

**Medway  
Local Development Scheme  
2021 - 2024**

**September 2021**

# **Medway Local Development Scheme 2021 - 2024**

**September 2021**

## **Contents**

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Update to Local Development Scheme**
- 3. Neighbourhood Plans and other policy documents**
- 4. Resources and project management**
- 5. Contact information**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Local Development Scheme provides an updated programme for the production of a new local plan that will provide the basis for development policy in Medway. The scheme covers the period from 2021 to 2024 and updates the Medway Local Development Scheme published in August 2020. The council has produced a revised Local Development Scheme to reflect the current position in the plan making process. This updated scheme is to be considered by the Council's Cabinet on 28 September 2021.
- 1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004<sup>1</sup>, as amended, requires local planning authorities to prepare, maintain and publish a Local Development Scheme (LDS). The first Medway Local Development Scheme was published in April 2005, and the Council has periodically reviewed the scheme to ensure its accuracy and that it aligns to the current legislative and local context. Local planning authorities must revise their local development scheme at such time as they consider appropriate, to ensure that it is up to date. The LDS provides public information on the process and timetable for the preparation and review of local development documents, and is used by the Council to help plan resources and workstreams. It allows the community and stakeholders to find out about the Council's intentions for the planning policy of Medway, and when they can participate in the plan making process.
- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework, as revised in 2018, 2019 and 2021, has reiterated the role of development plans to manage growth. Local planning authorities have a statutory duty to prepare and update local plans for their area. The government has provided further details on its expectations for plan-making in Planning Practice Guidance. The Secretary of State has extended powers to intervene in plan making where progress is unsatisfactory, and has taken up this power where he considered that planning authorities had not made sufficient progress.
- 1.4 The current development plan for Medway is made up of the saved policies from the Medway Local Plan adopted in 2003, together with some earlier saved policies specific to waste and minerals. Details of the saved policies that form the development plan are set out on the council's website at:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policy/146/current\\_planning\\_policies/2](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policy/146/current_planning_policies/2)

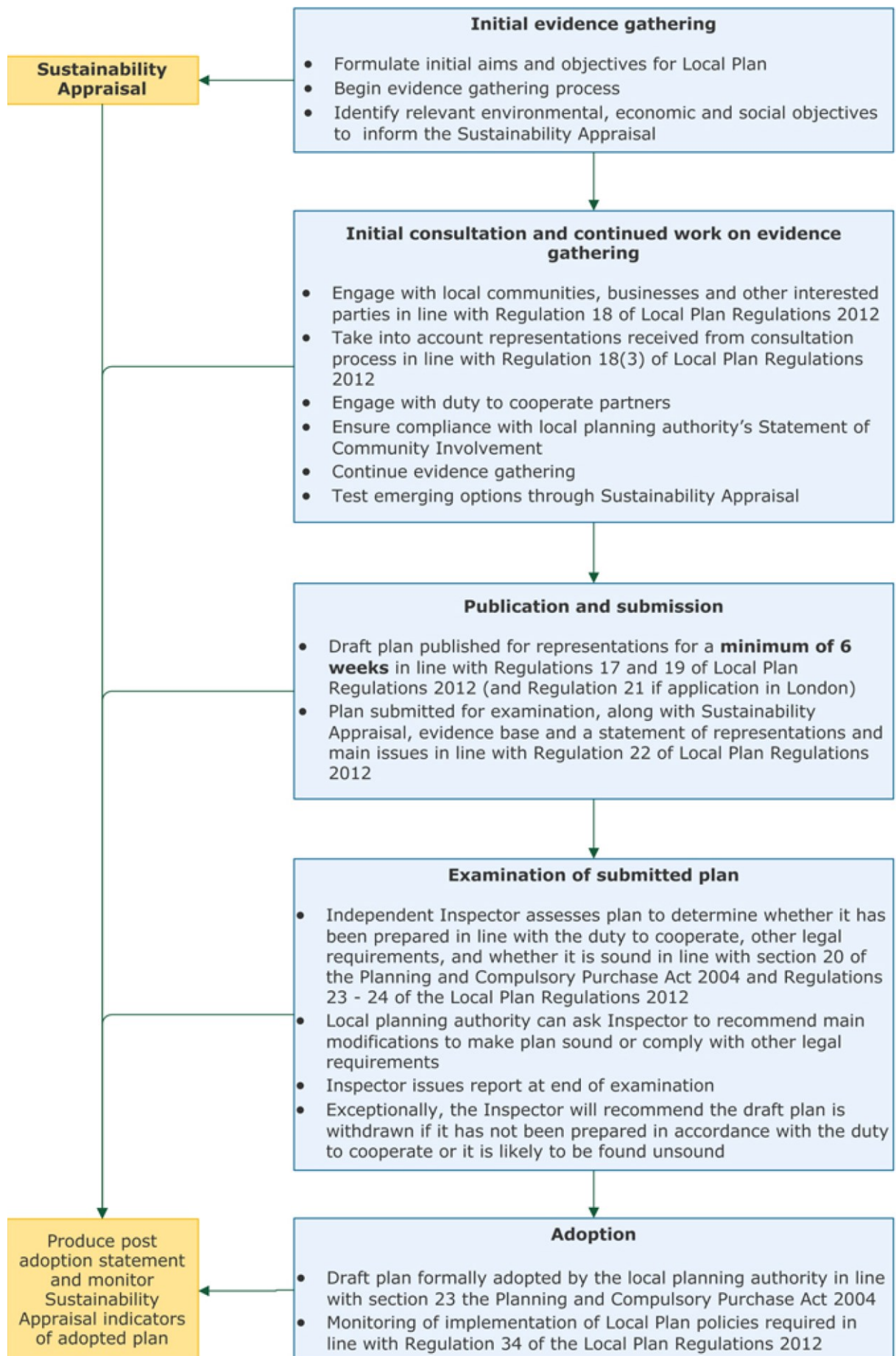
---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/section/15>

- 1.5 The Council has clear ambitions for Medway's successful growth, continuing the regeneration of urban waterfront and centres, and wider development supported by infrastructure investments. Our regeneration strategy, Medway 2035<sup>2</sup>, sets out aspirations for a Waterfront Learning City, connecting innovation, people and place. The Council is committed to driving growth that delivers benefits for all. This is being followed through in our plans for sustainable growth, addressing the climate emergency and structural changes in the economy.
- 1.6 The Medway Local Plan is a key means of setting the vision for Medway's growth and mapping out the strategy and policies to achieve our aims. The Council is aware of its ageing Local Plan and is committed to the adoption of a new Local Plan guiding Medway's development into the late 2030s. This has been a complex and lengthy process, and substantial work has been carried out to support the preparation of the draft plan.
- 1.7 The Council has shown a willing attitude to plan positively for the area's significant development needs, considering the sensitivities of the built and natural environment, and addressing challenges of infrastructure capacity. We have engaged with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, and the Planning Advisory Service, to provide updates on the preparation of the Medway Local Plan and show that the Council is committed to positively planning for the development needs of the area.
- 1.8 The Council has carried out three rounds of formal consultation at 'Regulation 18' stage of the plan preparation process. The Council undertook an initial Regulation 18 'Issues and Options' consultation in early 2016. A further consultation stage on 'Development Options' was held in 2017. Representations made at the Development Options consultation stage requested that the Council explicitly consider a development option that did not include reference to development on land at Lodge Hill, Chattenden. This would provide greater clarity in assessing the potential impact of development on a designated Site of Special Scientific Interest. Therefore, the Council provided a further opportunity to make representations, through a Regulation 18 consultation on a Development Strategy document in 2018. The process for the preparation of local plans is set out in the diagram below.

---

<sup>2</sup> Available at: [https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/3615/medway\\_2035](https://www.medway.gov.uk/downloads/file/3615/medway_2035)



## **2. Update to Local Development Scheme**

- 2.1 The Council's work on the new Medway Local Plan is the focus of this Local Development Scheme. The new local plan will cover the period 2021-2037. The Local Plan will cover the whole of Medway and will be prepared in conformity with national planning legislation, specifically the National Planning Policy Framework, 2021. On adoption it will replace the saved policies from the Medway Local Plan 2003. The Local Plan is a Development Plan Document (DPD).
- 2.2 The new local plan will include strategic policies, including for waste and minerals, and a number of local policies to manage development. It will also have a policies map and provide for land allocations to meet development needs for housing and employment.
- 2.3 The Council has collated a comprehensive evidence base to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan. It has published the information as it is prepared and made it available on the Council's dedicated Local Plan webpages:  
[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policy/519/future\\_medway\\_local\\_plan/2](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policy/519/future_medway_local_plan/2)
- 2.4 The Council will meet the requirements of sustainability appraisal throughout the plan preparation process, carrying out iterative appraisals of the sustainability of the options, proposals and draft policies in the emerging Local Plan and prepare reports setting out the findings. This will be carried out at the key stages of plan preparation. The Council will consult on the Sustainability Appraisals in line with its Statement of Community Involvement.
- 2.5 There are significant challenges to meeting high levels of development needs in Medway, with its sensitive environment and complex infrastructure context. The Council has sought to secure investments and mitigations to provide for sustainable growth. This has had implications for the evidence base work required and work programme for the local plan. The Council is now in a position to bring forward the draft local plan for publication at Regulation 19 in Autumn 2021.
- 2.6 This document represents the updated programme for the production of the new local plan. The Council has revised the LDS to reflect updated timing for the completion of core components of the evidence base, such as the Strategic Transport Assessment to take account of the proposals for the Lower Thames Crossing. The revisions to the Local Development Scheme relate to the published dates for the key stages of plan preparation as set out in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Key milestones for Medway Local Plan**

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Date</b>
Regulation 18 – Issues and Options consultation	Jan-Feb 2016
Regulation 18 – Development Options consultation	Jan-May 2017
Regulation 18 – Development Strategy consultation	March-June 2018
Regulation 19 – Publication of draft plan	Autumn 2021
Submission of plan for Examination	Spring 2022
Adoption (determined on outcome of Examination)	Spring 2023

### **3. Neighbourhood Plans and other policy documents**

3.1 Neighbourhood Plans were introduced in the Localism Act in 2011. They are not compulsory, but when duly prepared they are a statutory document that forms part of the development plan. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted local plan, and have regard to any emerging local plans or relevant development plan documents. Communities in Medway have shown increased interest in preparing neighbourhood plans for their local areas. Once the plans are ‘made’, or adopted, they will form part of the development plan for Medway. Currently there are four Neighbourhood Areas designated in Medway, for the purpose of producing a neighbourhood plan:

- Cliffe and Cliffe Woods – designated June 2015
- High Halstow – designated June 2018
- Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden – designated December 2018
- Arches (Chatham) – designated August 2019

3.2 Frindsbury Extra Parish Council has expressed interest in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, but has not yet the formal process.

3.3 Cliffe and Cliffe Woods submitted its draft Neighbourhood Plan to Medway Council in September 2021. The Council is to arrange publication of the draft neighbourhood plan, prior to making arrangements for independent examination in 2022.

3.4 Arches (Chatham) and High Halstow published their draft Neighbourhood Plans for consultation at Regulation 14 in 2021. Both anticipate submitting their plans to Medway in late 2021 to progress to Examination in 2022. Hoo St Werburgh and Chattenden intend to progress the consultation at Regulation 14 following the publication of the draft Medway Local Plan.

3.5 Further details of neighbourhood plans in Medway and support available from the Council are available on the Council's website at:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policy/142/neighbourhood\\_planning](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policy/142/neighbourhood_planning)

3.3 In preparation for the new local plan, the Council has reviewed its Statement of Community Involvement. The document was updated in 2020 to take account of the public health measures introduced to address Covid. The Statement will be further updated to support the publication of the draft plan to provide the basis for effective and meaningful engagement in the preparation of the new Local Plan. The Statement of Community Involvement is published at:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policies/141/medway\\_statement\\_of\\_community\\_involvement](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policies/141/medway_statement_of_community_involvement)

3.4 The Council makes use of supplementary planning documents to provide guidance and certainty on bringing forward development. It promotes the use of masterplans and development briefs for regeneration sites, as a core component of the area's growth strategy. It has also produced guidance on developer contributions and obligations to assist in the development process. A full list of the supplementary planning documents and other policy documents is set out on the Council's website at:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policy/146/current\\_planning\\_policies/4](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policy/146/current_planning_policies/4)

3.5 The Council has prepared a Local Development Order, jointly with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to support the development of a key employment site at Innovation Park Medway. This covers a defined area on the border of Medway near Rochester Airport, that has been identified by both Councils as a key location for a new business park.

3.7 The emerging Local Plan is informed by work on infrastructure planning and delivery. The Council has not progressed a Community Infrastructure Levy, and continues to use Section 106 agreements as its



preferred mechanism to collect developer contributions. Work on infrastructure funding has been carried out for the draft plan and the proposed policy is supported by the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

#### **4. Resources and project management**

- 4.1 Medway Council has strong corporate commitment to the adoption of a replacement Local Plan, and the importance of this work is recognised and supported across the authority. The Medway Local Plan will be produced by the Council's Planning Service, with the work being led by the Planning Policy team. The service is supported by the specialist technical skills and knowledge of other teams, including Environmental Protection, Regeneration Delivery and Public Health.
- 4.2 The Council will seek to use its processes of community involvement and engagement and its Duty to Cooperate activities and organisations to help inform and develop the plan, making effective use of intelligence and resources. This will include the preparation of Statements of Common Ground in relation to strategic cross border planning matters. Officers have held early discussions with neighbouring local planning authorities and other statutory organisations regarding the preparation of Statements of Common Ground. The council has led on the establishment of strategic planning and transport groups across north and mid Kent. The Council has managed the delivery of the Strategic Transport Assessment through a Statement of Common Ground with Highways England that commits both parties to sharing of information and collaborative working. The draft plan is supported by a comprehensive evidence base, including housing, employment, retail, transport, heritage, infrastructure, viability and the natural environment.
- 4.3 The Council has established management and reporting structures to support the delivery of the local plan, including the use of briefings and reporting to senior managers and members throughout the plan preparation process. Risk management is integral to reporting and monitoring. The Planning Service regularly reviews work streams on the local plan, to take account of new legislation and significant changes in the local context. There is a dedicated cross party member advisory group supporting the production of the local plan.

#### *Reporting progress*

- 4.4 The Council will publish this updated Local Development Scheme on its website and make it available for inspection at the Council's offices at

Gun Wharf, at an appropriate time. There is a dedicated page on the council's website for the LDS:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policies/597/local\\_development\\_scheme\\_and\\_monitoring](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policies/597/local_development_scheme_and_monitoring)

- 4.5 Progress on the Local Plan and supporting activities, such as demonstrating that the Duty to Cooperate is being met in the preparation of the plan, is reported annually in the Authority Monitoring Report. The report will show the progress being made on the Local Plan, and the degree of compliance with the LDS. The Authority Monitoring Report is published each December on the Council's website:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policy/597/local\\_development\\_scheme\\_and\\_monitoring/2](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policy/597/local_development_scheme_and_monitoring/2)

## **5. Contact information**

Further information about Medway's planning policy work is available on the Council's website at:

[https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning\\_policy](https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200149/planning_policy)

You can contact the Planning Policy team at:

The Planning Service  
Regeneration, Culture & Environment  
Medway Council  
Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR

Email: [futuremedway@medway.gov.uk](mailto:futuremedway@medway.gov.uk)

Telephone: 01634 331629