

Bolton's Local Plan

Local Development Scheme

October 2026

The Local Plan

Bolton's Local Plan currently consists of the following five development plan documents:

- Bolton's Core Strategy
- Bolton's Allocations Plan
- Greater Manchester Waste Plan
- Greater Manchester Minerals Plan
- Greater Manchester Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan

Adoption of the Places for Everyone Plan (PfE) has led to the replacement of some Core Strategy policies. A table of replaced policies is set out in PfE Appendix A.

Local Development Scheme (LDS)

This is a programme document for the review of Bolton's Development Plan Documents and sets out the documents the council needs to prepare with timescales and milestones for their preparation. The first Local Development Scheme was published in March 2005 and covered the period to March 2008. It has been revised several times since it was first produced, most recently in November 2024. This Local Development Scheme covers the period up to the end of 2027. A summary timetable can be found at appendix 2.

Authority Monitoring Report (AMR)

The council is required to prepare an Authority Monitoring Report (AMR). The AMR should contain information on the progress of DPDs, as set out in the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies set out in current DPDs are being achieved. The most recent report is published on the [Planning Policy Supporting Information page](#) of the council's website.

The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

This sets out how the council will engage the community in the preparation of Development Plan Documents and the council's decisions. It is also subject to public consultation. The first SCI was adopted in February 2007. The council has subsequently revised it and the current SCI came into force in July 2022.

Development Plan Documents (DPD)

DPDs set out the council's policies for the borough's development and use of land and form the primary criteria in determining planning applications. All DPDs must conform to the provisions of the council's SCI and will be subject to examination by the Planning Inspectorate before adoption.

Bolton's Core Strategy sets out the council's vision and spatial strategy for future development to 2026 and includes Development Management policies, a Key Diagram and allocations for major development. The council adopted the Core Strategy in March 2011.

Bolton's Allocations Plan sets out land allocations for a range of relevant uses including housing, employment, mixed use, retail development and community facilities. It also identifies areas of protection from adverse development such as Green Belt and Conservation Areas. The council adopted the Allocations Plan in December 2014.

Greater Manchester Waste Plan

The council adopted the Greater Manchester Waste Plan in April 2012 and is now part of the Development Plan for Bolton.

A review of this plan will be undertaken to determine whether an update to this plan is required. Details of any planned update will be incorporated in a future LDS review as appropriate.

Greater Manchester Minerals Plan

The council adopted the Greater Manchester Minerals Plan in April 2013 and is now part of the Development Plan for Bolton.

A review of this plan will be undertaken to determine whether an update to this plan is required. Details of any planned update will be incorporated in a future LDS review as appropriate.

Places for Everyone Joint Development Plan Document

The council adopted the Places for Everyone Plan on 13 March 2024 and it came into effect on 21 March 2024.

This plan was adopted along with eight of the Greater Manchester councils (Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) to provide a joint development plan document for jobs, new homes and sustainable growth across their boroughs.

Bolton's Local Plan

Bolton's new Local Plan will replace those elements of the Core Strategy and Allocations Plan that are not addressed in the Places for Everyone plan. It will provide the overall spatial vision and framework for the future sustainable development of the borough. It will address needs and opportunities in relation to housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure as well as providing a basis for safeguarding the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design. The Bolton Local Plan will set out broad locations and specific allocations of land for different purposes; through designations

showing areas where particular opportunities or considerations apply and through criteria-based policies to be taken into account in decisions on planning applications.

Local Plan conformity

Bolton's Local Plan must be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and with Places for Everyone. It must comply with the council's Statement of Community Involvement in its consultation procedures.

Neighbourhood Plans

The 2011 Localism Act allows local communities to prepare neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan. They are also subject to an independent examination and need to be approved by a majority vote in a local referendum. Once approved they are part of the development plan.

The council has designated three neighbourhood areas, at Blackrod, Horwich and Over Hulton. The Blackrod Neighbourhood Plan was formally "made" in June 2021 following success at referendum and now forms part of the Development Plan for Bolton. In May 2024 an examiner was appointed to oversee the examination into the Over Hulton Neighbourhood Plan. The timetable for neighbourhood plans is mainly outside the direct control of the council and does not need to be included in the Local Development Scheme.

Sustainability Appraisal

The Local Plan is subject to sustainability appraisal throughout the process including the production of an appraisal report. Neighbourhood plans may not need sustainability appraisal, depending on the nature of their content. Sustainability appraisal incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment required by legislation to ensure plans reflect sustainable development principles.

Resources

The council's Planning Strategy Team will be primarily responsible for the preparation of Bolton's Local Plan with support from other parts of the council with specialist expertise, as appropriate. External consultants may be engaged on specific projects where there is a lack of expertise or capacity in-house.

Risk

The Council seeks to minimise the risk of additional expense and delay. Key risks are:

- new national procedural arrangements for preparing Development Plan Documents may cause delays; this will be addressed by identifying any new procedures and taking action to ensure that there is compliance with them;
- changing planning policies at a national level could necessitate changes in policy at a local level and delays; the council will address this risk by ensuring that long-life

documents focus on essentials and are flexible enough to be adaptable to change and anticipating change;

- procedural complications and slippage, which the council will address by maintaining robust information and ensuring that plans are sound;
- resource issues such as staff retention, specialist advice and document and map production, which the council will address by matching resources to work priorities;
- increased financial costs caused for example by new evidence requirements or by unexpectedly large numbers of consultation responses; the council will address this through scoping and planning of the evidence base, and through frontloading consultation;
- stakeholder commitment issues, which the council will address with commitment to community involvement; and
- risk of non consistency of documents within the Development Plan. Careful timetabling of DPD production within the LDS should minimise the risk of subsequent documents being found to be unsound.

Monitoring and Review

Circumstances will inevitably change during the LDS period with changing priorities at national and local level. Progress on production of plans listed in the LDS is considered in Authority Monitoring Reports and the Local Development Scheme updated as necessary. National Planning Guidance sets out that a Local Development Scheme is expected to be reviewed and updated at least annually but may need updating more frequently if there are any significant changes in the timescales or the plans being prepared.

APPENDIX 1 - Bolton's Local Plan

Role and subject	Bolton's Local Plan will set out a planning strategy for Bolton and its priorities. In doing so it will focus primarily on the identification of sites and areas for development or protection, largely in urban locations, associated infrastructure and any necessary development management policies.
Coverage	The Borough of Bolton
Status	- Bolton Council will progress the Local Plan as a development plan document. - Once adopted the Local Plan will be part of the development plan for Bolton.
Conformity	Consistent with national planning policy and the Places for Everyone Plan

Stage	Timetable
Consultation on scope, vision, issues and options	Spring 2025
Consultation on draft plan	Autumn 2025
Publication	Autumn 2026
Submission	Winter 2026
Examination hearings commence*	Spring/Summer 2027
Adoption*	Winter 2027

** The timetable for the examination will be determined by the Planning Inspectorate, and not by the council.*

APPENDIX 2 - DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT SUMMARY TABLE

Document Title	Chain of Conformity	Consulting statutory bodies	Regulation 18 consultation	Publication	Submission to Secretary of State	Pre-hearing meeting	Commencement of hearing	Receipt of Inspector's report	Adoption
Bolton's Local Plan	NPPF, SCI and PfE	Spring 2025	Spring-Autumn 2025	Autumn 2026	Winter 2026	TBC	Spring/Summer 2027	TBC	Winter 2027
Policies Map	To be an integral part of Development Plan Documents						Update on each DPD adoption		