourhood Forum in unparished areas). Once ‘made’, a Neighbourhood Plan forms a part of the development plan, along with the relevant Local Plan for that area. There is no requirement for Neighbourhood Plans to be prepared or reviewed, this is for the Town or Parish Council to decide, along with the range of issues to be covered, in consultation with the local community. A Neighbourhood Plan must however be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the relevant Local Plan.
- 2.18 East Suffolk Council has statutory duties to support the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan. Information on Neighbourhood Plans in East Suffolk is available on the Council’s Neighbourhood Planning webpages<sup>7</sup>.
- 2.19 There are currently 25 ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans in East Suffolk:

Beccles (September 2021)	Mutford (December 2019)
Bredfield (May 2021)	Oulton (February 2023)
Bungay (November 2022)	Playford (July 2024)
Easton (July 2024)	Rendlesham (March 2015)
Framlingham (March 2017)	Reydon (May 2021)
Great Bealings (March 2017)	Rushmere St Andrew (June 2023)
Halesworth (February 2023)	Saxmundham (July 2023)
Kesgrave (May 2021)	Shadingfield, Sotterley, Willingham and Ellough (June 2023)
Kessingland (January 2017)	Southwold (February 2022)
Leiston (March 2017)	Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet (July 2018)
Lound, Ashby, Herringfleet and Somerleyton (July 2022)	Wickham Market (November 2023)
Martlesham (July 2018)	Worlingham (November 2022)
Melton (January 2018)	

- 2.20 A further 19 are currently under preparation (having had a Neighbourhood Area designated), and are at differing stages of preparation:

Aldringham cum Thorpe (Regulation 14 consultation undertaken)	Mettingham, Barsham, Shipmeadow, Ringsfield and Weston
Barnby	Otley (Regulation 14 consultation undertaken)

<sup>7</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-plans-in-the-area/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/neighbourhood-plans-in-the-area/)

Campsea Ashe	Oulton Broad
Carlton Colville (Examiner's report published and subsequent focused consultation undertaken)	Tunstall
Corton	Theberton and Eastbridge
Earl Soham	Ufford (Regulation 16 consultation undertaken)
Eyke	Walberswick
Henstead with Hulver Street	Westerfield (Regulation 16 consultation undertaken)
Little Bealings	Wissett
Lowestoft (Regulation 14 consultation undertaken)	

2.21 There is no requirement for Neighbourhood Plans to be reviewed, however some Town or Parish Councils are now considering a review of made plans.

2.22 The Council prepares guidance documents to support Town and Parish Councils in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans and will keep these under review and amend as needed, as well as prepare guidance on other topics as appropriate. To date the following have been prepared:

- Neighbourhood Planning – How to go about it (March 2021)
- Neighbourhood Plans – Indicative Housing Requirements Methodology (July 2021)
- Neighbourhood Planning Guidance Note – Review of Made Neighbourhood Development Plans (January 2022)

The following Neighbourhood Plan guidance is currently being prepared:

- Neighbourhood Plan Housing Guidance
- Neighbourhood Plan Climate Change Guidance

## Minerals and Waste Local Plan

2.23 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan forms part of the development plan and is prepared by Suffolk County Council, as Minerals and Waste Planning Authority. Suffolk County Council adopted the Minerals and Waste Local Plan in July 2020.

## Design Code

2.24 The Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023, under the section 'Design code for the whole area', will require a local planning authority to ensure that, for every part of their area, the development plan includes requirements with respect to design that relate to development, or development of a particular description, which the authority consider should be met for planning permission to be granted. Under the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act the Council will be required to prepare and maintain a local plan timetable which must include details of

how it will prepare a Design Code, and it is anticipated that under the new system Design Codes will either form part of a Local Plan or be prepared as new-style Supplementary Plans. The Council will keep under review any emerging secondary legislation, policy and guidance related to Design Codes.

- 2.25 Although referred to as a Design Code requirement in the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act, it is expected that there will be scope for this requirement to be implemented in a variety of ways, which will depend on the particular context of each local planning authority and the feedback received through consultation and engagement. The Council will initially undertake early scoping work to consider options for an appropriate approach across East Suffolk, including the timetable and the resource required. The Council will aim to align early consultation and engagement to inform the Design Code with early participation on the Local Plan. The approach to Design Code content and preparation will depend on the feedback received through the early consultation and engagement, and a detailed timetable will be established through a future iteration of the Local Development Scheme / Local Plan Timetable.

## Other documents

### Supplementary Planning Documents

- 3.1 Since adoption of the Local Plans, the Council has adopted a number of Supplementary Planning Documents<sup>8</sup> to support the implementation of the policies in the Local Plans. Supplementary Planning Documents are material considerations in decision making, prepared under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The planning reforms propose removing the ability to prepare and adopt Supplementary Planning Documents, anticipated later in 2025, and consideration would need to be given to the format of future guidance. The Council will monitor changes as they come forward.
- 3.2 Supplementary Planning Documents adopted (since adoption of the Local Plans):

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Title	Date adopted	Area covered
North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone Design Guide SPD	July 2020	North Lowestoft Heritage Action Zone area
Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy SPD	May 2021	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)
Historic Environment SPD	June 2021	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)
Residential Development Brief for Land North of Union Lane Oulton SPD	September 2021	Land North of Union Lane Oulton
Sustainable Construction SPD	April 2022	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)
Affordable Housing SPD	May 2022	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)
Housing in Clusters and Small Scale Residential Development in the Countryside SPD	November 2022	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)
Coastal Adaptation SPD	September 2023	East Suffolk (along with the Broads, Great Yarmouth and North Norfolk)
Rural Development SPD	April 2024	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)
Custom and Self Build Housing SPD	May 2024	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)
Healthy Environments SPD	June 2024	East Suffolk (outside of the Broads)

<sup>8</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/supplementary-planning-documents/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/supplementary-planning-documents/)

- 3.3 A review of the 2013 Supplementary Planning Document for the Kirkley Waterfront and Sustainable Urban Neighbourhood commenced in 2024. The planning reforms propose that authorities will not be able to adopt new SPDs from later in 2025 onwards. To provide up to date guidance in a timely manner to support decision making related to the redevelopment of this important strategic site, the update will take the form of a Planning Position Statement which will sit alongside the SPD and is being prepared to the following timetable:
- Initial evidence gathering consultation – Spring 2024
  - Consultation on draft Planning Position Statement – Spring 2025
  - Adoption – Spring/Summer 2025.
- 3.4 Further Supplementary Planning Documents and Supplementary Planning Guidance that were adopted prior to the adoption of the current Local Plans, and haven't been superseded by the new documents above, also remain in place.
- 3.5 In addition to the Supplementary Planning Documents listed, strategies and other guidance<sup>9</sup> have also been prepared. This includes the East Suffolk Cycling and Walking Strategy, adopted in October 2022, which sets out the Council's aims in relation to the improvement and creation of cycling, walking and wheeling provision.

### **Community Infrastructure Levy**

- 3.6 Community Infrastructure Levy is a charge which can be levied by local authorities on new development in their area, to help support the infrastructure needed to support development in their area.
- 3.7 The East Suffolk Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule<sup>10</sup> was adopted by the Council on 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and came into effect on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023. This replaced the former Suffolk Coastal CIL Charging Schedule (2015) and former Waveney CIL Charging Schedule (2013).
- 3.8 The Council is keeping any decision as to whether/when to update the CIL Charging Schedule under review as further changes to the planning system come forward.
- 3.9 The Council publishes an Infrastructure Funding Statement<sup>11</sup> each year which reports on the contributions received and how they are being spent<sup>12</sup>.

### **Statement of Community Involvement**

- 3.10 Local Planning Authorities are required to prepare and maintain a Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), setting out when and how the Council will involve the community in the preparation of planning policy documents and in the consideration of planning applications.

<sup>9</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/supplementary-planning-documents/#other](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/supplementary-planning-documents/#other)

<sup>10</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/developer-contributions/community-infrastructure-levy/cil-rates/approved-cil-rates-for-the-east-suffolk-area/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/developer-contributions/community-infrastructure-levy/cil-rates/approved-cil-rates-for-the-east-suffolk-area/)

<sup>11</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/developer-contributions/infrastructure-funding-statement/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/developer-contributions/infrastructure-funding-statement/)

<sup>12</sup> Map of CIL spend [Projects funded using Community Infrastructure Levy](#)

The East Suffolk Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)<sup>13</sup> was adopted on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2021. Under Regulation 10A of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended) the Council is required to review the Statement of Community Involvement to consider whether it needs to be updated before the fifth anniversary of its adoption (i.e. before 6<sup>th</sup> April 2026). The planning reforms propose to remove the requirement to prepare an SCI, and to replace this with a Project Initiation Document for plan-making which would set out how consultation and engagement would take place. In advance of the new system coming into place, the Council intends to commence a review of the Statement of Community Involvement in Spring 2025, with a view to transferring to documents required under the new system later.

- 3.11 The Council has also adopted a Developers Charter<sup>14</sup> in December 2024, which sets out the Council's expectations and ambitions in relation to consultation and communication for development management purposes.

### **Authority Monitoring Report**

- 3.12 The Council publishes an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) each year to provide an assessment of the progress of the Local Plans and monitor the effectiveness of policies including the delivery of site specific allocations.
- 3.13 The AMR is published on the Council's planning policy monitoring<sup>15</sup> webpages, along with the Planning Delivery Dashboard which presents the detailed information and data on a range of topics including housing, employment, retail and town centres, climate change, design, and the natural and historic environments and provides an assessment on how the local plan policies are performing.
- 3.14 In addition to the Authority Monitoring Report the Council also monitors housing land supply, through annual updates to the Housing Land Supply Statement, and the delivery of housing through its Housing Action Plan.

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<sup>13</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Local-Plans/Statement-of-Community-Involvement/Statement-of-Community-Involvement.pdf](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/assets/Planning/Planning-Policy-and-Local-Plans/Statement-of-Community-Involvement/Statement-of-Community-Involvement.pdf)

<sup>14</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/east-suffolk-developers-charter/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/east-suffolk-developers-charter/)

<sup>15</sup> [www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/open-data/](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/planning-policy-and-local-plans/open-data/)

## Risk Assessment

- 4.1 The work areas set out in this document are led by the Planning Policy and Delivery Team. Potential risks to the future work programme are set out below. A detailed risk assessment will be drawn up as part of preparing a detailed future local plan timetable and work programme.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Uncertainty over future planning reforms (nature and timing)	High	Major	<p>Changes to the timing of the introduction of planning reforms, and the introduction of details such as secondary legislation, policy and guidance – officers continually monitor progress and consultations on proposals are responded to. The Local Plan timetable will be kept under review. There is uncertainty over the scope of National Development Management Policies, which could result in abortive work if these are not in place prior to formal preparation of the Local Plan beginning.</p> <p>The reforms are also likely to affect the ability to adopt Supplementary Planning Documents after Autumn 2025, however the Council is not preparing any new SPDs.</p>
Introduction of Spatial Development Strategies	Very High	Major	The Government has committed to introducing a universal system of strategic planning within the next five years, and therefore it is likely that this more strategic level of planning would be introduced whilst the Local Plan is under preparation. Opportunities to inform the new system of strategic planning, and how this interacts with Local Plans under preparation, will be taken wherever possible.
Devolution and local government reorganisation	Very high	Major	The detail of future devolution and local government reorganisation arrangements, being taken forward under the Devolution Priority Programme, and how this relates to

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
			Local Plans under preparation, will be monitored. The Council has and will maintain a good working relationship with other authorities on addressing cross-boundary planning matters.
Lack of staff capacity to deliver the work programme (both internally and externally)	Significant	Major	<p>Most positions in the Planning Policy and Delivery Team are currently filled, however if any staff were to leave this would impact on the current work programme, and future work programme if recruitment was difficult. Recruitment has been difficult, in particular for more senior roles. Staff are supported to undertake training and to follow areas of work of interest to them, within the work programme.</p> <p>Adequate staffing resources in other bodies such as Suffolk County Council, the Environment Agency and Natural England is also a risk, but the Council has good links with these bodies and will work closely with them.</p>
Resourcing support for Neighbourhood Plans	Low	Major	<p>Whilst it supports Neighbourhood Plan preparation, the Council does not have any control over how many Neighbourhood Plans might come forward and when. If the number being prepared increased significantly, this would require much more staff time from the team, and impact on other areas of work. Regular contact is made with Neighbourhood Plan groups who are preparing plans, and engagement with other Town and Parish Councils takes place for example through the Town and Parish forums to maintain an understanding of the level of interest.</p>



Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Duty to Co-operate and liaison with adjoining authorities	Significant	Major	Where cross-boundary co-operation is required, the Council is also reliant on progress of other authorities. The Council has a good working relationship with adjoining authorities, including through the Ipswich Strategic Planning Area (ISPA) Board with Ipswich, Babergh and Mid Suffolk, and has liaised on broadly aligning timetables. Any requirement to accommodate housing needs from outside the district would require close working with adjoining authorities to evidence and confirm the position early in the process, and a review of any implications for the timetable.

## Review

- 5.1 This Local Development Scheme will be kept under review and updated as necessary (or replaced with alternative timetable documents as required under the reformed planning system) in relation to future Local Plan preparation.

## Write to us



East Suffolk Council  
Planning Policy and  
Delivery Team  
Riverside, 4 Canning Road,  
Lowestoft,  
NR33 0EQ

## Call us



**Planning Policy and Delivery Team (Local Plans)**

01394 444557

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01394 444832

## Email us



**Planning Policy and Delivery Team (Local Plans)**

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**Development Management (Planning Applications)**

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[www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/Planning](http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/Planning)