



DEVELOPMENT PLAN SCHEME



2026



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Your place, Your plan, Your future



INTRODUCTION

Planning authorities in Scotland have a statutory duty to prepare a Development Plan Scheme each year which sets out the key milestones to prepare and approve new local development plans and associated policy guidance.

The Development Plan Scheme is supported by a Participation Statement which sets out the who, when and how we will consult with stakeholders. The process for preparing new local development plans in Scotland has changed. National Planning Framework 4 became operational on 13th February 2023 and new Development Planning Guidelines have been published. Guidance on Local Place Plans and Masterplan Consent Areas has also been published but guidance on Regional Spatial Strategies has been delayed.

The first key stage of preparing the new Moray Local Development Plan 2027 was met with Moray Council agreeing the Evidence Report at the meeting of Council on 24th April 2024.

The Evidence Report was subsequently submitted to Scottish Ministers and subject to the new Gatecheck procedure. Four Further Information Requests were issued by the Reporter and the Council was notified in August 2024 that no further process was required and the Reporter considered the Evidence Report to be sufficient to allow the Council to proceed with the Local Development Plan. Moray Council is the first planning authority to pass through the Gatecheck.

The timelines will continue to be reviewed and updated as work progresses to prepare the new Local Development Plan. This will involve extensive stakeholder and community engagement and the Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 requires engagement with specific stakeholder groups such as young people. A detailed participation statement to support the Proposed Plan will be prepared during 2026.



Moray Local Development Plan 2020

The MLDP2020 was adopted on 27th July 2020. A number of Masterplans, Supplementary Guidance and additional planning guidance have been produced to support the Plan and these can be viewed at http://www.moray.gov.uk/moray_standard/page_133431.html

The following policy/ guidance and studies were progressed during 2025 to support delivery of the LDP2020 and NPF4;

- Moray Play Sufficiency Assessment
- Local Heat and Energy Efficiency Strategy
- Open Space Strategy
- Biodiversity Strategy
- Nature Network Opportunity Mapping
- Routemap to Net Zero update
- Forestry and Woodland Strategy
- Socio-economic benefits maximisation from renewable energy developments
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Developer Obligations Planning Guidance update
- Just Transition Fund Projects

Work to be progressed on policy/ guidance during 2026 to support the existing LDP, the new LDP and NPF4 includes;

- Approval of Biodiversity Strategy and Nature Network Opportunity Mapping **April - June 2026**
- Climate Change Strategy update **April - June 2026**
- Developer Obligations Planning Guidance for new LDP policy - consultation **October - December 2026**
- Socio-economic benefits delivery model and local policy - consultation **October - December 2026**
- Revised carbon guidance - consultation **October - December 2026**

Work on Regional Spatial Strategy will also be progressed following the publication of Scottish Government guidance, seeking to incorporate a Regional Just Transition Plan to avoid duplication and reduce the number of plans being progressed.

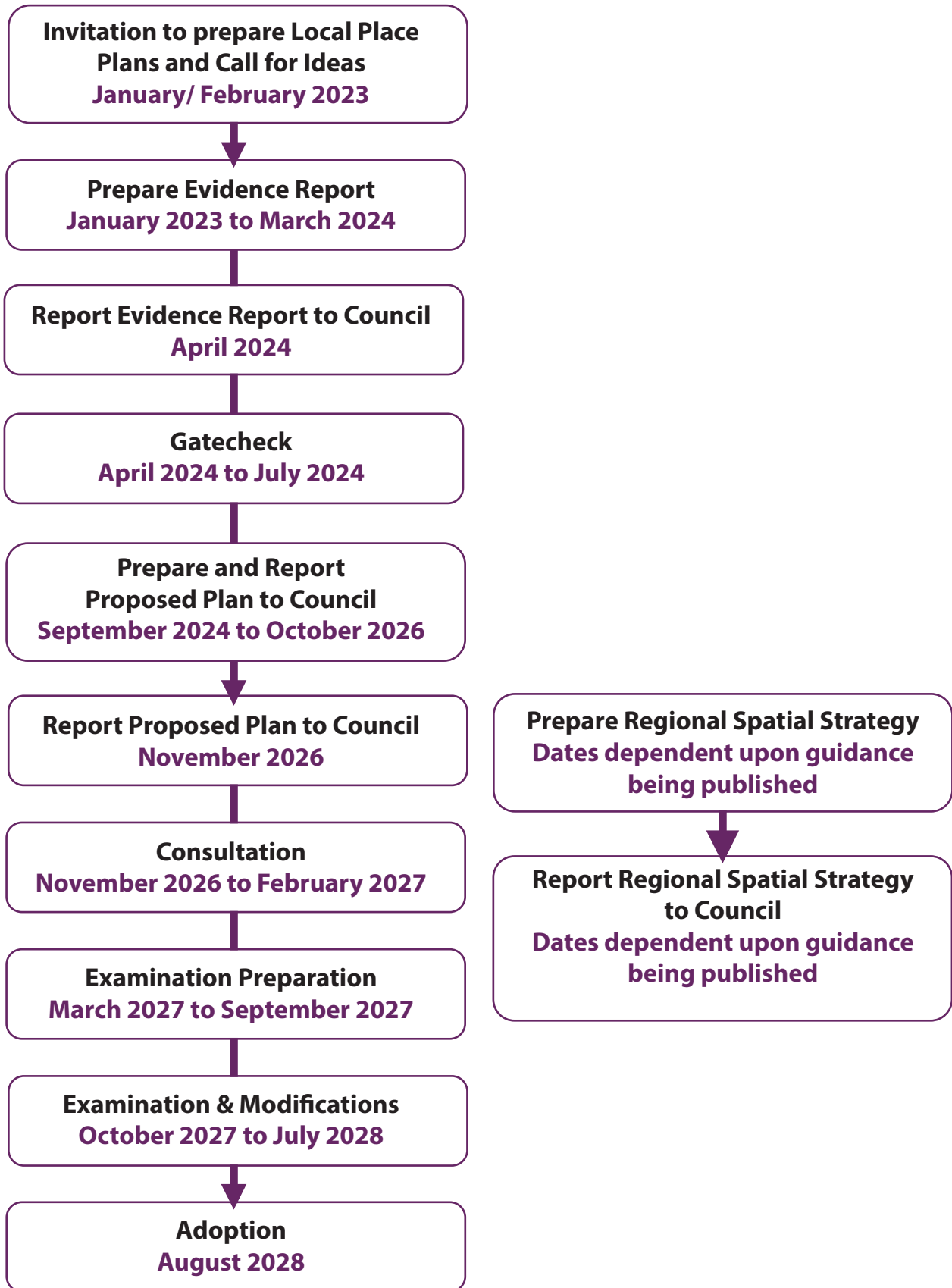
Moray Local Development Plan 2028

The diagram below summarises the key timelines in preparing the new LDP2028 which will replace the current LDP2020.

The target date is to have new LDP's in place within 5 years of NPF4 being adopted. The target dates for preparing the Evidence Report and reporting to Council were met and the timeline for the Gatecheck has been met.



Timescale for preparing LDP2028



Participation Statement

The Council is committed to encouraging participation from as wide a range of stakeholders as possible in all Local Development Plan related activities, such as masterplans, development briefs and other guidance published throughout the lifetime of the Plan. This Participation Statement outlines how communities and stakeholders will be engaged and have the opportunity to engage, shape and inform the Local Development Plan and associated documents, in line with National Standards for Community Engagement.

The Council aims to ensure that;

- All engagement events are inclusive, open and transparent, this will be reflected in the venues we use, the documents we produce and our methods of engagement;
- Representations are fully considered and help to shape our approach and that feedback is provided to all representations received;
- We take the extra step to engage with as wide an audience as possible, reflecting the diverse nature of our community.

From the outset of the LDP process, the Council has engaged with the local community launching a Call for Ideas and a series of community engagement events across the LDP area. Comments received were collated and formed part of the Evidence Report. The opportunity for communities to prepare Local Place Plans was advertised and around 14 groups initially expressed an interest. A series of information sharing events/workshops were held with community groups and templates and resource materials provided to assist in the preparation of LPPs. To date, 9 LPPs have been registered and are currently being considered through the preparation of the proposed LDP. The land use elements of other community plans for areas that are not covered by LPPs are also being taken into account in the preparation of the LDP.

Throughout 2025 and early 2026 a series of workshops and ward briefings have been held with elected Members on the spatial strategy, main issues, draft policies and place statements.

Key agencies such as SEPA, Historic Environment Scotland, NatureScot, Scottish Forestry, Transport Scotland, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, NHS Grampian and Scottish Water have been and will continue to be engaged at relevant stages of the process.

- A detailed Engagement Plan will be developed in 2026 to support the Proposed Plan stage.





