

Neighbourhood Planning

An Overview

A Neighbourhood Plan, is better described as a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

- It is a document which sets out key development policies and aims for a specific area, usually a Parish.
- It is created by community involvement and based on evidence.
- It has a much greater focus on the specific area than the Council's own Local Plan and can therefore be much more relevant and specific to the 'needs' of an area.
- Whilst it cannot stop development, it can manage and influence planning application decisions and the areas in which future developments can be built.
- It is developed through a formal Neighbourhood Plan process.

In general, what things can be considered?



The Neighbourhood Plan, can include policies and aims relating to all types of development and community needs, but primarily it is a local building development plan for the next 15 years.

What Status Does it have?

- It must be taken into account as part of the Council's planning application decision making process.
- It is a legally, adopted document used to inform the decisions made on all future planning applications.

... However, it must go through a process and meet certain standards. Only certain things can be included in the plan.

For example...

It cannot be used to stop development.



It must comply with:

- Certain European Directives & legislation (adopted by UK).
- National Legislation (Planning & Other).
- National & Local Planning Policy (Strategic Policies Only).

It:

- Cannot propose lower levels of growth, housing etc. than National, County or District requirements.
- Can help inform, direct and shape future development.
- Must be community led and evidence based.
- Is subject, once completed by the Parish Council, to an independent examination and then a formal local referendum.

Public and People Involvement

Steering Group's Role:

- Develop a communication strategy for community participation and consultation.
- Engage with the community and other stakeholders such as residents and landowners, e.g. public meetings, call for sites.
- Engage in and co-ordinate the work needed to complete the plan.

The Parish Council's Role:

- Neighbourhood Plan is led by the Parish Council and supported by a Steering Group.
- Parish Council has the formal power and responsibility for the preparation of the plan; it is the accountable body.
- Must ensure community involvement and engagement.
- Is responsible for all planning policies in the Plan.
- Is the main liaison with other government bodies.
- Engages in active delivery (e.g. acquiring funding for consultants).

West Lindsey District Council's Role:

As a duty to ensure / provide:

- Engagement with community, agency and other bodies.
- Preparation of materials to assist in the writing of the plan.
- Technical, policy and legal guidance.
- Advice, e.g. if thinks the plan will not pass examination.
- Statutory duties (consultation in Neighbourhood area, fund independent examination and organise a referendum).

Public Consultation

- The Steering Group must identify and refine planning objectives after initial consultation with residents, e.g. conduct a survey.
- Identify local housing needs/concerns and develop policy options to satisfy them.
- Conduct Regulation 14 consultation before submitting the plan to the West Lindsey District Council.
- Prepare SEA Screening opinion and consult on issues and options arising.

After mandatory consultation and amendment, the plan is submitted to the District Council. It is then reviewed by an independent Inspector prior to a referendum vote

Typical evidence in the plan required by the independent inspector:

- Demographic – e.g. who lives here now and what's the trend?
- Socio-economic - who works here where & at what?
- Environmental issues – e.g. flooding, air quality issues?
- Designations – e.g. heritage, landscape and wildlife?
- Transport – e.g. bus services, capacity, usage?
- Infrastructure – e.g. road capacity and fitness for purpose?
- Housing stock – e.g. type, tenure, condition, future need?
- Land uses – e.g. potential, suitable development sites?
- Existing evidence – e.g. National Stat's, current council plans?
- Consultation – e.g. questionnaires/community engagement?
- Other – e.g. specialist reports and other research?

Neighbourhood Plan Key Messages:

- It can manage and influence the way in which your parish is developed and what your community priorities are.
- Any type of community or development aspiration can be taken into account.
- It can be a real focus on what makes your parish special, what you want to improve, what you want to protect, where you want to see new development and to what design.
- It is not just an ambitions document, once adopted the plan has legally to be taken into account as part of the Council's planning application decision making process.
- It takes priority over the Council's own Local Plan Policies at a detailed level in relation to planning decision making, but it's aims must be aligned.
- It has to comply with the Council and National strategic policies on housing growth needs and legislation requirements.
- The plan is community and evidence led, meaning it is informed by people and it must evidence their involvement.
- When adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan is a powerful, legally recognised document which expresses the development needs and aspirations of the community. So, get them involved, let them have their say.
- It is a living document which should be regularly reviewed and updated by the Parish Council (at least every five years).