

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Local Development Scheme 2025-2027

Autumn 2025



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a live public 'project plan' setting out, over a period of three years, which Development Plan Documents and Supplementary Planning Documents will be produced and when. The LDS is a statutory document and prepared in accordance with the requirements of section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and regulations 7 and 8 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

- 1.2 The planning practice guidance sets out what a Local Development Scheme should contain:

This must specify (among other matters) the development plan documents (i.e. local plans) which, when prepared, will comprise part of the development plan for the area. Local planning authorities are encouraged to include details of other documents which form (or will form) part of the development plan for the area, such as Neighbourhood Plans. The Local Development Scheme must be made available publicly and kept up-to-date. It is important that local communities and interested parties can keep track of progress. Local planning authorities should publish their Local Development Scheme on their website. (Paragraph: 003 Reference ID: 61-003-20190315, Revision date: 15 03 2019)

- 1.3 This document sets out the scope and program for the preparation of policy strategies, frameworks and documents.

- 1.4 The LDS allows the community and stakeholders to find out about the Council's future intentions for the planning of policy documents for the borough. Our progress in meeting the timetable, as set out in Section 5, is reviewed annually, and updated when new Development Plan Documents are being prepared.

- 1.5 The Tower Hamlets LDS has the following purposes:

- To establish and reflect on the Council's priorities and enable work programs to be set for the preparation of Development Plan Documents;
- To provide a brief description of the Development Plan Documents to be prepared and the content and geographic area to which they relate;
- To set out the planned timetable for preparing each Development Plan Document and the key milestones to be achieved; and
- To provide a description of how progress against the LDS will be monitored.

- 1.6 The London Borough of Tower Hamlets is undergoing the process of reviewing the currently adopted Local Plan. As a result of this review, a new Local Plan will be produced which will set out a vision, objectives and planning policies to positively plan and manage development in the borough up to 2038. The Local Plan will also include site allocations to identify key sites that will enable the delivery of new homes and jobs alongside necessary infrastructure.
- 1.7 The scope of policy development and production now includes the area that was formerly covered by the London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC). In 2012, LLDC was established as a local planning authority to coordinate the growth and regeneration of the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and the wider area as part of the legacy of the 2012 London Olympic Games. Parts of Tower Hamlets to the north-east of the borough fall within the LLDC's boundaries and planning powers have resided with the LLDC since this date. The LLDC's planning powers were handed back to the Growth Boroughs (including Tower Hamlets) on the 1 December 2024, as agreed by The Mayor of London.

2. Tower Hamlets Development Plan Documents

2.1 The existing statutory development plan for the borough consists of the following:

- London Plan 2021
- Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031: Managing Growth and Sharing Benefits
- Neighbourhood Plans (where relevant)
- London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan 2020-2036, adopted July 2020 (where relevant)

National Planning Policy

2.2 The government first published its National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in March 2012; the latest update was published in 2024 and is supported by the Planning Practice Guidance which is updated regularly. The NPPF sets out how councils should produce planning documents to guide the development and use of land within a local authority's boundary.

London Plan

2.3 Within London, a regional tier of spatial planning policy, prepared by the Mayor of London, is contained within the London Plan which covers the whole of the Greater London Authority (GLA) Area. London Planning Authorities are required to produce Local Plans which are in general conformity with this regional policy tier. The current London Plan was adopted in March 2021.

Neighbourhood Planning

2.4 In 2011, the government introduced changes to the planning system through the Localism Act. This gave new powers to communities to produce Neighbourhood Plans. The Council has a statutory duty to provide advice and support to those producing a plan.

Tower Hamlets currently has two adopted Neighbourhood Plans:

- Isle of Dogs Neighbourhood Plan
- Roman Road Bow Neighbourhood Plan

London Legacy Development Corporation (LLDC)

The LLDC Local Plan together with the London Plan 2021 form the Development Plan for the Legacy Corporation Area. The LLDC Local Plan will continue to apply to the area

once covered by the LLDC until the Tower Hamlets Local Plan is adopted in late 2026/early 2027. The LLDC development plan consists of the following documents:

- London Legacy Development Corporation Local Plan 2020-2036, adopted July 2020

Supplementary Planning Documents

2.5 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) do not have development plan status, but they provide guidance on the application of existing development plan policies. They are subject to public consultation and can be approved by the Council without an independent examination. The Council currently has the following adopted SPDs:

- Central Area Good Growth SPD (adopted July 2021)
- Queen Mary University London SPD (adopted July 2021)
- Reuse Recycle Waste SPD (adopted July 2021)
- South Poplar Masterplan SPD (adopted July 2021)
- High Density Living SPD (adopted December 2020)
- Planning Obligations SPD (adopted March 2021)

2.6 The LLDC Supplementary Planning Guidance will continue to apply to the area once covered by the LLDC until the Tower Hamlets Local Plan is adopted in late 2026/early 2027. The SPDs provide guidance on the implementation of policies within the LLDC Local Plan in specific areas. The council currently consider the following LLDC adopted SPDs:

- Development Viability SPD (2017)
- Bromley by Bow SPD
- Carbon Offset Solutions SPD
- Planning Obligations SPD
- Hackney Wick and Fish Island SPD
- Night-time Economy SPD

3. Timetable for Preparation of Tower Hamlets Development Plan Documents (DPDs)

Local Plan

3.1 The key stages for the production of a Development Plan Document (DPD) generally involves the following stages:

- Evidence gathering
- Preparation of the DPD and consultation (Regulation 18)
- Publication of the DPD and consultation (Regulation 19)
- Submission of the DPD to the Secretary of State for examination (Regulation 22)
- Independent Examination in Public (Regulation 24)
- Receipt of the Inspector's Report (Regulation 25)
- Adoption of the DPD (Regulation 26)

3.2 The scale of preparing the Local Plan project is significant, requiring the full team resource from 2025 to 2027. The project includes:

- Comprehensive evidence base update
- Interdepartmental and external collaborative work
- Extensive public consultation and engagement
- Policy formulation
- Independent Examination (including public hearings) by the Planning Inspectorate on behalf of the Secretary of State

3.3 In terms of risk and interdependencies, there are two key issues:

- Emerging and evolving Government policy – altering the national policy context with which there is the need to be consistent.
- The transition of the London Legacy Development Corporation's planning powers (including Plan Making) back to the four boroughs, including Tower Hamlets.

3.4 It is anticipated that the Local Plan will be due for adoption in late 2026/early 2027.

Neighbourhood plans

3.5 At present no known neighbourhood plans are being prepared.

Monitoring and Review

3.6 The Council will monitor progress of the LDS timetable and will publish findings as part of the [Authority Monitoring Report](#) (AMR) or bring a new LDS into effect if necessary. Progress on the effectiveness of the policies brought forward in the planning documents will also be assessed through the AMR.

Further queries

For further information on this document please contact the Plan Making Team via email at planmaking@towerhamlets.gov.uk or talk to us by phoning 020 7364 5009.

4. Detailed Timetable for Preparation of Development Plan Documents 2025-2027

4.1 The timetable for the preparation of the above are set out in the timeline below:

