



St. Helens
Council

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

September 2020



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1. **INTRODUCTION**

Role of the Local Development Scheme (LDS)

- 1.1 Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to prepare and maintain a document known as the Local Development Scheme (LDS).
- 1.2 The LDS must identify which existing and proposed documents (referred to as development plan documents) are intended to comprise the statutory 'development plan' for the Borough. It must also identify:
 - the subject matter, geographical coverage and timetable for the preparation of each development plan document; and
 - any development plan documents which are to be prepared jointly with one or more other planning authorities.
- 1.3 The legislation requires all local authorities to make their LDS available to the public and to keep it up to date. The previous LDS for St.Helens was prepared and approved in December 2018 and is now considered to be out of date.



2. THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR ST.HELENS

Currently adopted development plan documents

1.1 The following documents make up the current 'development plan' for St.Helens and can be viewed at <https://www.sthelens.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy/adopted-local-plans>.

- St.Helens Local Plan Core Strategy (adopted in 2012);
- 'Saved Policies' of the St.Helens Unitary Development Plan (adopted in 1998);
- Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan (adopted in 2017); and
- Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (adopted in 2013).

1.2 As each of these documents form part of the adopted 'development plan' they each play a key role in guiding decisions on planning applications for new development.

St.Helens Local Plan Core Strategy

1.3 The St.Helens Local Plan Core Strategy sets out the overall strategy guiding new development in St.Helens. It identifies how much development is required, broadly where development should be located and how it should be delivered in the period up to 2027. It contains strategic policies for housing, economy and employment, community facilities, quality of life and accessibility.

'Saved policies' of the St.Helens Unitary Development Plan

1.4 The St.Helens Unitary Development Plan (UDP) replaced all previous adopted development plans for the Borough when it was adopted on 2 July 1998.

1.5 Several of the policies in the UDP lapsed as a result of a direction issued by the Secretary of State issued in 2007. Some other UDP policies lapsed when the St.Helens Core Strategy was adopted in 2012. Appendix 4 of the Core Strategy identifies which UDP policies continued to be saved beyond 2012 and which were replaced at that point. Two 'saved policies' covering waste issues were replaced by the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan in 2013.

Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan

1.6 Area Action Plans (AAPs) are a type of development plan document that provide a planning framework for a specific area of opportunity, change or conservation. They set out specific policies to shape development within that area.

1.7 The Bold Forest Park Area Action Plan was prepared in consultation with local stakeholders including the Mersey Forest and Bold Parish Council and adopted in July 2017. It aims to encourage inward investment via rural entrepreneurship in the visitor economy and provide leisure opportunities for the community.



- 1.8 The Plan covers the entire Bold Forest Park area, which covers an area of about 1,808 hectares in size and is strategically situated in the south of the Borough.

Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan

- 1.9 The Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan 2013 covers the period from 2013 to 2027. It was prepared jointly by Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool, Sefton, St.Helens and Wirral Councils and covers all 6 of these Council areas.
- 1.10 The Plan was prepared by the Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service (MEAS) and contains 16 policies and 18 site allocations dealing with all aspects of waste management from waste prevention to energy from waste facilities. Further details can be found via the MEAS website at:
<http://www.meas.org.uk/1090>.

The adopted Policies Map for St.Helens

- 1.11 The Policies Map is maintained as a separate document and is updated each time a new development plan document which allocates or designates land is adopted. The existing Policies Map for St.Helens is substantially based on the Proposals Map which formed part of the St.Helens UDP. It includes adjustments made as a result of the adoption of policies in the other development plan documents referred to above.

The emerging St.Helens Borough Local Plan

- 1.12 The Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan which will provide a new spatial strategy for the whole of the Borough. The new Plan will include:
- A vision and objectives setting out what type of place St Helens should be in 2035 and beyond;
 - strategic policies guiding the future development and use of land (for housing, employment, retail and other uses);
 - allocations of sites for particular types of development;
 - areas where development is to be constrained; and
 - more detailed policies to help guide the determination of planning applications.
- 1.13 The preparation of local plans must include a number of stages as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). These include:
- Regulation 18 – initial consultation and preparation;
 - Regulation 19 – publication of the local plan;
 - Regulation 20 – representations relating to the local plan;
 - Regulation 22 – submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State;
 - Regulation 24 – independent examination by an appointed person



- Regulation 25 – publication of the recommendations of the appointed person; and
- Regulation 26 – adoption of the local plan.

1.14 The emerging St.Helens Borough Local Plan will replace the St.Helens Core Strategy and the currently remaining ‘saved policies’ of the UDP.

1.15 The preparation of the new St.Helens Borough Local Plan is a key priority for the Council. The key public consultation stages in the preparation of the Local Plan to date have been:

- Local Plan Scoping consultation (Regulation 18) – January to March 2016
- Local Plan Preferred Options consultation – December 2016 – January 2017
- Local Plan Submission Draft consultation (Regulation 19) – January to May 2019

1.16 The following table sets out the remaining expected steps and timescales leading up to adoption of the Plan. Further details are set out in the programme in Appendix 1 to this document.

Stage (Regulation)	Stage (Description)	Stage / Milestone (Date)
Regulation 22	Submission of documents and information to the Secretary of State	October 2020
Regulation 24	Examination in Public Hearing Sessions	March-April 2021
Regulation 25	Publication of the Inspector’s Report	Autumn 2021
Regulation 26	Adoption of the Local Plan	Winter 2021-22

1.17 A revised version of the adopted Policies Map will be prepared as part the Local Plan and will illustrate the proposed site allocations and land designations.

Supporting documents

1.18 The Council has prepared or commissioned a number of other documents which support its existing and emerging development plan documents. These include:



- **The St.Helens Statement of Community Involvement** – this sets out how the Council will consult the community and stakeholders during the production of the Local Plan.
- **Evidence base documents** – these cover a wide range of topics and provide evidence to underpin the policies of the emerging Local Plan.
- **Sustainability and other appraisal documents** – these must be prepared to inform any new Local Plan document which is being prepared.

Joint working

- 1.19 The Council has a legal duty (under the Localism Act 2011) to cooperate with a wide range of statutory bodies when preparing the Local Plan. The Council works closely with a wide range of bodies in compliance with this duty.
- 1.20 The Council is not currently preparing any development plan document jointly with any other local planning authority. It has also not agreed to establish any joint committee under section 29 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to formulate such a joint plan. It should be noted however that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority proposes to prepare a Spatial Development Strategy including strategic policies covering the whole City Region (including St.Helens). This work is currently at an early stage.
- 1.21 MEAS is starting to undertake a very high-level review of the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan. Any decision to update or replace the Merseyside and Halton Joint Waste Local Plan (in whole or in part) will be reflected in a future review of this LDS.



2 MONITORING AND REVIEW

Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 The Council has a legal duty, under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to provide up-to-date information to the public showing the state of the authority's compliance with its timetable for the preparation of development plan documents. In accordance with this duty the Council will publish regular updates concerning the progress in preparing its new Local Plan on its website. Further details will also be set out in its Authority Monitoring Reports, which must be published each year.

Availability of Published Documents

- 3.2 Further details concerning the emerging St.Helens Borough Local Plan, and the other matters set out in this document, are available on the Council website at www.sthelens.gov.uk/localplan. You may also request to see hard copies at Planning Reception, Town Hall, Victoria Square, St. Helens (when the Council Offices are open).

