

CITY PLAN 2019 - 2040

Westminster Local Development Scheme

(Planning Policy Work Programme) 2024-2027

November 2024

Westminster Local Development Scheme (Planning Policy Work Programme) 2024 – 2027

This Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the key planning policy documents the council intends to produce over the three years between 2024 and 2027 either as part of the development plan, or to support its implementation.

In Westminster, the Statutory Development Plan currently consists of:

- The London Plan (adopted 2021) – the spatial strategy produced by the Mayor of London which provides strategic direction that borough’s local planning policies should be in ‘general conformity’ with
- Westminster’s City Plan 2019 - 2040 (adopted 2021)
- Knightsbridge Neighbourhood Plan (made 2018)
- Mayfair Neighbourhood Plan (made 2019)
- Soho Neighbourhood Plan (made 2021)
- Fitzrovia West Neighbourhood Plan (made 2021)
- Queen’s Park Neighbourhood Plan (made 2021)
- Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan (made 2022)
- Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan (made 2024)

The LDS is intended to help local communities and other stakeholders with an interest in development in Westminster to understand the timescale for production of new and revised planning policies. It has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

The timetable in the LDS has been updated from the previous version published in February 2024 to take account of progress and delays to the production of the policy work programme. As set out in the October 2023 LDS, there is still no intention to produce previously planned Design and Heritage SPDs over the next 3 years, given the resource that is now dedicated to the documents listed in the table below.. Nonetheless there is a strong existing and forthcoming policy framework to determine design and heritage matters in the city through:

- policies in the design and heritage chapter of the adopted City Plan;
- existing Conservation Area Audits which support the implementation of City Plan Policy 39 (Westminster’s heritage);
- Site Allocations in the forthcoming City Plan Partial Review (which will provide site specific guidance that helps ensure development responds to character and heritage for significant sites); and
- neighbourhood plans - we encourage neighbourhood forums to address locally specific design issues through their plans.

Document Title and Type	Subject matter and geographical area	Indicative Timetable
<p>Westminster’s City Plan Partial Review</p> <p>(Development Plan Document)</p>	<p>New council priorities mean that a partial review of the adopted City Plan 2019 – 2040 is prudent. The review will focus on affordable housing, prioritising retrofit, and a small number of Site Allocations. The retrofit policy will be accompanied by some supplementary guidance to support its effective implementation. This may then be updated and given SPD status post plan adoption. The site allocation policies will include key development principles that provide site-specific guidance and set out our aspirations for key underutilised sites in the city. They aim to help unlock development potential that may not otherwise come forward or be facilitated through the implementation of the thematic City Plan policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • January 2022: Site allocations call for sites • Autumn 2022: Regulation 18 published for consultation • March - May 2024: Regulation 19 Draft Plan published for consultation • November 2024: Submission to Secretary of State • Winter 2024 - Spring 2025: Examination • Summer 2025: Adoption
<p>Westminster’s City Plan</p> <p>(Development Plan Document)</p>	<p>The council intends to undertake a full review of all policies within the adopted City Plan post the adoption of the City Plan Partial Review. This will be necessary as the majority of policies in the adopted plan will be 5 years old by 2026 – so a Full Review will be necessary in accordance with the NPPF (which is also being updated). Furthermore, work is also commencing on a new London Plan, so there will be a need for new policies to be aligned with this.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer - Autumn 2025: Scoping for full review of City Plan 2019-2040 • Winter 2025: Informal engagement • Spring 2026: Regulation 18 Consultation • Spring 2027: Regulation 19 Draft Plan published for consultation • Winter 2027/ 2028: Submission to Secretary of State • Spring 2028: Examination • Summer 2028: Adoption
<p>Planning Obligations and Affordable Housing</p>	<p>The SPD sets out the policy context for the collection of Planning Obligations and the delivery of Affordable Housing. It provides guidance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer 2025: Consultation • Autumn 2025: Adoption

<p>(Supplementary Planning Document)</p>	<p>on a number of issues e.g. income thresholds for intermediate housing, provision for affordable workspace and carbon offsetting. It was adopted in March 2024 but is anticipated that some consequential updates may be necessary post the adoption of the City Plan Partial Review in order to ensure consistency across both documents.</p>	
<p>Public Realm (Supplementary Planning Document)</p>	<p>Will provide consolidated and up-to-date guidance on the implementation of adopted City Plan policies related to the public realm. It will set out the council’s agreed approach to making, changing and managing public realm, which will ensure a consistent approach is taken to the design, delivery and maintenance of the public realm in Westminster. It will assist council officers in assessing proposals and will guide those developing schemes to align with the approach set out by the council, and replace dated guidance contained in the “Westminster Way” document.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autumn 2024: Consultation • Winter 2024/ 2025: Adoption
<p>Environment (Supplementary Planning Document)</p>	<p>The Environment SPD was adopted in 2021, yet updates to evidence and new priorities mean a review of the guidance therein is necessary. It will provide additional guidance to support the implementation of environment policies in the City Plan.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winter 2024: Consultation • Winter/ Spring 2025: Adoption
<p>Neighbourhood Plans</p>	<p>At a neighbourhood level, locally designated Neighbourhood Forums or Community Councils produce Neighbourhood Plans, which focus on issues of a specific local interest.</p> <p>The council provides tailored advice and support to local communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans.</p> <p>Westminster has 21 designated neighbourhood areas. Of these, 16 Neighbourhood Forums and one Community Council have responsibility for preparing Neighbourhood Plans in their areas. 7 Neighbourhood Plans have already been ‘made’ and work continues to progress on several more. The council also assists Forums seeking re-designation (given such</p>	<p>Timetables are dependent on the work of Neighbourhood Forums and is therefore out of the control of the council. The council’s website will be kept up to date as progress is made on Neighbourhood Plans. The most advanced new plans currently under production are: Maida Hill, and St James’s (both of which are at Regulation 16 stage), Notting Hill East (which is progressing towards</p>

	designations expire after 5 years), and work is underway to ensure Forums follow best practice in being representative of their area.	Regulation 16), and Victoria (which is at Regulation 14 stage).
Authority Monitoring Report (Policy monitoring document)	Statutory document that describes progress on planning policy document preparation and reports how planning policies are performing in practice.	Authority Monitoring Reports will be published annually in Q1.

Conservation Area Appraisals

Westminster has an unrivalled heritage value, reflected by 78% of the city being subject to Conservation Area designations. In total, 56 Conservation Areas exist, and 49 of these have an existing Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA). While many of these Appraisals have long been in existence, they are still considered fit for purpose given their focus on the historic built environment. Beyond the priority documents listed above, the production of new Conservation Area Appraisals will be subject to resource constraints, with priority given to those Conservation Areas that do not benefit from an existing Appraisal. Currently, one CAA is in production for the Covent Garden Conservation Area. Consultation on a draft is imminent and adoption is expected in early 2025.

Monitoring and Review

Progress on the preparation and successful implementation of the documents listed in this Local Development Scheme will be monitored annually through the Authority Monitoring Report (AMR).

Performance reports will take into account whether the proposed timescales presented in this document have been met, and assess the extent updated policies are achieving their intended goals. The outcomes of this monitoring may trigger a need to update the work programme set out in this Local Development Scheme; highlighting if adopted policies need revising, or new supplementary guidance to adopted policies is required. However, the Local Development Scheme and the timings within it will be reviewed and updated at least every three years. It may also need updating in response to planning reform, team capacity, and competing priorities.