

# Neighbourhood Planning

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## Introductions

What is neighbourhood planning?

The neighbourhood planning process

Is there an alternative option?

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# What is neighbourhood planning?

## Neighbourhood (Development) Plans

- A statutory development plan that forms part of the Local Plan framework

## Neighbourhood Development Order

- Grant planning permission for certain kinds of development within a specified area

## Community Right to Build Order

- Grant planning permission for development schemes

# What is neighbourhood planning?

It is about a community using land and development to deliver somewhere to live, work, shop, eat, and drink. It is also about what it enjoys and cherishes and how it moves around.



Neighbourhood Plans **CANNOT** be used to stop growth or promote less development than the Local Plan.



The **Basic Conditions** must also be met:

- Have appropriate regard to national policy,
- Be in general conformity with the strategic elements of the Local Plan,
- Contribute towards sustainable development,
- Be compatible with EU obligations.

# The neighbourhood planning process

The Town or Parish Council must submit:

- A plan and statement identifying the land in question. It could cover the administrative boundary, part of it, or include adjoining parishes.
- A statement as to why the land should be designated.
- A statement as to why the group can be regarded as a 'qualifying body'.

The District Council must publicise the application and invite comments over a four week period before making a decision.



# The neighbourhood planning process

The District Council has a legal duty to support neighbourhood planning groups. It can:

- assist with community engagement work,
- provide technical data and maps, and
- advise on the content of the plan and whether it might pass examination.

The District Council must fund the examination and referendum.



# The neighbourhood planning process

- The Town or Parish Council must lead the process.
- Ideally it should be overseen by a Steering Group.
- The Town or Parish Council has formal power and responsibility for the preparation of the plan.
- It must involve and engage the community and liaise with other bodies.



# The neighbourhood planning process

The community and stakeholders engagement should include:

- Residents
- Businesses
- Interest groups
- Public agencies



# The neighbourhood planning process

How much Evidence is required and what form should it take?

- Will vary from plan to plan
- No prescriptive checklist
- Depends upon the aims and objectives of the neighbourhood plan
- The evidence must be sufficient to demonstrate compliance with the Basic Conditions



# The neighbourhood planning process

The plan must be based on sound evidence:

**Demographic** – who lives in the area – current and future trends

**Socio-economic** – who works, where and at what?

**Environmental issues** – flooding, air quality, noise

**Designations** – heritage, landscape, wildlife

**Transport** – services, capacity, usage

**Infrastructure** – capacity, fitness for purpose, need

**Housing stock** – type, tenure, condition, need

**Land uses** – potential development sites



# The neighbourhood planning process

## Preparing the Plan

- A plan may contain a single policy or tens of policies
- It must meet the 'Basic Conditions'
- Be subject to wide and inclusive community engagement
- Contain a statement confirming the status of the 'qualifying body'

# The neighbourhood planning process

## Publicising the Plan

- The Town or Parish Council publicise the draft plan to people who live, work or carry out business in the area.
- A minimum of six weeks must be given for comments.
- Statutory bodies must also be consulted as advised by the District Council.
- A draft is submitted to the District Council.

# The neighbourhood planning process

## Submitting the Plan

- Plan/statement showing the area
- Title of the plan
- Basic Conditions Statement
- Consultation statement detailing:
  - Who was consulted;
  - How they were consulted;
  - A summary of the main issues and concerns;
  - How these issues have been addressed



# The neighbourhood planning process

## Independent Examination

The Examiner will:

- Check the Plan to see if it meets the 'Basic Conditions'
- Conforms to the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Plan policies
- Contributes to sustainable development
- Recommend if any modifications need to be made
- Indicate whether the Plan should go to referendum
- Whether the referendum should be extended



# The neighbourhood planning process

## Other Checks

- EU Obligations
- Strategic Environmental Assessment
  - Not all Neighbourhood Plans will require one. Only needed if the policies/development will give rise to significant environmental effects
- Habitats Regulations
- Human Rights Act compatibility



# The neighbourhood planning process

## What is not Tested?

- Non land-use policies or designations,
- ‘Soundness’ of the Plan,
- Whether or not a Sustainability Appraisal has been undertaken (but sustainability of the plan is tested), and
- Anything that does not relate to compliance with the Basic Conditions!

# The neighbourhood planning process

The Examiners Report will recommend either:

- The plan is submitted for referendum;
- Modifications are made prior to referendum; or
- The plan is rejected.

Modifications can only include those needed to meet the 'Basic Conditions', EU convention rights, spelling and grammar.

If the Examiner recommends that significant changes are made the Town or Parish may need to go back to the local community and consult again on the changes.



# The neighbourhood planning process

## The Examiner's Report

- Non-binding 'technically' however ...
- The Report must give a reason for each of its recommendations,
- Contain a summary of its main findings,
- A copy must be sent to both the Town or Parish Council and the District Council,
- The District Council must publicise the report.

# The neighbourhood planning process

## The Community Referendum



- Organised and funded by the District Council
- Underlines the importance of wide community support
- The Examiner can extend the scope of the referendum but only if proposal has wider effects beyond neighbourhood area
- Requires simple majority (+50%)
- If successful the District Council is must 'make' the Plan.

# In there an alternative option?

**Village Design Statements** – used to inform the design and appearance of new developments.

**Parish Plans** – used by communities to set out aims and aspirations for their village. They can cover more than planning issues.

**Community-Led Plans** – similar to parish plans but with a greater emphasis on planning issues.

All can be used for decision-making purposes but they will not have the formal status of a neighbourhood plan.



# Who is preparing a plan?

Babergh	Mid Suffolk
East Bergholt	Debenham
Hadleigh	Elmswell
Hartest	Needham Market
Lavenham	Mendlesham
	Stradbroke
	Stowupland
	Thurston
<b>Other approaches</b>	
Chelmondiston	Eye

# Other Proposals

- **Brantham**, Factory Lane – Mixed-use development comprising 320, dwellings, approx. 54,000 sq m employment uses, 1,440 sq m retail uses and community uses.
- **East Bergholt**, Moores Lane – 144 dwellings and four business units.
- **Holbrook**, Ipswich Road – 78 dwellings.
- **Shotley Gate**, Former HMS Ganges Site – 285 dwellings, 60 bed nursing home, retail shop, offices and employment uses.

**Any questions ...**

