



Call for Sites

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)



1. What is the Call for Sites?

To meet the needs of our residents and businesses up to 2030, the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan 2030 (LDP) will need to identify land available for new development in a number of sustainable locations.

We want to look at a number of options and choose the most suitable sites for new development in line with our Spatial Growth Strategy (see Plan Strategy, page 50). Account will be taken of the RDS direction to achieve compact urban forms, concentrate resources and protect the setting of settlements from urban sprawl.

We would like to hear from you if you have any suggestions for sites that the Council should consider when we are developing the Local Policies Plan. This is known as the 'Call for Sites'. The Local Policies Plan is the second document which makes up the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan 2030. The first part of the Local Development Plan is the Plan Strategy, which the Council adopted on 16 October 2023.

The 'Call for Sites' **will not** determine how much new development we need, or whether a site should be allocated for development. It is simply an opportunity for landowners and developers to suggest available and sustainable sites that they would like to be considered for development as part of the Local Policies Plan preparation.

The 'Call for Sites' will help identify a potential pool of sites for further consideration when preparing the Local Policies Plan. The Council will not simply rely on submissions from the 'Call for Sites' process alone but will take into account other sources of information in considering sites to be assessed.

At this early stage in the process, we do not know which land might be developed. Much will depend on the detailed, technical assessments of land within the Council area and how different sites are best able to meet the identified requirements of the LDP, particularly the overall Strategic Objectives and Spatial Growth Strategy set out in the Plan Strategy.

2. What is the relationship between the Call for Sites process and the Local Development Plan?

The Local Development Plan comprises of two documents. The first is the Plan Strategy, which the Council adopted on 16 October 2023. This is the strategic policy framework for the plan area as a whole across a range of topics. It sets out the vision for Mid and East Antrim as well as the strategic objectives and policies required to deliver that vision.

The Local Policies Plan is the second part of the two-stage Local Development Plan process. The purpose of the Local Policies Plan is to set out Council's local policies and site-specific proposals in relation to the development and use of land in the Borough. The Local Policies Plan must be consistent with a Plan Strategy and should take account of the 'Regional Development Strategy 2035' (RDS) and other policy issued by DfI such as 'A Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland' (SPPS).

The Local Policies Plan must contain the local policies, including site-specific proposals, designations and land use zonings required to deliver the Vision, Strategic Objectives and policies set out in the Plan Strategy. This is where the 'Call for Sites' exercise can feed into the Local Policies Plan.

If you submit a site through the 'Call for Sites' and if it is assessed by the Council to be suitable and available for a particular use, such as housing the land may then be proposed for such a use (i.e. residential) within the Local Policies Plan (see Appendix A). **However**, this would only be the case after a site has been subject to detailed technical assessments **and** is determined to be appropriate for the use **and** meets the identified requirements of the Local Development Plan. The final selection of sites remains a matter of judgement for the Council and will be justified during the plan-making process.

The fact that a site has been found to be appropriate in the context of this process should not be relied on as generating any form of expectation about how the Council would determine individual application for planning permission. Applications for planning permission will be determined on their merits.

3. Where are sites for development likely to be required?

Suggested sites should **primarily** be located on land **within the settlement limits** of existing settlements (see Plan Strategy, page 56, SGS2 Settlement Hierarchy).

Sites may also be suggested on land adjacent to existing settlement limits or on the periphery of existing settlements.

In addition, sites may be suggested on land adjacent to existing clusters of development in our new small settlements (see Plan Strategy, page 56, SGS2 Settlement Hierarchy) to allow consolidation of the built form and potentially provide small development opportunities.

Land in the open countryside away from settlements should **not** be submitted as part of this exercise.

When suggesting a site, please bear in mind the strategic approach to the zoning and designation of land set out in the Plan Strategy, in particular:

- **SGS2 Settlement Hierarchy**

A total of 36 settlements within the plan area have been designated and split into four tiers based on their role, facilities and services available. Settlement limits for our eight new small settlements will be defined as part of the Local Policies Plan process. Settlement limits for the remaining settlements will be reviewed as part of the Local Policies Plan process.

- **SGS3 Strategic Allocation of Housing to Settlements** and **SGS5 Management of Housing Supply**
Land will be zoned in towns (for sites of 0.2 hectares or above or sites capable of accommodating 10 dwelling units or more) and phased in the three main towns of Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne and in Greenisland where required. Land will not be zoned for housing in villages or small settlements, but Housing Policy Areas may be identified where appropriate.
- **SGS6 Strategic Allocation of Land for Economic Development**
Land will be zoned in the three main towns of Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne.
- **SGS7 Retail Hierarchy** and **Section 7.2 Retailing and Town Centres**
Suitable mixed use development opportunity sites will be zoned in town centres (Ballymena, Carrickfergus and Larne) to meet identified needs.
- **SGS9 Open Space Strategy**
Firm and appropriate proposals for new cemetery/burial space will be zoned.

4. What potential use(s) could be zoned/facilitated on my site?

The Local Development Plan seeks land to facilitate a range of land uses, including:

- Residential uses
- Industrial uses (light industrial, general industrial, storage or distribution)
- Business uses (offices, call centres, research and development)
- Retail uses (shopping, financial and professional, other retail services)
- Medical/health services, education facilities, cemeteries, etc.
- Mixed-use (comprising a number of land-uses, such as residential, retail, office, leisure)

This 'Call for Sites' exercise offers an opportunity for you to suggest what land use you think is most suitable on your site. This land **may** then be proposed for such a use with the Local Policies Plan. **However**, this would only be the case after a site has been subject to detailed technical assessment **and** is determined to be appropriate for the use **and** meets the identified requirements of the LDP. The final selection of sites remains a matter of judgement for the Council and will be justified during the plan-making process.

If you think that there could potentially be more than one suitable use for a site in combination (e.g. partly residential, partly retail **and** partly leisure) you can indicate this as 'mixed-use'. Alternatively, should you wish your site to be considered for a number of potential uses (e.g. all residential **or** all industrial use **or** all retail use) this should be selected and explanation given as applicable.

5. How do I respond and how much evidence is needed?

You should respond using our survey form (either the online survey or downloadable response form).

Our **online survey form** is available on the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council website at the following address: www.midandeantrim.gov.uk/LDP-CallForSites. The survey form has been developed to provide a straight-forward method of submitting site suggestions to the Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan 2030 - Call for Sites. Here you will also find an interactive map, where you can draw out the boundary of the piece of land you wish to suggest. Alternatively, you can print out the downloadable consultation response form, complete and submit a map showing the site's location and boundaries.

Although we have provided a downloadable consultation response form, we would encourage you to respond **via the online survey**, as this will guide you through the questions and ensure that you are only presented with the questions that you need to respond to depending on your answers to previous questions.

Whilst the submission of additional supporting documents is not essential, should you consider them helpful to demonstrate the suitability and availability of your site these can be submitted. Note,

further information may be requested as the selection process continues. We will contact you if this is necessary.

Any suggested sites must be received by Mid and East Antrim Local Development Plan Team by 5pm on Monday 30 September 2024.

Sites can be submitted:

- via the **online survey** on the Council's consultation site www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/LDP-CallForSites; or
- **by email**, returning the **response form** to LDP@midandeastantrim.gov.uk; or
- **by post**, returning the **response form** to the address below.

The relevant documents can be made available in different formats upon request. Please contact us:

By Post:

Local Development Plan Team
Mid and East Antrim Borough Council
Silverwood Business Park
190 Raceview Road
Ballymena
BT42 4HZ

By Telephone: 028 25 633500

By Email: LDP@midandeastantrim.gov.uk

If for any reason a particular alternative format cannot be met, other possible solutions will be explored.

6. What information do I need to provide?

At this stage of the process, we do need a minimum level of detail to properly process and assess sites and it is helpful if you can provide as much information as possible. The online submission platform www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/LDP-CallForSites includes a comprehensive range of site assessment questions. Please complete these as best you can. As a minimum we do require the following:

- Site owner (and agent where applicable) contact details;
- Location map with the site boundary outlined and clearly marked with your name in case of separation; and
- When you anticipate that development could commence on site and be completed.

7. Are there any size thresholds?

There is no formal limit on the size of site that you can suggest.

However, for this 'Call for Sites' exercise we are interested in sites that are most able to meet the Strategic Objectives and Policies and Spatial Growth Strategy set out in the [Mid and East Antrim Borough Council Local Development Plan 2030 - Plan Strategy](#). For example, land will be zoned for housing in towns for sites of 0.2 hectares or above or sites capable of accommodating 10 dwelling units or more.

8. Who can submit a site?

Anyone can submit a site for consideration, provided that contact details are included. We cannot accept anonymous proposals in order to confirm the genuine availability of the site for development and as we may need to contact you for further information.

In accordance with data protection laws, you should be aware that the Council will use information collected as part of the 'Call for Sites' exercise to inform spatial policy decisions within the LPP and related evidence base. By submitting your response, you are accepting that the Council will publish it and the information within it. However, published responses will not contain any personal details of individuals. For more information see our [Privacy Notice](#).

9. If sites are submitted through the 'Call for Sites' exercise and are assessed by Council, does it mean that they will be allocated for development in the Local Policies Plan?

No. The 'Call for Sites' and the technical assessment of sites put forward is an important evidence source to inform the plan-making process but **does not** in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development. This is because not all sites considered in the assessment will be suitable or acceptable for development.

Allocation of land for development will depend upon the extent of policy and practical constraints identified in the assessment and the choices made by Council following public consultation on the options available. The technical assessment provides information on the range of sites which are available to meet the Local Development Plan Strategic Objectives, but it is for the Local Policies Plan itself to determine which of those sites are the most suitable to meet the requirements.

The final selection of sites remains a matter of judgement for the Council and will be justified during the plan-making process.

10. If my specific site is already known to the Council, do I still need to submit it again through the 'Call for Sites' process?

Yes. We want to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information on sites within the Council area, including ownership details and site availability. Even if the site is on the Housing Land Availability Monitor (Housing Monitor Report), Economic (Industrial) Land Monitor or Interim Urban Capacity Study or submitted through a previous LDP representation it should be submitted again. A site submission will ensure the Council can update any existing record of the site including what the owner intends to do with the site in future and so can provide valuable additional information, even if we are already aware of the site and its development potential.

11. What happens next?

The 'Call for Sites' exercise will not determine whether the Local Policies Plan should identify a site for development. It is only the start of the process.

The 'Call for Sites' will help identify a potential pool of sites for further consideration when preparing the Local Policies Plan. The Council will not simply rely on submissions from the 'Call for Sites' process alone but will take into account other sources of information in considering sites to be assessed.

The Council will publish the information received through the 'Call for Sites' as part of the evidence base for the draft Local Policies Plan. By submitting your response, you are accepting that Council will publish it and the information within it. However, published responses will not contain any personal details of individuals. For more information see our [Privacy Notice](#).

In preparing the Local Policies Plan, the sites will go through several technical assessments. For example, the assessment of sites suggested for housing uses will form part of an updated Urban Capacity Study, which will include an evaluation of whether a site is suitable and available. The sites

which are considered most appropriate and subsequently proposed for designation or zonings within the Local Policies Plan will then be subject to further public consultation and an Independent Examination in public. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will be conducted alongside the 'Call for Sites' process, technical assessments and drafting of the Local Policies Plan to consider and communicate the sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans, policies and potential designations or zonings. The SA/SEA will help to inform the plan making process by helping to refine the contents of plans/policies, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise the potential for adverse effects.

12. What is the deadline for call for sites?

All submissions must be received by **5pm on Monday 30 September 2024**.

13. How do I keep in touch with the progress of this project?

Details of the 'Call for Sites' exercise are available from the Council's website:

www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/LDP-CallForSites

Details of the Local Development Plan preparation process are available from Council's website:

www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk/business/planning/local-development-plan/plan-preparation-process/

If you are unable to find the answers to your questions on these pages, please do not hesitate to contact the Local Development Plan Team,

By Email: LDP@midandeastantrim.gov.uk

By Telephone: 028 25 633500

Appendix A: How the 'Call for Sites' fits into the Local Policies Plan making process

