

**TIMETABLE for Derry City and Strabane Local Development Plan 2030 (LDP)  
(DRAFT Text - Final Version to be properly formatted and presented in an attractive manner), To  
Planning Committee – LDP, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016**

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 This Timetable document sets out an indicative timescale along with the associated key stages for the production of the Derry City and Strabane District Local Development Plan 2030 (LDP). It is a public statement of our programme for the delivery of the LDP which will subsequently replace both the Strabane Area Plan 2001 and the Derry Area Plan 2011. The timetable will help ensure that the plan process is efficiently managed and that all involved in its preparation are kept informed and can manage their own resources to facilitate their involvement in the LDP process.

1.2 The Timetable was approved by resolution of Derry City and Strabane District Council prior to being submitted to and agreed by the Department of the Environment in accordance with Regulation 7 of the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015.

1.3 The Timetable meets the requirements of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 and the Planning (Local Development Plan) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2015, which requires Council to prepare and keep under review a Timetable for the preparation and adoption of its LDP. The Timetable has also been developed within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan.

## **2.0 PURPOSE OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

2.1 The purpose of the Local Development Plan is to inform the general public, statutory authorities, developers and other interested parties of the policy framework and land use proposals that will guide development decisions within the District up to 2030.

2.2 Our new LDP will be prepared within the context of the Council's Corporate Plan and will integrate with the Community Planning process to assist us in planning to deliver the future vision sought by all those who live in this District. It will ensure that lands are appropriately and sustainably zoned and that our infrastructure is enhanced to meet the need of future generations.

2.3 The LDP must also take account of the regional policy context set by the Northern Ireland Executive and Central Government Departments. This includes, amongst others, the Sustainable Development Strategy, the Regional Development Strategy, the Strategic Planning Policy Statement and Planning Policy Statements.

2.4 The LDP, when adopted, will replace both the Strabane Area Plan 2001 and the Derry Area Plan 2011 and their associated operational planning policies that were produced by the Department of the Environment. The LDP will be produced in two stages consisting of first, a Plan Strategy (PS), and later followed by a Local Policies Plan (LPP).

2.5 The PS will set the broad aims, objectives and the overall growth strategy and associated generic planning policies applicable across the District. In contrast, the LPP will deal with the site specific policies and proposals associated with our settlements, such as their settlement development limits, land use zonings and environmental designations. The land use zonings will

articulate the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies contained within the PS, reinforcing the integrated connection between both documents.

2.6 To inform the preparation of these plan documents, a key next step is to identify the most significant planning issues currently affecting our District, as well as those likely to become relevant in the future. We will define a range of options for addressing these issues and subsequently publish these for consultation in a Preferred Options Paper (POP). The POP and the consultation response to it will significantly shape the content of the resulting Draft PS.

2.7 Throughout the preparation of the LDP, we will undertake a parallel process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The SA process aims to ensure that social, economic and environmental considerations are put at the heart of the policy and proposal development process to ensure the resulting decisions, and ultimately the plan, is sustainably sound.

2.8 Relevant SA reports will be published at each of the key stages of the plan making process. This will include consultation on the scope of the appraisal at the Preferred Options Paper stage.

### **3.0 THE TIMETABLE**

3.1 The Timetable which sets out indicative dates for the key stages in the preparation of the LDP is set out in Figure 1. A brief explanation of the key stages is set out below:

**Statement of Community Involvement** – This will set out how the Council intends to engage with the local community during the preparation of the LDP.

**Preferred Options Paper** - The POP is a public consultation document which will set out the most significant planning issues currently affecting our District, as well as those likely to become relevant in the future. It will include the Council's preferred options to address them.

**Draft Plan Strategy** - The draft PS is a public consultation document which will set out in draft terms the proposed broad aims, objectives and the overall future growth strategy and associated generic planning policies applicable across the District.

**Independent Examination** - An IE will be held to determine the soundness of the draft PS, taking into account a consideration of the representations and counter representations received during the draft PS consultation period. After the IE, an Advisory Report of its findings will be issued to Central Government.

**Binding Report** – following consideration of the Advisory Report, Central Government will issue a Binding Report to Council directing it to adopt the draft PS as originally prepared or with modifications. Alternatively, Council may be directed to withdraw the draft PS. Council must incorporate any changes outlined in the Binding Report into the final PS.

**Adoption of Plan Strategy**- Following the IE and any relevant direction from Central Government, the Council will formally adopt the PS.

**Draft Local Policies Plan** - The LPP is the second plan document within the LDP process. The draft LPP is a public consultation document and will contain Council's detailed land use proposals for the District. The land use zonings will articulate the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and strategic policies contained within the PS.

**Independent Examination** - An IE will be held to determine the soundness of the draft Local Policies Plan, taking into account any representations or counter representations. Following the IE, an Advisory Report of its findings will be issued to Central Government.

**Binding Report** – following consideration of the Advisory Report, Central Government will issue a Binding Report to Council directing it to adopt the draft LPP as originally prepared or with modifications. Alternatively, Council may be directed to withdraw the draft LPP. Council must incorporate any changes outlined in the Binding Report into the final LPP.

**Adoption of Local Policies Plan** - Following the IE and any relevant direction from Central Government, the Council will formally adopt the LPP.

3.2 The Timetable does not just relate to the actual preparation of the plan documents. Council is also required to carry out a number of assessments in parallel with the preparation of the LDP documents. These assessments are essential for informing various aspects of Plan production and their undertaking and findings will contribute towards the LDP's test of soundness at the IE.

3.3 As indicated above, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) will be undertaken. This will assist the Council to assess the sustainability or otherwise of the LDP proposals and how they will combine and interact in the LDP to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. An integral part of the SA process will be the requirement on the Council to undertake a screening to determine if the LDP requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) – which will in turn examine purely the environmental effects of the LDP proposals.

3.4 Habitats Regulation screening will also be required to determine if a Habitats Regulation Assessment is required for the LDP. This will consider the potential impact of LDP policies and proposals on European nature conservation sites.

3.5 An Equality Impact Screening will be required to assess if the LDP is likely to have an impact on different sections of the community. If so, an Equality Impact Assessment, as well as a Rural Proofing Health Impact and Deprivation impact reports will be undertaken in relation to the LDP.

#### **4.0 DELIVERING ON TIME!**

4.1 Meeting the timetable is dependent upon Councillor involvement, adequate resourcing and risk management. The Timetable is an extremely challenging one, especially as we are seeking to produce a completely new style of plan based on significant levels of public engagement whilst simultaneously subjecting the process to a number of legislatively required Appraisals and Assessments.

## Councillor Involvement

4.2 Progress on the Derry City and Strabane District Local Development Plan will be reported to the Council on a regular, normally monthly, basis. In addition to the attached Timetable Summary, there are a number of critical dates for Councillors' involvement:

- The Preferred Options Paper will be presented for Councillors' agreement in (Date) to allow for (Date) publication.
- The findings from the public consultation exercise, the Sustainability Appraisal and Draft Plan Strategy will be presented for Councillors' agreement in (Date) to allow for publication in (Date).
- Councillors' authorisation will be sought in (Date) to forward the Plan with any representations to the Department of the Environment to request an Independent Examination. Any counter representations will be forwarded eight weeks later.
- Councillors' authorisation will be sought in (Date) on whether to accept or rebut the representations and submissions made to the Independent Examination by the date set.
- The binding report from Department of the Environment will be presented to Councillors' to allow adoption in (Date).
- The Draft Local Policies Plan will be presented to Councillors' in (Date) for authorisation of publication.
- Councillors' authorisation will be sought in (Date) to forward the Plan with any representations to the Department of the Environment to request an Independent Examination. Any counter representations will be forwarded eight weeks later.
- Councillors' authorisation will be sought in (Date) on whether to accept or rebut the representations and submissions made to the Independent Examination by the date set.
- The binding report from Department of the Environment will be presented to Councillors to allow adoption in (Date).

4.3 To further assist with the effective management of the Timetable, it is essential that relevant steps and safeguards are put in place to manage the LDP decision-making process and provide early warning of potential time slippage. Such steps include:

- A work programme will be presented to Council Members for each key stage of the plan process.
- Papers will be presented to Council Members on a regular basis regarding local development plan matters, including key planning topics and findings as they emerge.
- Web based interaction will allow people to input their thoughts into the decision making process on various planning topics as we seek to develop our POP
- A Steering Group will be established comprising of nominated Members of the Planning Committee, the Chief Executive / Director of Environment & Regeneration (or authorised replacement) and the Head of Planning. This is the high level co-ordinating body that will ensure oversight and strategic input on behalf of the whole community, as well as from planning professionals.
- A Project Management Team will be established comprising of Senior Council Officers and representatives from the key Statutory/Government Departments. The purpose of the team will be to ensure key consultees cooperate in the plan making process. The Project Management team will be consulted on and act as the screening and scoping group for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan.

- An annual monitoring report will be produced to inform Council Members and Central Government on progress in meeting the Timetable.
- Progress Reports on the LDP will be submitted on a quarterly basis to the Planning Committee.

### **Adequate Resourcing**

4.4 The staff considered necessary to undertake the LDP is as follows:

- 1 x Head of Planning: 25% of time;
- 1 x Principal Planning Officer: 80 – 100% of time;
- 1 x Senior Planning Officer
- 3 x Higher Planning Officers
- 2 x Planning Officers

4.5 It is also foreseen that at key stages in the Plan process, the team will require the services of both a GIS officer to assist with strategic and settlement mapping and administration support to oversee the representation and counter representation databases.

4.6 The use of suitably experienced consultants will also be required to bring forward studies related to both retailing and transport within the District. Consultants will also be required for the initial stages of the SA process.

### **Risk Management**

4.7 As already stated, the timetable is extremely challenging and there are a variety of risks that could slow down the LDP programme e.g. ranging from financial, judicial reviews, competing plans seeking similar IE dates to staffing resources. A Risk Management Log will be adopted to assess a variety of risks, identify their likelihood and potential impact and plan countermeasures to mitigate delays.

## **5.0 ANNUAL MONITORING AND REVIEW**

5.1 An annual monitoring report will be produced by Council to inform Members and the Department of the Environment on progress in meeting the timetable. If progress on plan production has slipped, the timetable will need to be revised and agreed with the Department in accordance with the Development Plan Regulations. In the event that the Plan Timetable requires amendment, Council has the power under the Planning Act 2011 to publish a revised Timetable. Any amendments will be publicised and made available on the Council's website

<http://www.derrystrabane.com>

### **Getting in Touch [TO GO INSIDE FRONT COVER]**

Should you have a planning query, you can contact the Council's Planning Section in the following ways:

**By email** to: [planning@derrystrabane.com](mailto:planning@derrystrabane.com)

**By post** to: Planning Section,  
Local Development Plan  
Derry City and Strabane District Council  
98 Strand Road  
Derry  
BT48 7NN

**By telephone** on: (+44) 28 7125 3253

**By text phone** on: (+44)28 7137 6646

Should you require a copy of this Timetable in an alternative format, it can be made available on request in large print, audio format, DAISY or Braille. It may also be made available in minority languages to meet the needs of those for whom English is not their first language.

### **Keeping you Informed**

Derry City and Strabane Council - Planning Section is developing new methods of actively communicating and effectively engaging with the residents of the District about LDP progress and planning issues in general.

As part of a European funded project, the Planning Section has created a LDP website via which you can input your thoughts and comments on a regularly basis on the planning topics that are important to you. Your feedback will form part of the decision making process for that particular planning topic and ultimately will help shape the content of the POP. We will also regularly update the website to keep you informed of LDP progress.

To visit this LDP website, please go to: <http://www.derrystrabane.com/ldp>

## Derry City &amp; Strabane District LDP – Timetable Summary

LDP KEY STAGES (with associated engagement / consultation periods)	KEY STAGES FOR SUSTAINABILITY ASSESSMENT & OTHER ASSESSMENTS	ESTIMATED TIMESCALE
<b>Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)</b> (Informal draft Community Engagement – 6 weeks)		November 2015
<b>Publication of SCI and LDP Timetable</b> (Statutory Stakeholder engagement. Informal Public and Member engagement on key issues)	Invite comment from Consultation Body (NIEA) on draft Sustainability Appraisal -SA (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment - SEA) Scoping Report.	May - June 2016
<b>Publication of Preferred Options Paper (POP)</b> (Statutory Public Consultation 8-12 weeks)	Publication of SA Interim Report comprising Scoping Report and appraisal of alternatives.  Screening for Habitats Regulation Assessment - HRA & Equality Impact Assessment – EQIA	March 2017
<b>Publication of draft Plan Strategy (PS)</b> (Statutory Public Consultation: 8 weeks for Representations; 8 weeks for Counter representations)	Publication of SA Report (incorporating SEA)  Publication of HRA and EQIA where relevant	December 2017
<b>Independent Examination</b>		2018
<b>Adoption of Plan Strategy</b>	Publication of SA Adoption Report (incorporating SEA)  Publication of HRA and EQIA where relevant	2019
<b>Commence preparation of draft Local Policies Plan (LPP)</b> (Statutory Stakeholder engagement. Informal Public and Member engagement on key issues)	Invite comment from Consultation Body (NIEA) on draft Sustainability Appraisal -SA (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment - SEA) Scoping Report.  Publication of SA Interim Report comprising Scoping Report and appraisal of alternatives.  Screening for Habitats Regulation Assessment - HRA & Equality Impact Assessment – EQIA	Mid 2019
<b>Publication of draft LPP</b> (Statutory Public Consultation: 8 weeks for Representations; 8 weeks for Counter representations)	Publication of SA Report (incorporating SEA)  Publication of HRA and EQIA where relevant	Late 2019
<b>Independent Examination</b>		2020
<b>Adoption of LPP</b>	Publication of SA Adoption Report (incorporating SEA)  Publication of HRA and EQIA where relevant	Late 2020
<b>Monitoring and Review of LDP incorporating Public Engagement:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Monitor</li> <li>• 5 and 10 year Review</li> </ul>	Monitoring of SA and other associated Assessments	Ongoing