

Local Plan Update: Water Neutrality & Local Plan Review Timetable

Publication of Water Neutrality Study Part C: Mitigation Strategy

You may be aware that Crawley Borough Council has been notified by Natural England that developments within the Sussex North water supply area must not add to impacts on protected nature conservation sites, and must ensure that they are 'water neutral'. More information on this is provided on the council's Water Resources webpage: <https://crawley.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications/water-resources-crawley>

This has caused delays to the Local Plan Review, as the council must demonstrate that the level of growth identified in the Local Plan will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of designated sites, either alone or in combination.

The council has now published the [Water Neutrality Part C - Mitigation Strategy \(crawley.gov.uk\)](https://crawley.gov.uk). This report outlines a strategy to achieve water neutrality within the Sussex North Water Resource Zone, throughout the timeframe covered by the Local Plans of Crawley Borough Council, Chichester District Council, Horsham District Council, and South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA).

The objective of the Strategy is to demonstrate compliance with the Habitats Regulations Assessment. Having been endorsed by Natural England, its recommendations will feed into a strategic water neutrality policy approach that will enable the Local Plan to proceed towards adoption.

It should be noted that the Natural England Position Statement continues to apply, and planning applications remain subject to water neutrality requirements.

Local Plan Review Timetable

Following the publication of the Water Neutrality Stage C Mitigation Strategy, a timetable for the Local Plan Review going forward has been drawn up. This is set out below and can be found on the council's [Local Development Scheme](#) webpage. The Local Development Scheme document will be formally updated in due course.

Milestone	Date
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	30 January 2023
Cabinet	1 February 2023
Full Council	22 February 2023
Regulation 19 Public Consultation	May – June 2023
Submission	Early July 2023
Examination (anticipated)	Autumn 2023
Adoption (anticipated)	Spring/Summer 2024