

Stroud District Council: Local Development Scheme 2025-29

June 2025

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a public timetable published by local planning authorities, outlining the schedule for preparing or updating planning documents including Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). Required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 15), it ensures transparency by detailing key milestones, consultations, and adoption deadlines. The LDS must be kept current and accessible on the council's website. Stroud District Council is legally required to maintain and publish an up-to-date LDS.

1.2 This LDS sets out:

- The current documents that make up the development plan for Stroud District and other relevant planning guidance; and
- The documents that will be produced during 2025-29 to maintain an up-to-date development plan and other relevant planning guidance.

2.0 Current development plan for Stroud district

2.1 National planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.¹

2.2 The development plan for Stroud District currently comprises:

- Stroud District Local Plan (adopted November 2015)
- Waste and Minerals local plans (see below)
- Neighbourhood development plans (see below)

2.3 The Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 19th November 2015 and provides a comprehensive spatial plan for the District for the period up to 2031. The Local Plan includes a development strategy; core and delivery policies; site allocations; and a policies map. The Local Plan completely replaces the previous Stroud District Local Plan 2005.

2.4 Waste and Minerals Local Plans include:

- Gloucestershire Minerals and Waste Development Scheme (MWDS) (October 2024/25 - 2026/27)

2.5 Further information on the current Waste and Minerals LDS can be seen here: [Minerals and waste development scheme \(MWDS\) | Gloucestershire County Council](#)

2.6 Neighbourhood development plans (NDPs) produced by parish councils within Stroud District following a successful referendum also form part of the development plan. The following NDPs form part of the development plan:

1. Brimscombe and Thrupp NDP (made May 2024)
2. Cam NDP (made July 2021)

¹ Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

3. Dursley NDP (made February 2019)
4. Eastington NDP (made October 2016)
5. Hardwicke NDP (made October 2017)
6. Horsley NDP (made July 2021)
7. Kingswood NDP (made May 2017)
8. Minchinhampton (made July 2019)
9. Slimbridge NDP (made May 2024)
10. Stonehouse NDP (made February 2018)
11. Stroud Town Centre NDP (made October 2016)
12. Whiteshill & Ruscombe NDP (made October 2016)

3.0 Current supplementary planning guidance

Supplementary planning documents (SPD)

- 3.1 Supplementary planning documents (SPD) are documents that add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.²
- 3.2 The following documents have been adopted by the Council as SPDs:
 - Industrial Heritage Conservation Area Management Proposals SPD (November 2008)
 - Sustainable Construction & Design Checklist SPD (February 2017)
 - Planning Obligations SPD (April 2017)
 - Chalford Community Design Statement (September, 2019)
 - A Canals Strategy for Stroud District (October 2022)

Supplementary planning guidance (SPG)

- 3.3 This form of guidance was prepared under the pre 2004 planning system and has limited weight. However, SPG's may still be taken into account as material considerations particularly if they relate to matters set out in the NPPF. The weight of the SPG increases if it has been prepared in consultation with the public and has been the subject of a Council resolution.
- 3.4 The following documents have been adopted by the Council as SPGs:
 - Stroud District Landscape Assessment SPG (November 2000)
 - Stroud District Residential Design Guide SPG (November 2000)
 - Stroud District Shopfronts Guide (adopted December 2011)

Supplementary planning advice (SPA)

- 3.5 These documents support the planning policies adopted by the Council but have not been subject to the same level of process as either SPGs or SPDs. However, they can be referred to for guidance and may be used in decision making. The weight given to them may be more limited than other documents.

² National Planning Policy Framework (Department for Communities and Local Government, February 2019), Glossary.

- 3.6 The following documents have been adopted by the Council as SPAs:
- Householder Design Guide (adopted 2007)
 - The Industrial Heritage Design Guide (adopted November 2008)
 - Stroud Public Realm Strategy (adopted January 2009)
 - Standish House Planning Concept Statement (adopted June 2015)
 - A Heritage Strategy for Stroud District (adopted February 2018)

- 3.7 In addition, the Council has adopted the following community design statements and conservation area statements (CAS) as Supplementary Planning Advice:

- Design statements: Alkington (2014); Bisley-with-Lypiatt (2010); Frampton-on-Severn (2018); Kingswood (2014); Longney and Epney (2011); Nailsworth (2009); Randwick (2014); Slimbridge (2017); Stonehouse (2005); Uley & Owlpen (2016); Whitminster (2014); Woodchester (2012).
- Conservation area statements: Bisley (2007); Frampton-on-Severn (2008); Kingswood (2014); Stroud Industrial Heritage Conservation Area (IHCA) (2008); Stroud Stratford Park (2008); Stroud Top of Town (2008); Stroud Town Centre (2008); Wotton Under Edge (1999)

Other documents

- 3.8 To meet the Council's responsibilities under the Habitats Directive, the following documents have also been produced:
- Rodborough Common Mitigation Strategy for Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (adopted October 2023)
 - Cotswolds Beechwoods Mitigation Strategy for Special Area of Conservation (SAC) (adopted October 2023)
 - Severn Estuary Mitigation Strategy SPA, SAC and Ramsar Site (adopted March 2024)

4.0 Future documents:

Stroud District Council Local Plan Review 2017

- 4.1 The Stroud District Local Plan (2015) included a commitment to an early review with this process beginning in 2017. The Council submitted its draft Local Plan, which had a positive pro-growth focus, for examination in October 2021. Examination hearings took place in 2023, covering site allocations, infrastructure provisions and most policy matters.
- 4.2 During a pause in the examination process in summer 2023, the Planning Inspectors wrote to the Council expressing particular concerns about capacity constraints at M5 junctions 12 and 14. In response, the Council engaged in detailed work with National Highways, South Gloucestershire Council and Gloucestershire County Council to address these issues by December 2024.

- 4.3 In February 2024 and again in April 2025, the Inspectors wrote to the Council advising that the draft Local Plan should be withdrawn. The Council is now carefully considering its position, while the draft plan remains formally at the examination stage at the time this document is published.

A New Local Plan

- 4.4 As of 2025, the Local Plan process in England has been reformed under the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA) and updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2023 as amended). Under the legislation the Council is obliged to commence preparation of a new Local Plan. However, as the Government has not yet published comprehensive details outlining the full requirements for new local plans under the revised system, the Council will first conclude the Examination process for its current draft Local Plan before initiating a new plan under the forthcoming guidance.
- 4.5 It is anticipated that work on the new Local Plan will begin in Spring 2026. The preparation process will follow the new strict prescribed stages and timelines established by the Government's updated planning framework.

Stage 1: Spring 2026 Evidence and Scoping (Months 1-6)

- Housing Need Assessment (Standard Method still used, but Green Belt constraints allowed)
- Call for Sites - Landowners and developers submit potential sites
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Environmental Outcomes Report (EOR) - Replaces old SA/SEA under LURA

Stage 2: Draft Plan Preparation (Months 7-18)

- Spatial Strategy and Policies - Must align with NDMPs
- Infrastructure and Viability Testing - Close work with statutory bodies
- Duty to Cooperate becomes "Alignment Statements" - Proof of coordination with neighbouring councils

Stage 3: Public Consultation (Months 19-24)

- Regulation 18 (Early Engagement) - Optional
- Regulation 19 (Proposed Submission) - Final draft published for consultation

Stage 4: Examination and Adoption (Months 25-30)

- Planning Inspectorate Review - Checks soundness and legal compliance
 - Hearings and Modifications - Inspector may recommend changes
 - Final Adoption anticipated 2029 - Full Council vote required
- 4.6 This timetable remains indicative at this stage, as the Council has not yet taken any formal decisions. The commencement of a new Local Plan will be subject to Council approval once further government guidance has been published and fully considered.

Community Infrastructure Levy

- 4.7 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a planning charge established under the Planning Act 2008 (as amended) that enables local authorities in England and Wales to secure funding from development projects. This mechanism helps councils finance essential infrastructure required to accommodate growth resulting from new developments. The levy ensures that developers contribute fairly towards the community facilities and services needed to support expanding populations.
- 4.8 Local authorities set their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) rates through a formal Charging Schedule process. This involves detailed viability assessments and a period of public consultation before final adoption. The council's current CIL Charging Schedule was adopted in 2017 and now requires updating to reflect current market conditions and infrastructure needs.
- 4.9 The council's current CIL Charging Schedule was adopted in 2017 and updating alongside the new Local Plan offers several strategic advantages. It allows both documents to draw upon the same viability evidence base, ensuring consistency in planning policy and infrastructure requirements. This coordinated approach also enables more effective infrastructure planning, as both the Local Plan and CIL can be developed with a shared understanding of development needs and costs.
- 4.10 Furthermore, conducting both processes simultaneously presents opportunities for efficiency savings. The examination costs can be shared, and the overall resource requirements reduced, by dealing with both documents through a coordinated programme. This approach ensures the CIL framework properly supports and aligns with the Local Plan's development strategy while making best use of council resources.

Statement of Community Involvement

- 4.11 The Statement of Community Involvement outlines the Council's approach to engaging local communities and stakeholders in both the development of planning policy documents (including the Local Plan) and the consideration of planning applications. It establishes clear procedures for meaningful public participation throughout these processes.
- 4.12 Under statutory requirements, local planning authorities must review their SCI at least every five years. Stroud District Council last updated its SCI in December 2019, making a review due. The Council has scheduled this update for autumn 2025 to ensure continued compliance with current regulations and best practice in community engagement.

5.0 Neighbourhood planning

- 5.1 The Council is currently providing support to several parish councils in the development of their neighbourhood plans. Upon successful completion of the examination process and a positive referendum result, these neighbourhood

plans will be formally adopted and will constitute part of the statutory development plan for Stroud District.

- 5.2 The following table sets out current progress with neighbourhood plans.

<i>Name of neighbourhood area</i>	<i>Area designation</i>	<i>NDP / Order submission</i>	<i>Referendum</i>	<i>Plan / Order made</i>
Bisley-with-Lypiatt	July 2019	2025	No date yet	No date yet
Chalford	June 2014	No date yet	No date yet	No date yet
Standish	February 2014	No date yet	No date yet	No date yet
Wotton-Under-Edge	March 2015	No date yet	No date yet	No date yet

Stroud District Design Guide

- 5.3 The Council is looking to adopt a district-wide design to assist planning applications until a new local plan can be adopted. A design guide is a comprehensive planning document that establishes design principles and standards for development across an entire local authority area. It serves as a framework to ensure all new buildings, public spaces and infrastructure projects meet consistent quality benchmarks while respecting local character. These guides play a crucial role in maintaining design coherence throughout a district, from urban extensions to rural developments.
- 5.4 The primary purpose of such guides is to deliver high-quality, context-sensitive design across all types of development, including housing, commercial schemes and public realm improvements. They typically support and expand upon policies contained within the Local Plan and align with the National Design Guide referenced in the NPPF. By setting clear expectations, they help raise design standards while allowing flexibility for innovation.
- 5.5 Content within these guides generally covers several key aspects. Local character sections analyse vernacular architecture, traditional materials and landscape features that define the area's identity. Building design principles address scale, density, massing and layout considerations. Sustainability requirements focus on energy efficiency, biodiversity enhancement and climate resilience measures. Public realm guidance shapes streetscapes, green infrastructure and accessibility standards.
- 5.6 The Council anticipates a timetable with potential adoption in 2026.

6.0 Monitoring

- 6.1 In accordance with national planning regulations the Council is required to produce a monitoring report addressing various matters including plan

progress and implementation, neighbourhood planning, CIL and the duty to cooperate.

The Council prepares various monitoring reports, these include:

- a) Authority Monitoring Report;
- b) Housing Land Supply Report (this calculates the Council's 5 year housing land supply);
- c) Employment land availability;
- e) Brownfield Land Register; and
- f) Infrastructure Funding Statement.

- 6.2 Where possible, the Council updates and publishes the above reports annually. All documents are available on the Council's website.