

Neighbourhood Planning Newsletter

Summer 2018



Welcome to the Summer 2018 edition of our Neighbourhood Planning Newsletter. This is the second of our newsletters, the purpose of which is to keep you updated throughout the year with the latest news on neighbourhood planning in England, including Central Government policy and regulation changes, Grant Funding and other relevant information.

This newsletter reports on publication of the new version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the changes this makes to neighbourhood planning. It also reports on the duty-to-support that local planning authorities are required to provide towards neighbourhood planning, financial support for this, and a recent Court Judgment that will have a bearing on neighbourhood planning.

As a team of town planners, designers and community planners we specialise in providing tailored support to Parish and Town Councils and Neighbourhood Forums. Our work ranges from preparing whole Neighbourhood Plans to acting as a 'critical friend' at key stages of the process. In addition to our work on Neighbourhood Plans we can help represent groups as part of the Local Authority Local Plan and Planning Application process, including preparing representations and attending hearings on their behalf.

We are an independently owned company and have offices in London, Manchester and Hampshire so are able to work across the country. I hope you find this Newsletter useful and informative. Please get in touch if you think you may need professional support for your project or if you would like to better understand Government's recent changes to policy, regulations and grant funding.

Don't forget to subscribe to our newsletters to stay up to date with the latest on neighbourhood planning. [Subscribe here.](#)

Kind Regards,



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RTPI
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Revised National Planning Policy Framework

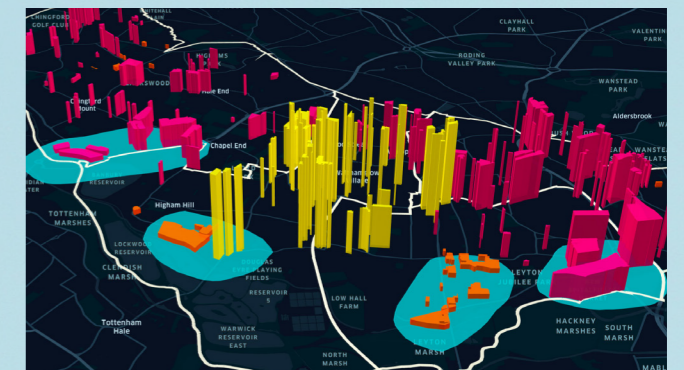
July 2018 saw publication of the Revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policy for England and how it should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development, including Neighbourhood Plans, can be produced. The revised NPPF can be accessed [here](#).

Impact on Neighbourhood Planning

First and foremost, the NPPF supports the role of Neighbourhood Plans in the plan-making process and notes that they can shape a vision and direct the type of new development that will take place in the plan area. Key points for neighbourhood planning in the NPPF include:

- Once a Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in a Local Plan covering the neighbourhood area. This essentially gives Neighbourhood Plans a stronger voice in influencing the shape of development in the local area.
- Stronger protection is now afforded for areas with 'made' Neighbourhood Plans but no up-to-date Local Plan – so long as the Neighbourhood Plan was adopted less than two years ago, meets its housing requirement and the local authority can demonstrate a three-year supply of land for housing.
- Local authorities should provide designated Neighbourhood Plan areas with a housing need figure to be planned for.

- Local Planning Authorities should promote the development of small and medium-sized sites and deliver at least 10% of their housing requirement through these. However, this target can be adjusted through preparation of Neighbourhood Plans.
- Neighbourhood Plans can play an important role in identifying the special qualities of each area and how this should be reflected in development. Given that the NPPF says that design should not be a reason for refusal where applications conform with local policies, it is crucial that any design policies put in place are clearly set out and based upon the character and quality of place.
- Where the local authority has established that green belt boundaries should be reviewed, detailed amendments to those can be made through Neighbourhood Plans.



The Duty-to-Support and local authority funding update

Duty-to-Support

The Localism Act outlines that all Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) have a duty to support neighbourhood planning groups which are taking forward a Neighbourhood Plan in their area. It is for individual LPAs to determine the level of support they deem appropriate, though this often includes the provision of information and review of emerging policies.

New legislation came into effect on 31 July which now requires LPAs to clearly set out the support they will give to neighbourhood planning groups in their 'Statement of Community Involvement'. This is a document that LPAs already prepare, outlining how they will involve the community in local planning applications and in Local Plan making. This now extends to neighbourhood planning.

These changes also state that LPAs have a responsibility to conclude each stage of the neighbourhood planning process promptly and that certain decisions must be taken within prescribed time periods.

From our experience it is important to engage with the LPA at an early stage and maintain regular contact through the plan-making process to ensure effective communication and support throughout. It is good practice to agree a memorandum of understanding at the outset of the process to agree the level and type of support that will be provided, and when. This enables both parties to know what is expected from them during the process.

Local authority funding update

The government recently updated the LPA arrangements for claiming financial support for neighbourhood planning for 2018/19.

LPAs can now claim an additional £20,000 when substantive modifications are required to a Neighbourhood Plan and which would involve examination and a new referendum. It is only after a successful examination and the setting of a new referendum that the LPA is eligible to make this claim. Once a claim has been submitted, further claims for revision to that specific Neighbourhood Plan will be restricted to one every five years.

Additionally, LPAs can claim a further £5,000 for the first five neighbourhood areas or forums they designate; this includes designations that have been made previously. LPAs can also claim a further £10,000 once they have set a date for a referendum following a successful examination of a business-led Neighbourhood Plan.

This money is to help LPAs meet their neighbourhood planning duties as introduced by the Localism Act 2011.

Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) - Important Court Decision for Neighbourhood Plans

It is a requirement that all Neighbourhood Plans are 'screened' by the Local Planning Authority to determine whether they should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is often required where a Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for development, or where there are sensitive environmental areas in or near to the plan area that are protected under the EU Habitats Directive. These include Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). In total, there are 254 SACs and 88 SPAs in England.

Until now, many Local and Neighbourhood Plans have included policies that encourage certain types of development, subject to planning applications and proposals demonstrating that any impacts on sensitive environments could be mitigated.

However, a recent Court Judgment (People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta) has said that such an approach is no longer appropriate. Rather, if it is thought that a policy might lead to a development requiring mitigation measures to be put in place, then those mitigations need to be fully considered at the plan-making stage. This may mean more Neighbourhood Plans now being subject to the full SEA process.

To find out more about the Court Judgment and the impact of this on neighbourhood planning, see the full article on [our website](#).

Neighbourhood Plan updates

Below is a list of Neighbourhood Plans that have been successful at referendum since our spring newsletter:

- Stannington Neighbourhood Plan (Northumberland)
- Thurlestone Parish Neighbourhood Plan (South Hams District)
- Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan (LB Camden)
- Northwich Neighbourhood Plan (Cheshire West & Cheshire)
- Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan (North Dorset District)
- Ottery and West Hill Neighbourhood Plan (East Devon District)
- Broadstone Neighbourhood Plan (Borough of Poole)
- Martlesham Neighbourhood Plan (Suffolk Coastal District)
- Handforth Neighbourhood Plan (Cheshire East)
- Great Limber Neighbourhood Plan in West Lindsey District
- Osgodby Neighbourhood Plan (West Lindsey District)
- Petworth Neighbourhood Plan (South Downs National Park)
- Royal Wootton Bassett Neighbourhood Plan (Wiltshire)
- North Northumberland Coast Neighbourhood Plan (Northumberland)
- Newton and Noss Neighbourhood Plan (South Hams District)
- Ugborough Neighbourhood Development Plan (South Hams District)
- Aston Clinton Neighbourhood Plan (Aylesbury Vale District)
- South Petherton Neighbourhood Plan (South Somerset District)
- Grange Neighbourhood Plan (South Lakeland District)
- Horsford Neighbourhood Plan (Broadland District)

How We Can Help

Troy Planning + Design is a planning and urban design consultancy with a track record of delivering and supporting Neighbourhood Plans, including the provision of technical evidence and community engagement. We can help you at all stages of the neighbourhood planning process, providing a tailored service for your area and requirements. Our neighbourhood planning services include:

Consultation & Engagement

We have expertise in community consultation and engagement at each stage of the process, such that it is inclusive, meaningful and well documented. We run and facilitate workshops and exhibitions alongside innovative engagement techniques such as digital polling, visual preference surveys and interactive web solutions.

Tailored Advice & Support

We empower neighbourhood planning groups by giving them the tools needed to develop a Plan which reflects the vision and objectives of the community. We provide support to Parish and Town Councils and Neighbourhood Forums in relation to representing these groups on Local Plans and Planning Applications including preparing representations and attending hearings on their behalf. We prepare a wide range of supporting documents including Basic Conditions Statements.

Policy Writing & Evidence

We help prepare policies that seek to deliver your objectives but which can stand up to scrutiny at examination and also be implemented. We work with groups to help identify and collect the evidence to justify policies.

Design

We undertake character assessments to identify the qualities of different places, the scale and form of development, streets and open spaces, to help generate locally responsive planning policies. We also undertake urban design analysis, village design statements, prepare master plans and design codes to help shape future change. With extensive experience in visual design we create convincing documents and develop brands for our clients.

Technical Assessments

We are able to prepare housing needs and site assessments, sustainability appraisals, strategic environmental assessments, infrastructure needs and viability assessments to help support and underpin Neighbourhood Plans.

Proposals Maps

We prepare intuitive and interactive maps at all scales that communicate data-backed spatial analysis and aspirations.



Please get in touch for an informal discussion



Feel free to email or call us for an informal chat. We would be delighted to learn more about your project and how we might help.

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