

Exeter City Council

Local Development Scheme -

Future planning policy work

June 2023

Version for Executive: Appendix A

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We consider requests on an individual basis.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Local Development Scheme (LDS) is required to set out a programme of planning policy documents which the Council proposes to prepare for the city council administrative area.
- 1.2 The principal document the Council is progressing is the Exeter Plan, the new Local Plan for the city. We are also preparing:
- A review of the city's Article 4 position which manages the change of use of regular residential properties to houses in multiple occupation.
 - A Supplementary Planning Document for the Water Lane area;
 - A review of the Householder's Guide to Extension Design Supplementary Planning Document; and
 - A review of the Council's Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule which sets out CIL rates in the city.
- 1.3 This LDS replaces the previous LDS of June 2021. It will be updated as necessary to reflect the progress being made on the planning policy documents being prepared.

2. Current planning policy for Exeter: The ‘development plan’

- 2.1 Planning legislation¹ requires all local planning authorities to produce what is called a ‘Development Plan’.
- 2.2 The current Development Plan for Exeter consists of a series of plans called Development Plan Documents. Taken together, these provide a vision and a framework for the future development of the city. More specifically, the documents set out the priorities for the city, identify areas for development and provide a comprehensive set of policies which are used to make decisions on planning applications.
- 2.3 In Exeter, the Development Plan currently includes the following documents:
- The adopted Exeter Core Strategy and saved policies from the adopted Exeter Local Plan First Review.
 - The St James Neighbourhood Plan. This is currently the only ‘made’ Neighbourhood Development Plan in Exeter. Because neighbourhood development plans are not prepared by the Council they are not considered in detail here.
 - The adopted Devon Minerals Plan and adopted Devon Waste Plan. These are produced by Devon County Council. Because minerals and waste planning policy is not prepared by the Council these matters are not considered in detail here.
- 2.4 The policies in all these documents must be taken into account when making decisions on planning applications.

¹ [The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004](#)

3. Supplementary planning documents

- 3.1 In addition to formal Development Plan Documents such as the Exeter Plan, the Council occasionally produces other documents such as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). SPDs provide further explanation of formal Development Plan policies, how they should be interpreted and expectations for their implementation. SPDs can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on a particular issue and are taken into account when making planning decisions. SPDs cannot not themselves set out policies.
- 3.2 The Council already has a series of SPDs covering topics such as affordable housing, planning obligations, public open space and various areas in the city. The list of SPDs will gradually need to be reviewed in the context of the new policies which emerge in the new Exeter Plan and to reflect changes in national planning policy which may result from the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill, the review of the National Planning Policy Framework and the emergence of National Development Management Policies.
- 3.3 SPDs do not provide formal planning policy in the same way as a local plan and so the procedure for preparing them is simpler and shorter as explained by the planning regulations². They do however have to be prepared with supporting evidence, require public consultation and need to be formally adopted by the Council.
- 3.4 The Council is currently working on three SPDs:
- Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document. This sits alongside a review of the associated Article 4 Direction.
 - Water Lane Supplementary Planning Document.
 - Householder's Guide to Extension Design Supplementary Planning Document: Review

² [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

4. The new Local Plan: The Exeter Plan

- 4.1 The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the city. This will be known as the Exeter Plan. The Exeter Plan will replace the adopted Core Strategy and adopted Local Plan First Review. It will include a vision and objectives for Exeter, a spatial strategy, sites for development (allocations) and a series of planning policies. Some of these policies will be strategic policies covering themes and topics whilst others will be non-strategic policies covering requirements for development or specific areas.
- 4.2 Two formal public consultations to consider the Exeter Plan have already been held. An Issues Consultation was held between September and November 2021. This discussed the vision for the plan, a series of issues which the plan could cover and some of the principles to steer a future spatial strategy for the city.
- 4.3 Following the Issues Consultation, work on the Local Plan evolved and the name of the document was revised to become the Exeter Plan. A further consultation on an Outline Draft of the Exeter Plan was held between September and December 2022. The Outline Draft plan included a vision for the city, a spatial strategy, a series of Liveable Exeter principles to achieve high quality development, a number of draft policies on various themes and a suite of proposed development allocations for Exeter.
- 4.4 There is still some way to go on the preparation of the Exeter Plan. This will include the continued development of the evidence base, further policy drafting, additional consideration of potential development allocations, various consultations and an Examination. The key consideration for the timetable is the need for robust evidence to ensure the soundness and deliverability of the plan, in particular the predominantly brownfield development strategy.
- 4.5 The timetable for preparing the Exeter Plan is set out below:
- Issues consultation (Regulation 18³): September 2021
Complete
 - Outline Draft Plan consultation (Regulation 18): September 2022
Complete
 - Draft Plan consultation (Regulation 18): October 2023
 - Publication (Regulation 19): October 2024
 - Submission to Planning Inspectorate (Regulation 22): March 2025

³ [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

Indicative timetable (determined by Planning Inspectorate)

- Examination including hearings (Regulation 24): June 2025
- Adoption (Regulation 26): December 2025

4.6 It should be noted that the timetable after the submission is broadly outside the control of the council due to the Examination process being managed by the Planning Inspectorate.

4.7 Details of the steps required in preparing the Exeter Plan are set out in planning regulations⁴. The stages are summarised below.

- **Issues consultation (complete):** This was the first stage of public consultation where the Council sought views on what the plan should cover and the key issues facing the city.
- **Outline Draft Plan consultation (complete):** After the issues consultation, responses were analysed and further evidence was prepared. From this work, an outline draft plan was produced. This included a series of draft policies and potential sites for consultation. This document was not yet a full draft of the plan.
- **Draft Plan consultation:** Following the Outline Draft Plan consultation, the responses are being reviewed, further evidence is being compiled, additional policies are being prepared and more detailed specific site proposals worked up.
- **Publication (Pre-submission Plan):** After the draft plan consultation, responses will be considered, amendments made and further work completed to produce a final draft of the plan. This 'publication' version is the plan which the Council intends to submit to the Planning Inspectorate for examination. A publication consultation will be held on this version of the plan to seek formal comments ('representations'). The nature and duration of this consultation have to follow strict regulatory requirements.
- **Submission to the Planning Inspectorate:** The publication version of the plan, the supporting evidence and the formal comments on the plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate who will appoint an independent inspector to test the plan through an examination.
- **Examination hearings:** During the examination, the planning inspector will hold a set of public hearings to discuss the plan. These hearings can be attended by those making comments on the publication version of the plan. The discussions at the hearings help the inspector to reach conclusions regarding the soundness of the plan. The inspector will often identify modifications to the plan which may require further consultation. At the end of this process the Council will receive a report from the Planning Inspectorate which concludes whether the plan is 'sound'.

⁴ [The Town and Country Planning \(Local Planning\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#)

- **Adoption:** After the Council receives the report from the inspector, the plan can be formally adopted by the Council. This means that the content of the plan, including the policies and development sites, become official planning policy for the city.

5. Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document: Review

- 5.1 In 2010, the Council made an Article 4 Direction to restrict permitted development rights from dwellings to houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). The Article 4 Direction applies to an area around the University of Exeter's Streatham and St Luke's campuses and was introduced by the Council as one of two planning policy responses to help manage the potential impact of increasing numbers of students living in Exeter and studying at the University. The original HMO Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in 2011 to accompany the Article 4 Direction. The current version of the document was adopted in 2014 and provides more detail on the implementation of policy H5 in the Local Plan First Review.
- 5.2 In November 2021, following receipt of petitions from local residents, the Council's Executive decided to review the Article 4 Direction and accompanying SPD.
- 5.3 In 2022, evidence was put together to consider the potential geographic scope of revisions to the Article 4 Direction and the SPD. The next steps are for the Council to continue the project through consultation and eventual implementation. The timetable for the work is set out below:
- Evidence gathering: 2022. **Complete**
 - Consultation: May 2023. **Ongoing**
 - Further assessment: July - September 2023
 - Confirmation of Direction and SPD adoption: December 2023
 - Implementation of updated Direction: December 2024

6. Water Lane Supplementary Planning Document

- 6.1 Water Lane, within the Canal Basin area, is allocated for development in policy KP6 of the adopted Local Plan First Review. The site is also identified as a regeneration area in the adopted Core Strategy with policy CP17 setting out key principles for the area.
- 6.2 An extended site was included in the original Liveable Exeter programme in 2019 and this area was also included for consultation in the outline draft of the Exeter Plan in 2022.
- 6.3 It is likely that Water Lane will be one of the earliest of the strategic sites in the Exeter Plan to come forward, with proposals currently emerging through the development management process. It is vital that development in this area sets the tone for delivering high quality, brownfield development across the city.
- 6.4 On this basis, an SPD is being developed to set clear parameters to support high quality development at Water Lane. This will provide a development framework for the site together with a design code.
- 6.5 The timetable for preparing the Water Lane SPD is included below.
- Evidence gathering: May – September 2023. **Ongoing**
 - Consultation: October 2023
 - Adoption: June 2024

7. Householder's Guide to Extension Design Supplementary Planning Document: Review

- 7.1. The Householders Guide to Extension Design SPD will provide a review of an existing adopted Council document of the same name. The document identifies the requirements in relation to domestic extensions and alterations and amplifies existing design policies DG1 and DG4 of the adopted Local Plan First Review. These policies cover themes including street pattern, landscaping, density, local distinctiveness, materials, townscape and outside space amongst others.
- 7.2. The review is needed because the current document was adopted in 2008 and the national and local planning context has evolved subsequently with the adoption of the Core Strategy and emergence of the Exeter Plan and Liveable Exeter initiative.
- 7.3. More specifically, there is a need to review the document so it aligns with:
- The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance;
 - The Council Residential Design Supplementary Planning Document; and
 - Changes to the General Permitted Development Order.
- 7.4. The proposed LDS timetable for the work on the Householders Guide to Extension Design SPD Review is summarised below.
- Document review: May – September 2023. **Ongoing**
 - Consultation: October 2023
 - Adoption: June 2024

8. Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): Charging Schedule Review

- 8.1 As the Local Planning Authority and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Authority for Exeter, the Council has the authority to charge CIL in the city. The Council has been charging CIL since December 2013. In the intervening years there have been significant changes in the city and the development industry which means the current CIL charges in the city are now being reviewed.
- 8.2 Viability work and a revised draft CIL Charging Schedule have been compiled and were subject to consultation between December 2022 and January 2023. The next steps are for the Council to continue through various stages towards implementation of the revised CIL rates. The timetable for the work on the CIL review is set out below:
- Evidence gathering: 2021 – 2022. **Complete**
 - Consultation: December 2022 – January 2023. **Complete**
 - Submit: March 2023. **Complete**
 - Examination hearing: July 2023

Indicative timetable (determined following the outcome of the hearing)

- Implementation: December 2023

9. Other work

- 9.1 As required by legislation, this Local Development Scheme has set out the key formal planning policy documents which the Council proposes to produce together with a timetable for this work.
- 9.2 It should be noted that the projects included in this document are not an exhaustive list. There is a series of other work which the Local Plans team carries out. This includes:
- Development delivery work, focusing on the Liveable Exeter initiative
 - Housing monitoring and land supply calculations
 - Infrastructure planning
 - CIL and s106 collection and monitoring
 - Maintenance of the brownfield land register
 - Maintenance of the custom and self-build register
 - Preparation of the Authority Monitoring Report
 - Evidence preparation
 - Partnership working including the preparation of the East Devon, Exeter, Mid Devon and Teignbridge joint strategy
 - Responding to planning consultations
 - Wider consultation and engagement activity
 - Management of the Building Greater Exeter programme