

LEEDS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING GUIDANCE

Guidance for local communities
and others who are interested in
neighbourhood planning in Leeds



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Purpose of this guide

This guidance note is aimed at helping communities decide whether to get involved in neighbourhood planning and to help them prepare a neighbourhood plan if they do.

This guide covers:

- introduction to neighbourhood plans and neighbourhood planning;
- the steps communities should follow when they are preparing a neighbourhood plan;
- the role of the Council;
- support and assistance available.

Neighbourhood planning presents many opportunities for local communities but it is important to be aware that the preparation of a neighbourhood plan could be a substantial undertaking which may take significant time and effort. Therefore, this guide outlines both the opportunities and some of the challenges.

What is neighbourhood planning?

The Localism Act 2011 introduced major reforms to the planning system that gives local communities new rights to shape and plan their neighbourhood.

The Act introduces a new initiative called the **neighbourhood plan**. A neighbourhood plan is optional. The decision to prepare a neighbourhood plan is made by the local community. They can be used to set out policies for the development or use of land but they must be 'pro development'. They are primarily town planning documents but there is nothing to stop local communities including 'non town planning' aspects. This is particularly encouraged in Leeds.

The Act also includes new powers for local communities to prepare a **Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)** for their area, which will be able to promote a particular type of development.

Related to the NDO, is the **Community Right to Build Order (CRtB)** and this will provide for community-led site development.

Local communities may also be interested in applying to the Council to have a valued area designated as a **Local Green Space**.

This guidance note focuses mainly on neighbourhood development plans, as that is the greatest level of interest in Leeds at the moment. However, this note will be updated to reflect local needs as they change.

For regular updates on neighbourhood planning check www.leeds.gov.uk/Planning.

Neighbourhood Plan

A neighbourhood plan can be used to decide where new development takes place, what it should look like and other aspects of community interest.

A **neighbourhood plan** cannot be used to stop development already allocated or permitted, or propose less development than that in the Local Development Plan (The Core Strategy and the Site Allocations Plan).

It can, however, propose more development than the Local Development Plan.

This new process provides an opportunity for local communities to work with the Council on the allocation of sites as well as other corporate objectives, such as improving equality, cohesion and integration and recognising diversity. Specifically, a neighbourhood plan could allow local communities to:

- choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built
- have their say on what those new buildings should look like
- include other matters in their plan that are important to them

See Appendix 1 for ('10 tips for a successful neighbourhood plan').

Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO)

A **Neighbourhood Development Order** (NDO) is a new tool intended to streamline the planning system and stimulate economic development. It will permit certain types of development without the need for planning permission (in a similar way to the Local Development Orders promoted by the Council in respect of the Enterprise Zone). This could relate to a particular type of development (for example, low carbon) or it could relate to a particular use (for example residential or retail). They can apply to all or part of a neighbourhood area and can be included as part of a neighbourhood plan, but can also be brought forward separately. They can also be linked to the Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

The procedure that will lead to the adoption of a NDO is in many respects identical to that for making a Neighbourhood Plan, including independent examination, consultation with and participation by the public and holding of a referendum.

Community Right to Build (CRtB)

A **Community Right to Build Order** (CRtB) is a particular type of neighbourhood development order and these are intended to allow local communities to build, design and run a facility which they feel is needed in their neighbourhood. The community right to build organisation must be a constituted group of at least 10 un-related members who live in the particular area (i.e. living in different dwellings to each other) and set out a clear statement that the organisation will carry out its activities for the benefit of the community. Any profits made as a result of community right to build orders must be distributed among the organisation's members.

Local Green Space

Local communities are also now able to apply to the Council to have a valued local green area designated a **Local Green Space** (LGS). Speak to the Council about this at an early stage to discuss the opportunities in your area.

To be designated a Local Green Space, sites must meet the following criteria:

- Will be in reasonably close proximity to a centre of population;
- Is demonstrably special to a local community and holds particular local significance;
- Is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

Why prepare a neighbourhood plan?

Developing a neighbourhood plan can help communities play a greater role in how their area changes in the future and will bring together a wide range of people who live, work, visit or do business in an area.

The preparation of the plan will help create new and lasting partnerships, for example between public services, business and the voluntary sector.

Neighbourhood planning could help local communities agree a vision for their area, agree planning priorities and prioritise projects to be delivered when funding comes along.

Although neighbourhood plans are primarily about the use of land and other planning matters, they are also an opportunity to establish community priorities, improve service delivery and enhance local regeneration initiatives.

Other options

A neighbourhood plan may not be right for every community. There may be other types of plan that are more suited to meeting the needs of your neighbourhood, including:

- Regeneration frameworks
- Parish/Town Plans
- Village /Neighbourhood Design Statements
- Conservation Area Appraisals
- Local design guides
- Community led action plans
- Vision statements

The Council can offer further advice on this. See contact details on page 23.

Timescales

From start to finish it could take about 18 months – 2 years to get your neighbourhood plan to a referendum. The timing will generally depend on the issues and complexity of your plan and if any objections have been made.

Conformity with the Council's Core Strategy, the National Planning Framework and ensuring that your plan is responsive to local needs and working with the Council throughout the process will help you reach examination with minimum delay.

Costs

The cost of preparing a plan will vary widely depending on the complexity and size of the neighbourhood. The starting point should be – the more local communities can do for themselves, the less the plan will cost.

The type of costs that would be incurred include hiring of rooms for meetings, publicity, professional fees (perhaps to investigate a technical issue), public consultation events, the preparation of an up to date evidence base as well as drafting and printing of plans.

Some communities may wish to consider sponsorship and fundraising to assist in the preparation of the plan.

The Council and others are able to assist. Appendix 2 provides information on organisations that may be able to assist.

Speak to the Council if you plan to spend significant sums of money on any aspect of a neighbourhood plan. It may be that you do not need to or there may be assistance available elsewhere.

You can potentially save money by making best use of the skills and talent that exists within your local community. For example, there may be an amateur photographer that could assist, or a retired surveyor or perhaps a student seeking experience.

Who can be involved?

Parish or town councils will initiate and lead on the process in parished and town council areas and in other areas a neighbourhood forum will need to be set up.

Whether you are a parish council, town council or/a neighbourhood forum you should seek to involve a wide variety of interests in the preparation of your plan, including:

- Residents (including those who rarely get involved in planning/community matters)
- Elected representatives
- Community organisations
- Business
- Landowners
- Developers
- Voluntary organisations
- Special interest/amenity
- West Yorkshire Police
- Health practitioners

Working together

The Council, local communities and business will need to work together if neighbourhood planning is to be successful. This table outlines the main responsibilities and the type of approach that is needed from all parties:

Key responsibilities and Working Together

Leeds City Council

Key responsibilities

1. 'Duty to support'
2. Designate Neighbourhood Area
3. Designate Neighbourhood Forum
4. Ensure compliance with statutory and EU requirements
5. Advise examiner on representations received and other matters
6. Fund and organise examination
7. Consider examiner's recommendations
8. Fund and organise Referendas
9. Duty to adopt

Working together

Cooperation
Support
Transparency
Face-to-face contact
Plain English
Building trust
Understanding
Learning lessons
Solution-focussed

Parish/Town Council, Neighbourhood Forum

Key responsibilities

1. Identify the need to prepare plan
2. Identify key issues and vision
3. Submit application for neighbourhood area
4. Submit application to be neighbourhood forum (if relevant)
5. Prepare evidence to support proposals
6. Consult and engage
7. Prepare documents/plans
8. Ensure compliance with EU directives and national policy/local plan (including carrying out sustainability appraisal/strategic environmental assessment as necessary)
9. Submit plan for independent examination

Support from Leeds City Council

The Council will work with communities to support them through the neighbourhood planning process by:

- **Quick and transparent decision-making** (on the designation of neighbourhood areas, designation of neighbourhood forums);
- **The effective management of Council responsibilities** (for example, appointment of independent examiner, arrangements for a referendum);
- **Implementation** (planning approvals will be granted in accordance with adopted neighbourhood plans and other aspects where possible)

More specifically, the Council's '**duty to support**' will include the following:

- Enhance existing working relationships with town and parish councils and build new relationships with neighbourhood forums;
- Meet local communities interested in neighbourhood planning at an early stage, setting out the general and area specific level of support that can be provided ;
- Assist local communities to prepare a plan that will be fit for Independent examination. This will include advising on planning issues and ensuring that other issues are 'joined up';
- Attendance at briefings and meetings (subject to officer availability);
- Provide advice and mediate as required;

- Advise on consultation and engagement;
- Advice on how neighbourhood planning can support regeneration, service delivery and other matters.

The Council will also assist all communities with specific requests for **technical assistance**. Subject to reasonable requests, the Council will provide copies of the following:

- Area and site plans (subject to printing charge);
- Technical reports/extracts (subject to printing charge);
- Technical information held on sites (subject to printing charge);
- Any other technical information that is in the public domain (subject to printing charge).

In addition to this guide, the Council's webpage offers updates and a series of advice notes.

Funding and other support

Locality and Planning Aid England will help with designations and the preparation of your neighbourhood plan. See mycommunityrights.org for further information.

Neighbourhood planning surgeries

Informal discussions with Council officers will help you get the support and advice that you need. If you would like to book an appointment contact npsupport@leeds.gov.uk

The role of the Parish Council, Town Council or Neighbourhood Forum

The parish council, town council or neighbourhood Forum will initiate and lead the process of formulating a Neighbourhood Plan. It is important that the plan is not prepared in isolation from the rest of the community. There is a need to consider how to engage all residents, as well as, for example: community groups, local ward members, local authorities, statutory agencies (Highways, Environment Agency etc), local organisations, landowners, development interests, social networks and enterprises who might have an interest in the neighbourhood. It is also important to engage with groups often described as 'hard-to-reach' who may have specific needs that should be reflected in the plan.

A Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group could prepare the plan and bring in expertise as appropriate. Members of a steering group could include elected members, local landowners/ developers, other stakeholders (amenity/ environmental groups) as well as members of the community.

The role of business, developers and landowners

Business, developers and landowners have an important role to play in the neighbourhood planning process by working with local communities. Not only do they have an important role to play in your neighbourhood, they can also be a valuable source of help:

- Advising (for example, on viability, delivery, sustainability)
- Assisting (for example, with fundraising)
- Sponsorship
- Early consultation and engagement

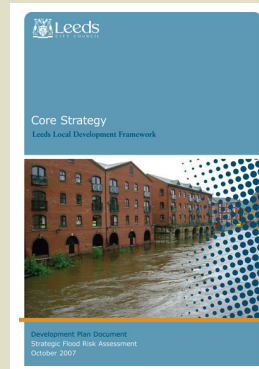
It is clear from the examinations that have been held to date, that the involvement of business, developers and landowners is critical for a successful neighbourhood plan.

Making neighbourhood planning documents complementary

The Core Strategy

What is it?

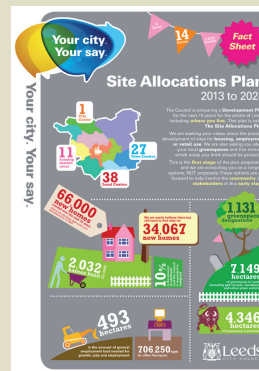
The Core Strategy is the main document setting out the strategic level Policies and Vision to guide the delivery of development and investment decisions and the overall future for the Leeds district. It plans for the longer term regeneration and growth of the district over a 15 year period.



The Site Allocations Plan

What is the Site Allocations Plan?

The Site Allocations Plan will allocate sites that will help to deliver the Leeds Core Strategy long term spatial vision, objectives and policies. This is to ensure that sufficient land is available in appropriate locations to meet the targets set out in the Core Strategy. It will cover housing, employment, retail and green space allocations.



How does a Neighbourhood Plan relate to the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with both the Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plan. However, it can influence which sites come forward in the Site Allocations Plan, as well as

identify new sites the community want to see developed. Once adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan will be a statutory consideration and will carry the same weight as the Core Strategy in determining planning applications.



Vision for Leeds

What is it?

Leeds City Council's Vision for 2030 is to be the best city in the UK, that

- 1) Leeds will be fair, open and welcoming;
- 2) Leeds' economy will be prosperous and sustainable; and
- 3) All Leeds' communities will be successful. The Council will continue to work in partnership with others and with local communities to achieve the best for the people of Leeds.

How does it relate to neighbourhood planning?

The Vision for Leeds will promote strong communities with confidence and a clear sense of belonging, where people are active and involved in their local area and give power to local people to make decisions that affect them. Neighbourhood planning fits well into this approach and will help to deliver the principles and ambitions of the Vision for Leeds.

HOW TO PREPARE A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

There are two main stages:

STAGE 1 – EARLY ENGAGEMENT, AGREEMENT & DESIGNATION

It is essential at an early stage to agree that there is both a need for a neighbourhood plan and a willingness for the community to get involved. Once this has been done, an application can be made to be designated a neighbourhood area/neighbourhood forum.

STAGE 2 – PREPARING THE PLAN

Neighbourhood planning at its best is about partnership working and working with a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that your plan is as good as it can be – this includes everything from ensuring that a correct process is followed to providing the evidence to back-up your policies and proposals.



STAGE 1 – EARLY ENGAGEMENT, AGREEMENT & DESIGNATION

a) For parished and town council areas

You must undertake early engagement on the need for a plan, the issues that people who live, work and do business have in the area and possible content of the plan.

TIP – ensure that early discussions are recorded, use minutes and notes of meetings to build up an evidence base

An application must be made to the Council to be designated a neighbourhood area. Before the application is made, speak to the Council about the appropriate boundary for your plan.

Agreeing a Neighbourhood Plan boundary

The Neighbourhood Plan area must be one that includes the whole or any part of the area of the parish. It is also possible to work with neighbouring parishes to produce a Neighbourhood Plan for a cluster of villages covering two or more parish areas.

If the Neighbourhood Plan includes any part of the area of another parish council, the lead parish council is only authorised to prepare a plan if the other parish council(s) have given their consent.

TIP – speak to local people about the issues that are important to them, this will help to decide where the neighbourhood area boundary should be

TIP – speak to the Council at an early stage about the appropriateness of the parish boundary as a neighbourhood area. The parish boundary may not always be the most appropriate boundary

Application for designation as a neighbourhood area

Once the Council receives the application it will be advertised for a period of 6 weeks. An advert will be placed in the local newspaper to let people who live, work and do business in the area know that an application has been made. Further details, including the proposed boundary and the supporting statement will be available to view locally and on the Council's website.

The application must include:

- A statement confirming that the organisation making the application is either a parish council or a town council;
- A map which identifies the area to which the proposed neighbourhood plan will relate;
- A statement stating why the boundary is an appropriate one.

TIP – when you submit your application, include a clear statement on why you think the proposed boundary is the right one

TIP – When the application is being publicised (6 week period) use this period to raise awareness and sign up volunteers

Designation of neighbourhood area

When the Council confirms designation as a neighbourhood area it is recommended that parish and town councils meet with officers to discuss next stages in the preparation of their plan. The Council will be able to help to ensure that the plan is fit for independent examination.

b) For non-parished areas

Undertake early engagement on the need for a plan, the issues that people who live, work and do business have in the area and begin to think about possible content of the plan. At this point the Council will work with you to agree the support that is needed.

There are 3 key steps that non-parished areas need to follow:

- 1 Agreeing a neighbourhood boundary
- 2 Designation as a neighbourhood area
- 3 Designation as a neighbourhood forum

1 Agreeing a Neighbourhood boundary

For many urban or inner-city areas the boundaries of a 'neighbourhood' are not always obvious. The starting point should be to ask people who live, work and do business locally about the issues that affect them.

TIP – Plot the issues on a plan, this can help make sense of local issues and give pointers to an appropriate boundary.

In considering an appropriate boundary, consider the following:

- Are there physical features that help define the neighbourhood? (roads, railway lines, motorways etc)
- Where are the main facilities?
- Are there historical boundaries that still apply?
- Are there local designations such as Conservation Areas?
- Are there local character areas? (housing types, design features etc)

2 Designation as a neighbourhood area

On receipt of an application Leeds City Council will advertise the proposal for 6 weeks. An advert will be placed in the local newspaper to bring to the attention of people who live, do business and work in the area. The application must include:

- a plan showing the boundary of the proposed neighbourhood area;
- a statement that explains why the community consider that their proposed area is appropriate to be a neighbourhood plan area; and
- a statement that the organisation making the application is, or is capable of being, designated as, a neighbourhood forum (see the section on Setting up a neighbourhood forum below).

TIP TIP – Work with the Council on the proposed boundary prior to the application

TIP TIP – When the application is being advertised (6 week period) use this period to raise awareness

Once the Council confirms the Neighbourhood Area designation, the next step is to submit an application to be designated a neighbourhood forum (although this could also be done in parallel)

3 Designation of a Neighbourhood Forum

To be designated a neighbourhood forum there must be a constituted group of **21** people who represent a cross section of the people who live, work and do business in the area.

An application will need to be made to Leeds City Council and must include the following:

- The name of the proposed neighbourhood forum;
- A copy of the written constitution of the proposed neighbourhood forum;
- The name of the neighbourhood area to which the application relates and a map which identifies the area;
- The contact details of at least one member of the proposed neighbourhood forum.

TIP TIP – work with the Council to agree a constitution that will meet the specific needs of your neighbourhood

It is important that neighbourhood forums are inclusive and representative of your community. Therefore, your application should include:

- evidence of how you have engaged with different sections of the community and included them in the forum where possible;
- evidence on how you have engaged across the different parts of the area;
- details of which groups and stakeholders you have engaged with (or have made efforts to engage with);

- your intentions for engagement as the neighbourhood plan progresses and those who you intend to involve.

TIP

TIP – speak to the Council at an early stage who will be happy to advise you on the make up of your forum and whether it meets the legal standards and will check draft applications before they are formally submitted

STAGE 2 – PREPARING THE PLAN

There is no rule on what a Neighbourhood Plan should look like but it should contain a plan and clear policy statements and proposals (where relevant), alongside relevant accompanying maps. Planning Aid England will assist with all aspects of plan preparation, except writing the plan. You can apply for support via mycommunityrights.org

TIP – In your plan be clear on what is a proposal, a policy or an aspiration (see FAQ for an explanation)

TIP – The Council and others can advise on how best to ensure that your plan promotes equality in your neighbourhood

Step 1 – Organisational

There are no set rules about how you organise neighbourhood planning in your area but experience so far in Leeds has shown the following to be effective:

- **Establish a neighbourhood planning team or steering group** – include cross-representation of people who live, work or do business in your community, including residents; representatives of community organisations; business owners; landowners and local councillors
- Set up a **working group** responsible for drafting the Neighbourhood Plan and for securing engagement and input from the community and stakeholders.

- **Consider who can help** your prepare your plan. Balance those with ideas with those who can offer practical skills, such as minute taking, design, report writing etc.
- Produce a **project plan** or programme to consider:
 - a. What activities will need to be carried out at each stage - meetings, publicity, surveys, events
 - b. What resources will be needed to carry out these activities - people, materials, funding
 - c. How much time should be set aside to accomplish each stage?
- **Develop a communications strategy** – good publicity and communication both at the start of the process and throughout are key to keeping the community involved & getting their support. Think about how engagement will happen with the wider community even at this early stage.

TIP – To encourage people to join your forum, show how neighbourhood planning could be relevant to their needs and desires

Step 2 – Identify the issues (Community Profiling)

- Gather together relevant information and evidence – from both official statistics (suggested list of websites at Appendix 4) and surveys of local people;
- Community profiling – gather statistical data to build up a social portrait of neighbourhood & community characteristics;
- Gather information from any existing plans, strategies or studies relating to the neighbourhood (see Appendix 2 for detail);
- Initial discussions with stakeholders;
- There may be a need to tailor techniques for different sectors of the community (e.g. online survey for young people, visiting an elderly persons' home to meet with individuals to hear views on the neighbourhood);
- Identify the area's strengths and weaknesses.

TIP – look at www.westyorkshireobservatory.org for up to date statistics for your neighbourhood

TIP – a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is a good starting point to understand your neighbourhood better and to establish early agreement

Step 3 – Develop a Vision and Objectives

The Vision will be an overarching statement, or series of statements, describing what the community will be like to live and work in, within 15-20 years time. The time scale should reflect the Core Strategy which plans up to 2028.

The objectives should set out what the community wants to achieve in order to help realise the vision. It is important that the vision is realistic and achievable and that it is based on the information gathered.

- Analyse information gathered including what implications these plans have for the neighbourhood;
- Draft the vision and objectives – these should be realistic and achievable and based on the information gathered;
- Check draft vision and objectives with community – endorsement could be sought in a variety of ways including;
 - a. Making copies available for public distribution and asking for comments;
 - b. Meeting with community groups and asking for their feedback;
 - c. Organising informal discussion groups;
 - d. Holding public meetings or drop-in events;
 - e. Publishing information in the local newsletter/magazine/website and providing an address to receive people's feedback.

TIP – ensure that proposals are backed up by evidence as the examiner will require this when assessing your neighbourhood plan

TIP – When considering sustainability issues think about the environmental, economic and social impacts of your plan proposals.

Step 4 – Consider options for your draft Neighbourhood Plan

Do not attempt to draft the plan without considering options. As well as considering options you also need to evidence that options have been considered.

TIP – It is recommended that a ‘do nothing’ option is considered. For example, if a neighbourhood plan was not to be prepared, what would happen?

To help you, your neighbourhood planning steering group and local community should be given the opportunity to assess the following:

- Have the right options been considered?
- Are there any other options?
- Which option(s) do you prefer and why?

This step is important in demonstrating that local people do have a say in the content of the plan.

Sustainability is at the heart of considering options. Sustainability must be considered and evidenced. This does not mean that local communities will be required to undertake a sustainability appraisal for everything they do but it would be good practice for significant aspects of your plan.

TIP – At a simple level list the social, economic and environmental impacts of options for your plan

A simple report should be prepared to show how sustainability has been considered, explaining why the policies it has included in the plan are the most appropriate ones.

Step 5 – Drafting the plan

The vision and objectives of your plan should be set out clearly at the beginning.

The plan may include a mixture of policies, proposals and aspirations. The exact mix will have been determined by the results of consultation and engagement, deliverability and sustainability factors.

It is recommended that your draft Neighbourhood Plan includes a **‘proposals map’**. A proposals map shows which areas of land have been allocated for which uses (and linked to policies in the Neighbourhood Plan) and areas that are to be protected from development (again linked to policies in your Neighbourhood Plan). There should be a clear key. Linkages to neighbouring areas should be highlighted where appropriate.

Step 6 – Pre-Submission Consultation and Publicity

Before the final draft of your plan is submitted to the Council for examination, you need to consult on your draft plan and make any amendments as a result. Consultation will be your responsibility.

You will be required to demonstrate that people who live, work and do business in your neighbourhood have been given an opportunity to comment. You will be required to consult for a period of no less than 6 weeks, providing details of where and when the draft plan can be inspected and how to make representations.

In particular:

- Check proposals with landowners or site-owners to ensure any proposals are deliverable and realistic
- Check draft Neighbourhood Plan with community and other stakeholders to ensure there is general support
- Check with the Council to ensure that policies, proposals and aspirations are sustainable

Some bodies **must be** consulted on your draft Neighbourhood Plan if it proposes development that could affect their interests. The plan should be sent to wider stakeholders including Leeds City Council, the Environment Agency, Water Utilities, Natural England, West Yorkshire Police as well as key stakeholders in the local community. Neighbouring parishes, forums, local authorities should also be consulted.

TIP - Before consulting, check with the Council that everything is in order as this will make the consultation more meaningful and will save you having to do it again

Once consultation has been carried out an analysis of comments should be made. Consider any amendments that need to be made to the draft plan as a result of the consultation before final submission to the Council.

TIP – a good consultation statement is one which sets out who was consulted, what was said and how the draft plan has changed as a result. Where the plan has not changed as a result of comments it should say why.

Step 7 – Your Neighbourhood Plan Proposal

When you submit your revised draft neighbourhood plan to the Council you should do the following :

- outline the area covered by your neighbourhood plan
- set out how local people and stakeholders were consulted, who was consulted, what was said and how feedback influenced the plan (a consultation statement)
- check that your plan is in conformity with national policies / guidance;
- check that your plan is in general conformity with Leeds City Council's strategic policies
- check that your plan is compatible with European Union obligations

- show that special regard has been paid to the desirability of preserving any Listed Building and its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest (if relevant);
- show that special regard has been paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas (if relevant);
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

When the Council receives the plan proposal it will be publicised on the Council's website and an advertisement will be placed in a local newspaper to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the local area. At this point the Council will:

- check that the contents of the draft neighbourhood plan and the way that has been prepared meet the statutory requirements;
- check if the plan meets the requirements and therefore it is ready to be submitted for an independent examination (see below);
- check whether the draft neighbourhood plan has been prepared in accordance with the provisions introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012;
- check the plan is consistent with the strategic elements of the Council's planning policies;
- check the plan is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- check the plan is in line with relevant planning and other legislation and regulations.

The Council will carry out a final check to ensure that your Neighbourhood Plan and all accompanying documents comply with legal requirements. Once the Council is satisfied that

everything is in order, we will formally publicise that you have submitted a Neighbourhood Plan. At this point those who live, work or carry on business in the area covered by your Neighbourhood Plan can submit further comments to the local planning authority who will pass them on to the examiner.

Step 8 - Independent Examination

Leeds City Council will facilitate and fund the independent examination into the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Council will consult parish and town councils and neighbourhood forums and agree who should be appointed to undertake an independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. The main function of the examination will be to check that the Neighbourhood Plan conforms with:

- The strategic content of the Local Plan and neighbouring Neighbourhood Plans
- The National Planning Policy Framework and/or other national policies and advice (including a demonstration that the proposals in the Plan are evidence based, deliverable and viable)
- European Directives on subjects such as International Nature Conservation designations, Sustainability, Human Rights and Equalities
- National and international designations (e.g. Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas)

The examination will also:

- consider comments, supporting or objecting, made during consultation on the plan;

- check that the plan is consistent with any neighbourhood plans for adjacent areas;
- consider whether the area for the referendum should extend beyond the neighbourhood area.

The result of the examination will be a report that will have one of the following recommendations for consideration by Leeds City Council:

- That the draft Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum
- That it should proceed to a referendum, subject to certain amendments
- That the proposed Neighbourhood Plan should be refused.

The Council and parish council, town council or neighbourhood forum will then consider how to proceed; for example, what modifications to make to the plan in response to the examiner's recommendations.

Step 9 – Referendum

Leeds City Council will organise and pay for the local referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan.

The referendum will normally be open to any individual registered to vote in the parish or neighbourhood area, but the referendum may be extended to a wider area if appropriate.

For the plan to be adopted, more than 50% of those who vote must register their support for the plan. If this happens, Leeds City Council will adopt the neighbourhood plan.

Step 10 – Adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan

When a neighbourhood plan has been passed by the examiner and agreed in the referendum the Council will adopt the plan.

The neighbourhood plan will sit alongside the Council's other adopted plans as the basis for decisions on planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

Step 11 – Implementing & Monitoring the Plan

Leeds City Council, the town/parish council or neighbourhood forum will work together to implement and monitor the plan. The details of this will depend on the plan itself but will largely relate to decisions on planning applications, enforcement (where necessary), service delivery (where appropriate) and regeneration (where appropriate).

TIP – prepare an implementation plan and work with the council and others on delivery, including timescales, viability and monitoring

You do not have to opt for a neighbourhood plan if you do not want to. You could have your plan adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) instead (speak to the Council about this and other options).

TIP

Appendix 1

10 TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

1 Agree local issues

Before you put pen to paper, spend time speaking to people who live, work and do business locally to fully understand local issues

2 Agree a timescale

Think about what you would like to see and when, both in the short and longer term

3 Work with the Council

Work with the Council from the start, including planning officers and Area Teams

4 Involve others

Involve people who live, work and do business in your neighbourhood as well as those who can help you deliver your plan, for example voluntary organisations and business

5 Be realistic

When preparing your plan be clear what a neighbourhood plan can and can't do, focussing on what should be a policy or a proposal and what should be an aspiration

6 Follow local and national policy

In particular, the Unitary Development Plan, The Core Strategy and National Planning Policy Framework

7 Follow legal requirements

Check with the Council that you are following equality, human rights and environmental protection legislation

8 Be Pro-growth

Your plan can't promote less growth than the Core Strategy, but it can promote more

9 Promote sustainability

Make your neighbourhood more sustainable by focussing on meeting needs locally

10 Consult and engage

Consulting and engaging is not only a requirement but it will help make your plan as good as it can be, tailor-made to local needs

Further information and support

1) Leeds City Council:

Ian Mackay - Team Leader

Telephone: (0113) 2478079

Email: ian.mackay@leeds.gov.uk

Heather Suggate

Telephone: (0113) 2478084

Email: heather.suggate@leeds.gov.uk

Website: www.leeds.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

2) Locality:

Manages neighbourhood planning funding and support nationally.

Website: www.mycommunityrights.org

Tel: 0845 345 4564

Mon-fri 9.30am - 12.30pm

3) Planning Aid England:

Provides independent planning advice and support to communities preparing their neighbourhood plans.

Website: www.rtpi.org.uk

4) Planning Advisory Service:

A free online resource for planners and communities.

Website: www.pas.gov.uk

5) Department for Communities and Local Government:

A useful resource for neighbourhood planning, policy announcements and more.

Website: www.gov.uk



neighbourhood planning



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