

Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council

Joint Local Development Scheme

March 2025



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1. Introduction

The Local Development Scheme sets out the Councils' timetable for adopting new planning documents which will help guide development in the Districts of Babergh District Council and Mid Suffolk District Council. This Local Development Scheme covers the period 2025 to 2029.

Since 2011 the production of a Local Development Scheme has been guided by the requirements of s.111 of the Localism Act 2011 which amended s. 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and is further supported by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

All local planning authorities are required to keep their Local Development Scheme under regular review and this revised Local Development Scheme introduces the Councils' decision to not continue with a Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 2 Development Plan Document, but to produce a full Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Review under the provisions of the new plan-making system.

The Government has also instructed all local planning authorities to publish a new Local Development Scheme within 12 weeks of the publication of the revised National Planning Policy Framework, which happened on 12th December 2024.

The Local Development Scheme:

- Provides a brief description of all the Local Plan documents (the Joint Local Plan Review), Supplementary Planning Documents and the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedules to be prepared and the content and geographical area to which they relate.
- Explains how the different documents relate to each other.
- Sets out the timetable for producing these documents, including their publication, submission in the case of Local Plan documents and the Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedules, and adoption of the document.
- Provides an overview of Neighbourhood Planning.
- Provides information on other related planning documents outside the formal Local Plan, being the Statement of Community Involvement and Authority Monitoring Report, as well as Planning Position Statements.

This Local Development Scheme will update and replace the Joint Local Development Scheme adopted in November 2023. Progress of the Local Development Scheme is reviewed at least annually as part of the Authority Monitoring Process, and this Local Development Scheme will be the subject of further review when the new Planning Regulations are published.

2. Planning Context

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils adopted the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 Development Plan Document in November 2023, which contains the strategic and local planning policies to guide development in the two Districts for the period to 2037.

In addition, there are the saved policies of the Babergh Local Plan (2006) and the Core Strategy and Policies Development Plan Document (2014) for Babergh District and the saved policies of the Stowmarket Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (2013) for Mid Suffolk District.

The previous Local Development Scheme referred to the preparation of a Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 2 Development Plan Document following the Joint Local Plan examination. However, in response to recent changes in national policy, namely the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), the Councils are now embarking on a Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Review, which will be produced in accordance with the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. It is expected that the revised Planning Regulations will come into force in the autumn of 2025, and these will set out the stages and procedures for the new plan-making process.

Following the publication of these Planning Regulations, it will be necessary to review the Joint Local Development Scheme further and an earlier review may be necessary as it is envisaged that the Councils will likely need to consider accommodating housing needs from outside of the Districts. This position will need to be confirmed in the early stages of plan preparation to maintain a robust and efficient approach.

For minerals and waste matters, Suffolk County Council are the authority responsible for the production of the Minerals and Waste Local Plan, which forms part of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Development Plans. The Suffolk Minerals and Waste Local Plan was adopted in July 2020. More information can be found on the Suffolk County Council website (www.suffolk.gov.uk).

Neighbourhood Plans are key planning documents that also form part of the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Development Plan. As of 31st December 2024, there are 22 made (adopted) Neighbourhood Plans in Babergh and 22 in Mid Suffolk.

3. Local Plan Documents

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Review 2024-2044

The Councils' Joint Local Plan Review will set the vision and objectives and the spatial development strategy for the Districts. It will contain a set of planning policies to guide development to 2044, building on the planning policies set out in the adopted Joint Local Plan Part 1 Development Plan Document, and responding to national planning policy requirements.

The publication of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024 introduced a revised standard method for calculating local housing need. This has resulted in the need to plan for 775 dwellings per annum in Babergh and 734 dwellings annum in Mid Suffolk. The current adopted housing requirement set in the Joint Local Plan Part 1, which is the Councils' position until November 2028 for decision-making purposes, is 416 dwellings per annum for Babergh and 535 dwellings per annum for Mid Suffolk. Therefore, these new housing requirements represent a substantial uplift for the two Districts, 86% for Babergh and 37% for Mid Suffolk.

In addition, the Councils are likely to need to consider accommodating housing needs from outside of the Districts, and through the Plan will also consider delivering strategic infrastructure and building economic and climate resilience.

The formal stages of the Plan Review, which are subject to the detail arising from the provisions of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023 is programmed as follows:

- Scoping and participation stage, including minimum four-month notification of Plan commencement – March 2026 to July 2026.
- Plan visioning and strategy development including first public consultation – August 2026 to March 2027.
- Evidence gathering and draft the Plan – April 2027 to December 2027.
- Second public consultation, proposing changes and submission of the Plan – January 2028 to June 2028.
- Examination of Plan including additional three months for Main Modifications – July 2028 to March 2029.
- Adoption – April 2029.

4. Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood Plans once made (adopted) following a 'yes' vote at a Referendum, are part of the District's Development Plan. There are currently 39 areas in Babergh and 29 areas in Mid Suffolk either with made Neighbourhood Plans or in the process of working towards this.

For an up-to-date position regarding Neighbourhood Plans, please visit:

[Neighbourhood Planning in Babergh](#)
[Neighbourhood Planning in Mid Suffolk](#)

5. Supplementary Planning Documents

Supplementary Planning Documents build upon and provide more detailed guidance on policies in an adopted Local Plan document. The Supplementary Planning Documents follow adoption of the Part 1 Joint Local Plan. They cannot introduce new planning policies into the Development Plan, but they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

They are produced in accordance with existing Planning Regulations and are subject to public consultation. Once the new Planning Regulations are published, anticipated in the autumn of 2025, it will not be possible to adopt these documents as Supplementary Planning Documents. Therefore, any documents that are still to be adopted will be so as Planning Position Statements providing planning guidance, which will be a material consideration in planning decisions.

Whilst, not required to set out Supplementary Planning Documents, this Local Development Scheme sets out those Supplementary Planning Documents / Planning Position Statements which the Councils intend to produce over the next two years as follows:

- Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document;
- Wellbeing and Health Supplementary Planning Document;
- Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Supplementary Planning Document;
- Design – Part A: Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document;
- Design – Part B: Local Design Codes Supplementary Planning Document;
- Air Quality Planning Position Statement;
- Natural and Historic Environment Planning Position Statement; and
- Guidance to Marketing of Employment and Community Uses Planning Position Statement.

Any additional Supplementary Planning Documents / Planning Position Statements that the Councils decide they wish to produce will be reported to the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Full Council meetings and may or may not require an amendment to the Local Development Scheme.

6. Other Local Development Documents

Statement of Community Involvement

The Joint Statement of Community Involvement for Babergh and Mid Suffolk was adopted in February 2019. In response to COVID-19 restrictions, an addendum to the Statement of Community Involvement was produced and adopted in November 2020 for use during the Pandemic. The Councils have undertaken a review of Chapter 4 regarding planning applications and will publish an addendum for consultation. The Statement of Community Involvement will be subject to a full review following the publication of the new Planning Regulations.

The Councils expect to engage in preliminary public and community engagement ahead of the formal stages to help inform the emerging strategy for the Districts.

Authority Monitoring Report

The Authority Monitoring Report is published each year, normally towards the end of the calendar year, to demonstrate the progress of the objectives of the adopted Local Plan and focuses on a monitoring period from 1st April to 31st March.

7. Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedules

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a fixed rate payment that councils can charge on new buildings in their area. This is in order to offset the impacts of additional homes and businesses on facilities such as:

- public transport infrastructure;
- schools;
- open spaces; and
- health centres (infrastructure).

The Community Infrastructure Levy also enables sustainable growth.

Section 106 legal agreements will be used alongside the Community Infrastructure Levy to secure onsite infrastructure and other provisions that are not infrastructure (for example affordable housing).

Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils adopted Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedules on 20th and 21st January 2016 respectively, charging the Community Infrastructure Levy on all relevant planning permissions granted and all relevant permitted developments started from 11th April 2016.

The Councils are currently undertaking a review of these Charging Schedules.

8. Documents to be prepared during 2025 to 2029 – detailed profiles

Details of the documents Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils intend to produce in the next four years follow in the tables below. The timetable for the production of documents reflects previous experience.

Joint Local Plan Review

Title	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Review
Subject and Scope	This document will set out the vision and objectives for development in Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts. It will contain a set of planning policies to guide development in the period to at least 2044.
Status	Local Plan Document.
Chain of conformity	Must be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Scoping and participation stage, including minimum four-month notification of Plan commencement	March 2026 to July 2026 (minimum four months).
Plan visioning and strategy development including first public consultation	August 2026 to March 2027.
Evidence gathering and draft the Plan	April 2027 to December 2027.
Second public consultation, proposing changes and submission of the Plan	January 2028 to June 2028.
Examination of Plan including Main Modifications	July 2028 to March 2029.
Adoption	April 2029.
Arrangements for production	Led by the strategic planning team with support from all internal directorates, Suffolk County Council and local infrastructure providers as appropriate. The Statement of Community Involvement currently outlines how external parties and members of the public will be involved, and under the new plan-making system, detailed arrangements for engagement and consultation will be set out in the Project Initiation Document to be produced as part of the Scoping and Examination stages. Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails.

Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through the Authority Monitoring Report, with the review period being within five years.
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Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document

Title	Biodiversity and Trees Supplementary Planning Document
Role and content	To provide further guidance and detail for the provision of biodiversity and trees within development proposals in the two Districts.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document.
Chain of conformity	The Supplementary Planning Document will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public consultation – Summer 2024. • Adoption – Spring 2025.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, public realm and development management teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Wellbeing and Health Supplementary Planning Document

Title	Wellbeing and Health Supplementary Planning Document
Role and content	To provide further guidance and detail on integrating wellbeing and health into the natural and built environment, including social value appraisal within development proposals in the two Districts.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document.
Chain of conformity	The Supplementary Planning Document will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Summer 2025. • Public consultation – Summer 2025. • Adoption – Winter 2025/26.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, communities, public realm, economy & business, climate change and development management teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Supplementary Planning Document

Title	Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Supplementary Planning Document
Role and content	To provide further guidance and detail for renewable and low carbon energy projects with development proposals in the two Districts.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document.
Chain of conformity	The Supplementary Planning Document will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Summer 2025. • Public consultation – Summer 2025. • Adoption – Winter 2025/26.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, economy & business, climate change and development management teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Design – Part A: Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document

Title	Design – Part A: Sustainable Construction Supplementary Planning Document
Role and content	To provide further guidance and detail on design relating to sustainable construction within development proposals in the two Districts.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document.
Chain of conformity	The Supplementary Planning Document will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Summer 2025. • Public consultation – Summer 2025. • Adoption – Winter 2025/26.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, development management, heritage, building services, housing delivery, public protection and building control teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Design – Part B: Local Design Codes Supplementary Planning Document

Title	Design – Part B: Local Design Codes Supplementary Planning Document
Role and content	To provide further guidance and detail on design through the development of local design codes for development proposals in the two Districts.
Status	Supplementary Planning Document.
Chain of conformity	The Supplementary Planning Document will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Summer 2025. • Public consultation – Summer 2025. • Adoption – Winter 2025/26.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, development management teams and heritage teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Air Quality Planning Position Statement

Title	Air Quality Planning Position Statement
Role and content	To provide further guidance and detail for assessing air quality and impacts on sensitive environmental receptors.
Status	Planning Guidance.
Chain of conformity	The planning position statement will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Spring 2026. • Public consultation – Summer 2026. • Adoption – Winter 2026/27.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, public protection and development management teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Natural and Historic Environment Planning Position Statement

Title	Natural and Historic Environment Planning Position Statement
Role and content	To provide further guidance and detail on landscape and historic environment considerations for development proposals in the two Districts.
Status	Planning Guidance.
Chain of conformity	The planning position statement will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Spring 2026. • Public consultation – Summer 2026. • Adoption – Winter 2026/27.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, public realm, heritage and development management teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Guidance to Marketing of Employment and Community Uses Planning Position Statement

Title	Guidance to Marketing of Employment and Community Uses Planning Position Statement
Role and content	To provide further guidance and details for development proposals involving the loss of employment and community facilities.
Status	Planning Guidance.
Chain of conformity	The planning position statement will support the policies within the Joint Local Plan Part 1 once adopted.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Spring 2026. • Public consultation – Summer 2026. • Adoption – Winter 2026/27.
Arrangements for productions	<p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning, economy & business, communities and development management teams.</p> <p>Will be informed by public consultation, which will include a public notice and letter / e-mails. This will be an online consultation.</p>
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption through a review of planning applications and through the Authority Monitoring Report.

Authority Monitoring Report

Title	Authority Monitoring Report
Role and content	To provide analysis of how the planning policies in the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan are performing against a range of indicators identified in the Joint Local Plan Monitoring Framework.
Status	Annual production, non-statutory but required to show evaluation of the effectiveness of policies.
Chain of conformity	None.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts.
Timetable and milestones	Publication towards the end of the calendar year.
Arrangements for productions	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning team with support from internal teams and Suffolk County Council where necessary.

Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedules

Title	Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedules
Role and content	To set out the amount of Community Infrastructure Levy to be charged on new buildings in the two Districts.
Geographic coverage	Babergh and Mid Suffolk Districts, with each District having a separate charging schedule.
Timetable and milestones	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillor approval for consultation – Spring 2025. • Public consultation – Summer 2025. • Submission for Examination – Autumn 2025. • Adoption – Spring 2026.
Arrangements for productions	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils' strategic planning team.
Post-production – Monitoring and review mechanisms	Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Councils to monitor after adoption on an annual basis.

9. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring

The Authority Monitoring Report is undertaken each year and analyses the period from April in the previous year to March in the current year. The Authority Monitoring Report focuses on:

- Progress of document production against the timescales and milestones set out in the Local Development Scheme;
- An overview of Neighbourhood Plan preparation;
- Progress against Local Plan monitoring indicators; and
- Whether any policies or documents need to be reviewed.

Review

Once a Development Plan Document has been adopted, it will be kept under review through the annual monitoring process. If it is deemed necessary that either part or all of the Development Plan Document requires updating, this will be detailed in a future revision of the Local Development Scheme.