



Urban Vision Enterprise

Town and Parish Council Planning Service

Guide to Neighbourhood Plans

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1. Introduction

1.1 Neighbourhood Plans

Neighbourhood Plans have been part of the planning system since 2012. Neighbourhood Plans relate to the use and development of land and associated social, economic and environmental issues. It is a planning policy document, and once 'made' forms part of the statutory development plan for an area.

A Neighbourhood Plan may contain a vision, aims, planning policies, allocation of sites for housing or other kinds of development and Local Green Space designations. It may deal with a wide range of subject areas (like housing, employment, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues that are of particular importance in a local area.

All Neighbourhood Plans must meet Basic Conditions, which are described later in this guide. These are tested through an independent examination. If the independent examination recommends it, the Neighbourhood Plan will then be subject to a referendum.

1.2 Using this Guide

This guide gives a concise summary of the process for producing a Neighbourhood Plan, together with suggestions for good practice.

References to the NPPF relate to the National Planning Policy Framework December 2024 (or any superseding version).

2. Qualifying Bodies for Neighbourhood Planning

2.1 Town and Parish Councils

Where there is a town or parish council, then that is the qualifying body for leading a neighbourhood plan for all or part of the parish.

Parish Councils can work in partnership to prepare a joint Neighbourhood Plan. However, Parish Councils cannot work in partnership with Neighbourhood Forums.

2.2 Neighbourhood Forums

Where there is no parish or town council, a neighbourhood forum must be formed. Those eligible for membership of a Neighbourhood Forum are people living in the area, working in the area or elected councillors for the area. Once designated, the forum will lead the development of the neighbourhood plan.

The legal requirements that a Neighbourhood Forum must meet are:

- an express purpose of promoting or improving the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of an area that consists of or includes the neighbourhood;
- area concerned;
- a purpose that reflects the character of the area in general terms;
- a membership open to people living and working in the area, and elected members for the area (reasonable steps must be taken to secure at least one of each);
- a minimum of 21 members from the above groups;
- a membership drawn from different places in the area and different sections of the community;
- a written constitution.

2.3 Designation of a Neighbourhood Forum

An application by a prospective neighbourhood forum for designation must be submitted to the local planning authority and should include:

- the name of the proposed neighbourhood forum;
- a written constitution;
- the name of the neighbourhood area and a map identifying that area;
- contact details for at least one member;

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- a list of prospective members, including details to demonstrate that they are eligible for membership and that they are drawn from different places in the area and different sections of the community;
- a statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood forum meets legal requirements.



3. Process for Preparing a Neighbourhood Plan

3.1 Statutory Process

The process for preparing a Neighbourhood Plan is set out in planning legislation, national policy (the NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance.

In summary, the main stages are:

- Neighbourhood Area Designation
- Neighbourhood Forum Designation (where necessary)
- Preparing the draft Neighbourhood Plan
- Screening (to determine whether full Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitat Regulation Assessment are required).
- Undertaking full SEA/HRA where necessary)
- Consultation (Regulation 14)
- Submission of the Neighbourhood Plan and supporting statements
- Publicity (Regulation 16)
- Independent Examination
- Referendum

In addition to these statutory stages, community and stakeholder engagement should be undertaken from the earliest stages. Also, an evidence base will need to be compiled, to support the Neighbourhood Plan's policies.

3.2 Project Plan

It is helpful to prepare a project plan at the start of the process, identifying key stages and timings. Many Neighbourhood Plans take around 18-24 months, but some can take considerably longer. The project plan should be realistic, but also ambitious enough to maintain momentum.

4. Neighbourhood Area

4.1 Designation of the Neighbourhood Area

The first formal step in neighbourhood planning is the submission of the proposed neighbourhood area to the local planning authority.

This may already be in place, where there is an existing Neighbourhood Plan.

4.2 Application for Designation

A Neighbourhood Area application must include:

- a map identifying the proposed neighbourhood area;
- a statement explaining why the area is appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area;
- a statement explaining that the body making the area application (the parish or town council or prospective neighbourhood forum) is capable of being a qualifying body.

The application will be publicised by the local planning authority for a 6-week period.

4.3 Parished Areas

Adjacent parish/town councils may agree to work in partnership to produce a joint Neighbourhood Plan.

For town or parish councils seeking to designate the whole parish, there is a fast-track process, without the need for the 6-week publicity stage, and where the area becomes designated after 2 weeks.

4.4 Unparished Areas

Prospective neighbourhood forums will also need to apply for a neighbourhood area to be designated (see 4.2). This is sometimes submitted in parallel with the Neighbourhood Forum designation application, and sometimes before.

4.5 Duty to Support

Once the neighbourhood area is designated by the local planning authority, that authority is legally required to provide advice and assistance to those bodies producing a Neighbourhood Plan in its area. This 'duty to support' could include things like:

- making available existing data and evidence, including that underpinning an emerging Local Plan (Planning Practice Guidance makes clear that this may also form part of the evidence base for Neighbourhood Plans).
- identifying key local strategic policies from the adopted Local Plan;
- sharing information on key contacts within the local authority and key external stakeholders;
- providing maps;
- making available venues for community engagement activities;
- checking the plan prior to formal submission and providing informal feedback.



5. Building the Evidence Base

5.1 The Evidence Base

Planning policies need to be based on a clear planning justification and relevant evidence (the evidence base). Relevant evidence should be referred to in the Plan, as part of the planning rational or justification for the policies. However, it is not necessary to include detailed evidence reports in the Plan itself.

5.2 Where to Find Evidence

Once there is a clear understanding of the issues that planning policies should address, relevant evidence can be identified. A review of existing evidence should be undertaken and this may include:

- The evidence under-pinning the adopted and/or emerging Local Plan. This could include housing needs data and housing site assessments;
- Socio-economic data for area (for example census data);
- Technical reports (e.g. retail studies, transport studies);
- Historic environment records and data, such as conservation area appraisals and statutory lists (listed buildings, and scheduled ancient monuments) or local lists;
- Details of statutory, national and local environmental protection designations, such as tree preservation orders and sites of special scientific interest;
- Economic data, for example land and property values and their implications for viability;
- Plans and strategies on relevant themes prepared by the local authority or other public bodies or statutory undertakers;
- Existing plans for an area, such as a masterplan, community plan or parish plan.

The local planning authority should be able to provide support with identifying the sources of relevant evidence.

5.3 Preparing or Commissioning Evidence

Some Neighbourhood Plan bodies prepare their own evidence, for example reports to justify Local Green Space designations. It may be necessary to develop evidence at neighbourhood level, for example housing need, vacancy, or heritage analysis.

6. Community and Stakeholder Engagement

6.1 Informal Engagement

There are statutory requirements for consultation for Neighbourhood Plans, and these are described later in this guide. But more informal community and stakeholder engagement is also necessary and important, from the earliest stages of the Neighbourhood Plan process. Finding out what people think and drawing on their skills and knowledge is important in identifying the issues that the Neighbourhood Plan should address, which can then translate into planning policies. This helps to gain and maintain public support and to ensure that the Plan is realistic and deliverable. Failure to engage communities and stakeholders can be a cause of conflict later in the process, leading to additional costs and delays.

Early-stage engagement is about finding out what people think about the area. Later engagement can look at more specific issues, such as draft Plan aims and policy themes, housing site selection criteria, or potential sites for Local Green Space designation.

It can be very confusing to the public if there are multiple and conflicting versions of policies shared at different times, while they are at a formative stage. But the main themes of policies could be tested. The later statutory consultation (Regulation 14) will provide the opportunity to comment on the detailed content of policies.

The referendum will involve a simple 'yes' or 'no' vote on the Neighbourhood Plan. Properly engaging people from the beginning of the process ensures that there is an opportunity to influence the detail of the Neighbourhood Plan, rather than just having the option to accept or reject the whole plan.

6.2 Effective Engagement

Ways of ensuring that community and stakeholder engagement are effective include:

Stakeholder mapping: Identify key stakeholders, including business, community and public bodies. These can have useful knowledge and data and also provide easier access and support in involving communities, residents, businesses and hard-to-engage groups.

Front Loading: Community engagement should be undertaken before work commences on the plan (this is called front-loading) and throughout the process of plan preparation. The purpose of the first stages of community engagement is to help define issues and aims for the plan, which can then

translate into planning policy themes. Open questions could be asked about what is good, what is bad and what needs to change in the area.

Publicity and Awareness: It is important to publicise the proposed neighbourhood plan as widely as possible using different media, from the beginning of the process. Feedback on the outcomes of engagement should then be provided throughout the process.

Tokenism: The purpose of undertaking community engagement is to inform the content of the plan. If the outcomes have already been determined, then community engagement is tokenistic.

Being Creative: Community engagement needs to engage people using a range of approaches and media. It should be stimulating and enjoyable, not boring or intimidating.

Targeting: Whilst some people will naturally want to get involved in neighbourhood planning, targeting will be necessary to reach a wider audience. This could include the elderly, young people, ethnic groups or other minority or hard-to-engage groups.

Making it Accessible: Careful thought needs to be given to make events and material accessible, including location, timing, media, format, etc. Events should be informal and unthreatening. Some people will be excluded if engagement activities are held too late in the evening.



7. Writing the Neighbourhood Plan

7.1 Content

There is considerable flexibility over the content of a Neighbourhood Plan. Plans vary in length and detail. Generally, concise Neighbourhood Plans, focused on the policies and their justification, are easier to use in the Development Management Process, so more effective in shaping decisions. Supporting evidence can be presented in background evidence documents, rather than being included in the Plan itself.

7.2 Plan Structure

The following are suggestions for possible structure and content of the plan:

Introduction: This should set out the legal status of the Neighbourhood Plan and its role in shaping planning decisions.

Vision and Aims: Most plans have aims and some also have a vision, though this is not essential. Aims should be fairly high level and should not contain detail (the policies will contain the detail). For example, aims could relate to supporting sustainable growth, high street recovery, meeting local needs, sustainable design, supporting active travel and protection of the natural and historic environments.

Background data: Many Neighbourhood Plans include a section on the Neighbourhood Area, describing its strategic location, connections and broad social, economic and environmental characteristics. This is useful, but should be concise and relevant. Two pages would normally be more useful and more likely to be read than twenty pages.

Planning Policies. A Neighbourhood Plan, once made, will form part of the statutory local development plan for the area and its policies will be used to determine planning applications for development proposals in the Neighbourhood Area. Planning applications will be determined in accordance with the policies of the statutory development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The most important challenge is to ensure that the policies are carefully drafted, to meet legal requirements and be effective in the development management process.

Site Allocations. The Neighbourhood Plan may identify sites for specific kinds of development, such as housing, retail, employment or mixed use. A Neighbourhood Plan does not have to make site allocations, but many do so. This is done through site allocation policies.

Local Green Space Designation: The Neighbourhood Plan may designate Local Green Space. This is done through a planning policy.

Infrastructure Priorities: The Neighbourhood Plan may state priorities for the use of planning infrastructure monies. This is a statement of preference, rather than policy.

7.3 Effective Policies

Many Neighbourhood Plans identify the right themes, but are let down by vague or generic policies. Also, policies must meet 'The Basic Conditions' (see later in this guide). So, it can be useful to bring in experienced professional support for policy drafting.

Some tips for creating effective policies are:

- Use a clear structure of policy headings. Avoid setting inconsistent requirements in different policies. For example, it can be confusing if there is an overall design policy, but then different design requirements in other policies.
- Set clear and unambiguous tests or requirements for development to meet. Policies should relate to the development scheme itself, rather than matters for supporting statements to address. Avoid policies that read as narrative, rather than setting clear requirements.
- Include a clear planning rationale for each policy (before or after the policy). Reference should be made to relevant evidence and analysis underpinning the policy.
- Avoid repeating national or Local Plan policy or just stating that development must meet national or Local Plan policy requirements. Rather, the Neighbourhood Plan should complement such policies by setting locally specific requirements.
- Avoid policies that require compliance with external documents. Decision makers and developers are unlikely to have the time to read detailed external documents and may not pick out the key principles. Any change to external documents can kill the policy. It is far better to translate the key principles from external documents directly into policy wording.

7.4 Policy Themes

A Neighbourhood Plan can deal with one or two issues, or include a more comprehensive range of policies, for example supporting growth, promoting active travel, setting design requirements or protecting historic and natural environments. Some common policy themes are:

Employment: The neighbourhood plan could support employment development in suitable locations, subject to impacts, or make site allocations for employment related development. The Plan could support the improvement and development of existing commercial estates. In rural areas, the Plan could support diversification of agricultural sites.

Residential Development: The neighbourhood plan could support housing development in certain locations, set housing mix or amenity requirements, or make housing site allocations. If a Neighbourhood Plan meets evidence housing need for the Neighbourhood Area, it can counter the 'tilted balance' where there is not a five-year housing land supply in the wider district (Paragraph 14 of the NPPF).

Community Facilities: Policies could seek to protect existing community facilities or support new community facilities in suitable locations, subject to impacts. There is often a strong overlap between employment and community facilities, for example through local shops and food outlets.

Town Centres, High Streets, Local Centres: Neighbourhood Plans can seek to enhance and diversify the range of facilities in high streets and town centres. A Plan could increase the residential catchment population through site allocations close to existing centres. Development opportunities within the town could be identified.

Site Allocations / Settlement Boundaries: A Neighbourhood Plan can make site allocations for housing or other uses. It could also set or amend settlement boundaries. Close liaison with the local planning authority is advised, in particular, to discuss any issues around general conformity with strategic local policy. A transparent process is essential, so that sites allocated are based on clear criteria, analysis and evidence.

Design: Design policies could cover a range of issues, such as townscape characteristics, pedestrian permeability, green infrastructure, character, scale and other matters. Design policies should avoid being over-prescriptive on stylistic matters and should support creative site-specific solutions and green design.

Natural Environments and blue/green infrastructure: Neighbourhood Plan policies should be locally specific, based on the actual features and landscapes in the area, including designated landscapes. Policies can seek to protect the specific values of different kinds of space and to avoid adverse impacts from development. For example, policies could set out how development should respond to a river and

its environs, including consideration of impacts. Generic natural environment policies have little or no effect, especially if they simply repeat national policy.

Historic Environments: As with natural environment policies, historic environment policies should seek to protect locally specific aspects of heritage. For example, a policy could set out key aspects of special interest and character of a conservation area, which development should respond to (without resorting to stylistic imitation). Policies could identify specific areas with opportunities for heritage-led regeneration. Heritage policies that repeat national policy are inconsequential.

Movement and Active Travel: Neighbourhood Plans can support balanced transport provision, including sustainable forms of transport and opportunities for active travel (walking and cycling).

Local Green Space: Many Neighbourhood Plans designate Local Green Spaces (LGS). These must be based on robust evidence and analysis, to demonstrate that they met the NPPF criteria.

Floodrisk: A Neighbourhood Plan could address locally specific floodrisk issues, for example by considering impacts of surface water runoff from development on land already prone to flooding. There is no point in repeating existing national or local plan policies.

Amenity: Impacts on amenity could include light, noise, fumes, dust or other impacts. These could be dealt with in a separate policy, or as part of policies that support development, such as employment or housing policies.

7.5 Site Allocations

Neighbourhood Plans can enable housing in various ways, including through settlement boundaries (or modification of settlement boundaries), brownfield site policies, or site allocations.

A rigorous methodology and transparent process is required to underpin site allocations. Discussions with the local planning authority are essential, to ensure synergy between site allocations being proposed by the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan. Also, the local planning authority may have data on available sites and analysis of their suitability for development.

Where sites are being allocated, or a settlement boundary is being extended, the Neighbourhood Plan should be accompanied by an evidence/analysis document, setting out the methodology, site selection criteria, analysis of each site and justification for which sites are being selected for designation.

As with policy drafting, it is useful to employ experienced professional support to help with developing a methodology and selection criteria for housing sites.

Where there is not a five-year housing land supply in the wider district, but a Neighbourhood Plan's policies and/or site allocations meet evidenced housing need for the Neighbourhood Area, the 'tilted balance' for development will not apply (see Paragraph 14 of the NPPF).

7.6 Local Green Space Designation

A Neighbourhood Plan can designate Local Green Space. This relates to spaces with demonstrable community value, which meet requirements set out in the NPPF.

Where Local Green Space designation is proposed, the Neighbourhood Plan would need to be accompanied by an evidence/analysis document, setting out how each space meets NPPF criteria.

7.7 Maps

Many policies will require supporting maps, for example showing:

- Defined areas, such as settlement boundaries, town centre boundaries or conservation area boundaries or other designations;
- The boundaries of sites being allocated for development;
- The boundaries of sites being designated as Local Green Space.

The local planning authority may provide support with preparing maps.

7.8 Guidance

Policies could be augmented by guidance or interpretations, to help with their application. For example, this could include design guidance or briefs for specific sites.

7.9 Projects and Actions

Some Neighbourhood Plans include a non-statutory section on projects or actions, for example relating to regeneration or enhancement proposals. However, it is more practical to include these in a separate document outside of the Neighbourhood Plan, which means they can be updated as required. This also helps to make the Neighbourhood Plan concise and policy focused.

8. Screening

8.1 Screening for SEA and HRA

Draft Neighbourhood Plans will need to be screened to determine whether full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Habitat Regulations Assessment are required. This will normally be undertaken by the Local Planning Authority.

There are a small number of local authorities that refuse to screen Neighbourhood Plans. This then requires the Neighbourhood Plan body to screen its own plan or to commission consultants to screen the Plan.

The screening process must include consultation with specified national bodies.

8.2 Full SEA and HRA

The screening will identify whether full SEA and/or HRA are required. If they are required, then a full SEA and/or HRA will need to be commissioned. There is a legal requirement when submitting Neighbourhood Plans that it be accompanied either by full SEA and/or HRA, or a screening outcome confirming that these are not required.

Full SEA is more likely to be required if a Neighbourhood Plan makes site allocations, or if the Neighbourhood Area includes significant environmental designations and constraints.



9. Statutory Consultation

9.1 Decision (Regulation 14) by the Qualifying Body

Once there is a completed draft of the Neighbourhood Plan, it will need to be approved by the Town or Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum. A minuted decision will be required to approve the document for Regulation 14 consultation.

9.2 Regulation 14 Consultation

The completed draft Neighbourhood Plan must be subjected to statutory consultation (Regulation 14).

It is a legal requirement that the proposed neighbourhood plan is publicised and the subject of public consultation, before it is submitted to the local planning authority. This includes:

- Publicising the plan in a manner which brings it to the attention of people who live, work or run businesses in the neighbourhood area. This should include details of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan, details of where and when it may be viewed (e.g. local fairs, schools, etc.), details on how to make comments on the plan and the date by which comments must be received (at least 6 weeks from the date on which it is first publicised).
- Consulting bodies whose interests may be affected by the plan. The local council should be able to advise on this, but it is likely to include the county council, the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage.
- Sending a copy of the proposed plan to the local authority.
- Consulting any neighbouring local, town or parish councils, significant landowners, local businesses and local community organisations, such as chambers of commerce, civic societies and local trusts.

The list of statutory consultees in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

It may be useful to produce a concise summary of the plan, for those that don't wish to read the full document.

Regulation 14 is a statutory consultation, so needs to meet the requirements of planning law and consultation case law (common law).

There should be an online means of responding, but also a paper version for those that require it. The format of the response should make clear which policy or page number is being commented on. Binary or multi-choice responses should be avoided, as the reasoning behind people's views will be important in determining whether or not, to amend a policy.

9.3 Analysis and Preparation of the Consultation Statement

The analysis of Regulation 14 representations needs to be handled in a systematic manner. This involves a process of:

- rigorously considering each representation and each issue raised;
- considering whether or not to amend the planning policy, site, space or other Plan content;
- recording if modifications have been made and why (this is done through the Consultation Statement).

The Consultation Statement may include a summary of earlier community and stakeholder engagement, but the main focus is on the Regulation 14 consultation. The Consultation Statement should contain the following:

- details of people and organisations consulted about the proposed Neighbourhood Plan;
- details of how they were consulted;
- a summary of the main issues and concerns raised through the consultation process;
- descriptions of how these issues and concerns were considered and addressed in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

The detailed analysis could be included in the form of a table.

10. Submission

10.1 Decision by the Qualifying Body to Submit the Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan will be modified as a consequence of the Regulation 14 Consultation. The modified 'submission' draft will then need to be approved by the Town or Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum. A minuted decision will be required to approve the submission, including the draft Neighbourhood Plan, the Basic Conditions Statement and the Consultation Statement.

10.2 Submitting the Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan should be submitted by the qualifying body to the local planning authority. The local planning authority is responsible for publicising the plan and arranging for the independent examination and referendum to take place.

The submission to the local planning authority must include the following:

- a map which identifies the area to which the plan relates (this is usually in the Plan itself);
- a consultation statement (see 9.3);
- the proposed Neighbourhood Plan;
- a Basic Conditions Statement explaining how the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements (see 11.1);
- the screening outcome that confirms that full SEA and HRA are not required or, where applicable, the full SEA and/or HRA reports.

11. Independent Examination

11.1 Meeting the Basic Conditions

Neighbourhood Plans must meet the Basic Conditions, and this will be tested through the Independent Examination. In addition to the Consultation Statement, Neighbourhood Plan submissions must include a Basic Conditions Statement, explaining how the Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

In summary, the Basic Conditions that neighbourhood plans must meet are as follows:

- must be appropriate having regard to national policy;
- must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- must be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area;
- must be compatible with EU obligations.

Regulations specify an additional basic condition that a plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.

The Basic Conditions relating to EU obligations and habitats would be addressed through the screening outcome or the full SEA and HRA, where required.

In addition, the plan must meet requirements of human rights law. This is often demonstrated through a summary of community engagement and an Equalities Analysis.

11.2 Regulation 16 Publicity

Upon receiving the draft Neighbourhood Plan and supporting statements, the local authority will consider whether it is a valid submission and then publicise it for a 6-week period (Regulation 16).

This is very different to the earlier Regulation 14 consultation. Whilst Regulation 14 provided an opportunity to comment on the planning merits of the Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 16 is focused on whether it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements.

Any representations received by the local planning authority will be sent to the independent examiner for their consideration. So, they will only be considered within the scope of the Independent Examination.

11.3 Independent Examination

It is the responsibility of the local authority to organise and cover the costs of the independent examination and referendum. The Independent Examiner will be appointed by the local planning authority, with the agreement of the qualifying body.

The Independent Examination will consider the submitted Neighbourhood Plan, supporting statements, relevant supporting evidence and any representations made during the Regulation 16 consultation period. The Examiner will consider whether the plan meets the 'Basic Conditions' and other legal requirements.

Usually, the appointed Examiner will do an initial review of the Plan and then contact the qualifying body and the Local Planning Authority and ask for clarification on certain issues. These questions may relate to issues raised through Regulation 16 representations, or may be based just on the Examiner's own reading of the Plan. The Examiner will normally invite the Qualifying Body to respond to any of the issues raised through the Regulation 16, where it wishes to do so.

The independent examiner may recommend that the plan proceed to the referendum stage (i.e. it meets all legal requirements) but would also usually recommend modifications that are necessary to meet the Basic Conditions. The examiner will normally recommend that the referendum area coincides with the neighbourhood area, but they could recommend a wider voting area if the Neighbourhood Plan would have a wider impact.

11.4 Modifications

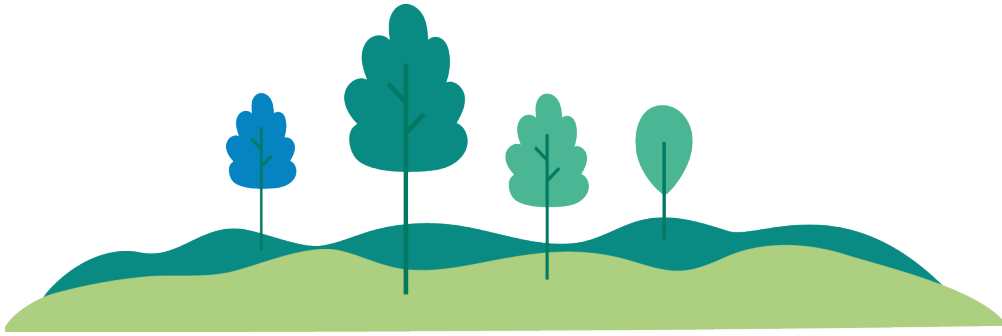
The local planning authority must make modifications to the plan, where necessary to meet the Basic Conditions. But it can only make modifications to meet the Basic Conditions.

Normally, the local planning authority will follow the Examiner's recommendations. The Examiner will highlight issue in meeting the Basic Conditions and may make helpful suggestions for modification. The Local Planning Authority must ensure that issues in meeting the Basic Conditions are addressed fully, but there may be alternative solutions to achieving this, so it is not uncommon for there to be some negotiation at the modification stage. This should be a constructive process to meet the Examiner's concerns in the most effective way

The Qualifying Body may withdraw the plan if it is unhappy with modifications being made. This must be done before the Regulation 18 publicity stage.

11.5 Regulation 18 Publicity

The local planning authority must publicise the modified plan and the length of this publicity period depends on whether there has been any departure from the Examiner's recommendations.



12. Referendum

12.1 Making the Plan

If the plan is found to meet the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements, with modifications, if necessary, then the local authority must arrange for the referendum to take place. It must give at least 28 working days' notice before the date of the referendum.

Care is required to avoid public bodies or public money being used to promote a certain outcome in the vote. However, factual information may be prepared, explaining the consequences of a 'yes' vote or 'no' vote.

If more than 50% of those voting in the referendum vote 'yes', then the Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area and the local planning authority must 'make' the Plan.



13. Implementation, Monitoring, Review

13.1 Implementation

The 'made' Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory development plan for the area. It will be used to help determine planning applications and guide planning decisions in the Neighbourhood Area.

The Town or Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum can use the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan as a basis for making representations on planning applications. This provides an opportunity to explain whether a scheme complies with some or all of the relevant policies, and where it would not comply.

13.2 Monitoring and Review

Planning decisions could be monitored, to assess the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Plan in the decision-making process. This includes planning applications and appeals. Changes to national policy and Local Plan policy should also be monitored. These may have implications for the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Consideration of these and other factors may lead to a decision to review the Neighbourhood Plan.

The process for review depends on the extent of modification proposed, so a discussion with the local planning authority is essential. Correction of errors or adding references to external documents would not normally require examination or a referendum.

Material modifications which do not change the nature of the plan would require examination but not a referendum. An addition of a design code to support an existing policy would be an example.

Material modifications which do change the nature of the plan or order would require examination and a referendum. This could involve significant changes to policies or allocating additional sites.

14. About Urban Vision Enterprise

14.1 Experience and Services

Urban Vision Enterprise (UVE) is a professional planning consultancy providing services in planning, regeneration, economic development and third sector organisational development. UVE provides a Town and Parish Council Planning Service in England.

UVE has supported well over 200 neighbourhood plans and can provide support at all stages of the process. This includes drafting of effective policies, site allocations and advice on legal compliance at all stages.

UVE specialisms include:

- mediation and complex negotiations;
- neighbourhood planning;
- regeneration and economic development;
- town centres and high street recovery;
- housing growth, site selection and masterplanning;
- heritage-led regeneration and conservation;
- natural environment and blue and green infrastructure;
- urban design, including strategies, policies, guidance and design review;
- community and stakeholder engagement;
- statutory consultation (legal compliance);
- technical reports including housing need, site assessment and heritage studies;
- feasibility and viability studies and project business plans;
- training, continuing professional development (CPD) and education;
- preparing guidance and briefings;
- in person (verbal) and written evidence for Parliamentary committees;
- third sector (not-for-profit) organisational development, including strategy, operations, governance and business development.

Urban Vision Enterprise is ISO 9001 Registered. The practice is an IHBC recognised historic environment service provider (HESPR) and CPD provider.

14.2 Our Clients

Current and past clients include government and funding bodies, UK and national professional bodies and membership organisations, local authorities, town and parish councils, neighbourhood forums and third sector (not-for-profit) organisations. These include the Heritage Lottery Fund, Locality, Royal Town

Planning Institute, Institute of Historic Building Conservation, and the National Trust.

14.3 Contact

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