

Neighbourhood Planning Note Frequently Asked Questions

1 What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a new type of plan which will focus on very local areas, to be produced by communities with Parish and Town Councils, with the assistance of the Council. Policies included in neighbourhood plans will need to be related to the use of land in the area, or to spatial matters (i.e. aspects that affect how a place works). When adopted, they will form part of the overall development plan for North Warwickshire and be used to consider all planning applications in that area, in the context of the North Warwickshire Core Strategy.

2 What does a Neighbourhood Plan do?

A Neighbourhood Plan gives local people a chance to create a planning document that guides and shapes development in their local area, and to influence what facilities are provided in the area as a result.

3 Can we stop development from happening in our area?

No - a Neighbourhood Plan can guide development to be more appropriate to local context and help decide where it goes, but the government has made it clear that it is not a tool to be used to stop development.

4 Will Neighbourhood Plans allocate land?

This will depend on what the community wants to include in their plan but the plan is able to allocate land if required.

5 What is the process for starting a Neighbourhood Forum?

It will be useful to ask the Forward Planning Team to help set up a workshop where issues and ideas are gathered from local people about their area.

The community may then want to set up a **Neighbourhood Forum** and **Steering Group**. The Forum should be made up of members of the community including local residents, business owners, local Borough/ Parish or Town Councillors, and may include land owners or developers. People can then volunteer to be on the steering group or to participate in other ways. Forums may find it helpful to have the first few workshops /meetings led by the Council officers, but after this point it is expected that the local steering group members will guide discussions and make decisions about how to progress the plan. The Forward Planning Team will be available to provide assistance and support where appropriate.

The Forum Steering Group will manage the production of the Plan. They will arrange community events or consultations with the wider community and will need to ensure that the plan is realistic and robust.

6 What is the timeframe?

It is expected that Neighbourhood Plans will take approximately 2 years from start to finish.

7 Is the Council still progressing a Core Strategy or just Neighbourhood Plans?

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The Council is still progressing with the Core Strategy which will span the whole of North Warwickshire and contain overarching Strategic Policies. It is also continuing to prepare:

- Site Allocations Plan
- Development Management Plan
- Gypsy & Travellers Plan

Neighbourhood Plans are able to develop in tandem with the Core Strategy and these other documents.

A Neighbourhood Plan which includes the issues to be covered by these later documents will be excluded from those documents in order to avoid duplication.

8 If we have a Neighbourhood Plan does this mean that we don't have to use the Local Plan or Core Strategy?

No - the Local Plan remains part of the development plan and will continue to be used to determine planning applications until superseded by the Core Strategy. Neighbourhood Plans will form a new tier of planning at a very local level. They need to conform to the overarching adopted Core Strategy for North Warwickshire but will form part of the **development plan** for their area.

9 Which carries more planning weight – a Neighbourhood Plan or the North Warwickshire Local Plan?

The weight (importance) that is attached to a particular policy can only be decided when considering a specific proposal. At a general level, when adopted, Neighbourhood Plans and the Local Plan or Adopted Core Strategy should complement each other. Planning decisions will be based primarily around policies in adopted Neighbourhood Plans and the Local Plan/Core Strategy.

10 I'm a developer – do I have to use Neighbourhood Plans when putting in planning applications?

Yes - planning applications will need to have regard to all relevant policy

11 How does a Neighbourhood Plan get adopted as planning policy?

To get adopted, current guidance requires the plan to be approved by the Council, then an independent examination, and be subject to a local referendum gaining a 50 per cent level of support. Further details on this will be made available at the time.

12 How do I get involved in neighbourhood planning?

Either email or phone the relevant Parish Council Clerk for your area, or contact the Forward Planning Team. (planningpolicy@northwarks.gov.uk or 01827 719499)

13 How much will it cost and why has my area not received funding from central government?

The Government has a rolling programme of funding for key neighbourhood initiatives. However, the cost of delivering Neighbourhood Plans is likely to exceed the funding from Government and Neighbourhood Forums may wish to establish other funding initiatives in partnership with the Council, the Private sector and other agencies.

14 The Process

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Set out below is a simplified flow chart of the process involved in progressing a Neighbourhood Plan:

NPA = Neighbourhood Planning Authority

LPA = North Warwickshire Borough Council is the Local Planning Authority

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