

Neighbourhood Plan

Why do a Neighbourhood Plan?

The purpose of the “Wanborough Neighbourhood plan” is to improve the local area and take an active role in shaping the future of the area in which we live. We will be creative in finding ways to maintain and improve conservation, local services and our amenities, by utilising local skills and knowledge. We would also ensure that development is in line with local needs and would be able to identify the specific site or broad location as well as size, type and design of new development. Wanborough Parish Council intends to develop a ‘Neighbourhood Plan’ to cover a majority of our mainly rural parish but specifically excluding land to the North of the Lyden Brook which has been considered for some time to form the Southernmost boundary of the proposed ‘Eastern Villages’ housing development as proposed within the emerging (but as yet unexamined) Local Plan. We believe that it is appropriate that the proposed urban area to the North of the Lyden Brook and East of the A419/Covingham is given the opportunity to develop its own community identity as it grows (if and when it is built).

In the latter stages of planning for the 8,000 home Eastern Villages development a proposal was made without consultation to include Redlands Farm and Airfield (to the South of the Lyden Brook) for a small scale housing scheme to solve difficulties for the Borough Council with its existing use for Skydiving and Microlights.

The Parish Council oppose large scale development of this site but are supportive of a small scale (30-40 home development – or similar in scale) as proposed by the Eastern Villages Draft supplementary Planning Document to form a hamlet within the previously identified RURAL BUFFER which protects the village of Wanborough from coalescence with the new housing developments. The rural buffer should promote a sense of place for both the development and the new developments which will share the proposed plan boundary.

The Lyden Brook is a particularly defensible line as it is a river course with wide areas both sides susceptible to flooding and which provides a visual gap between the urban form to be built to the North and the more loosely grouped housing on Wanborough’s edge. Historically the village has evolved with a number of hamlets on the periphery in the rural hinterlands, namely ‘Horpit’ and ‘The Marsh’ to the North which are primarily individual, well-spaced homes with some rural enterprises including arable and dairy farming, equestrian enterprises, alpaca farming and some small business units. To the South of the village is the hamlet of Foxhill which has some housing, the large PGL ‘Liddington’ outward bound centre (despite the name this is entirely within Wanborough Parish) and is a major employer and the Foxhill Motocross site which is used for motocross events.

We have included the areas to the Parish Boundary in the South to ensure that its location within the AONB and with the historic Ridgeway trail running through it are respected but that also rural enterprise and rural employment is encouraged and nurtured through the planning process.

What is the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan?

Whilst a neighbourhood plan is flexible to some extent in terms of what can be included it must be primarily about the use of land and buildings. The following principles apply:

A Neighbourhood Plan can....

- Decide where and what type of development should happen in the neighbourhood.
- Include policies for example regarding design standards, that takes precedence over existing policies in the Local Plan for the neighbourhood – provided the policies do not conflict with the strategic policies in the SBC Core Strategy
- Define where new shops, offices or homes should go
- What green spaces should be protected
- Transport and access (including issues around roads, cycling, walking and access for disabled people).
- The development of schools, places of worship, health facilities, leisure and entertainment facilities, community and youth centres and village halls.
- Protection and creation of open space, nature reserves, allotments, sports pitches, play areas, parks and gardens, and the planting of trees.
- Protection of important buildings and historic assets such as archaeological remains.

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot...

- Conflict with the strategic policies prepared by SBC
- Be used to prevent development that is included in SBC core strategy
- Not comply with a number of European Union Directives and not be in line with both national policy (which will be set out in a new National Planning Policy Framework) and SBC Local Plan. When the plan has been produced, an independent examiner will consider whether it is consistent with these requirements.

How do we implement a Neighbourhood Plan?

Stage 1: Defining the neighbourhood

In areas with a parish or town council, the parish or town council will take the lead on neighbourhood planning. Town and parish councils and community groups will then need to apply to the local planning authority (usually the borough or district council) for a designated area. They will check that the suggested boundaries for different neighbourhoods make sense and fit together. The local planning authority will say no if, for example, 2 proposed neighbourhood areas overlap. If the local planning authority decides that the community group meets the right standards, the group can call itself a 'neighbourhood forum'.

Stage 2: Preparing the plan

The Neighbourhood forum group will need to pull together and prioritise their early ideas, and draw up their plans. They can choose to draw up either a plan, or a development order, or both. It is entirely up to them. Both must follow some ground rules:

- they must generally be in line with local and national planning policies
- they must be in line with other laws
- if the local planning authority says that an area needs to grow, then communities cannot use neighbourhood planning to block the building of new homes and businesses;
- they can, however, use neighbourhood planning to influence the type, design, location and mix of new development
- neighbourhood plans must contribute to achieving sustainable development.

With a neighbourhood plan, communities are able to establish general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. They will be able to say, for example, where new homes and offices should be built, and what they should look like. The neighbourhood plan will set a vision for the future. It can be detailed, or general, depending on what local people want.

Stage 3: Independent check

Once a neighbourhood plan or order has been prepared, an independent examiner will check that it meets the right basic standards.

If the plan or order doesn't meet the right standards, the examiner will recommend changes. The planning authority will then need to consider the examiner's views and decide whether to make those changes. If the examiner recommends significant changes, then the parish, town council or neighbourhood forum may decide to consult the local community again before proceeding.

Stage 4: Community referendum

The local council will organise a referendum on any plan or order that meets the basic standards. This ensures that the community has the final say on whether a neighbourhood plan or order comes into force.

People living in the neighbourhood who are registered to vote in local elections will be entitled to vote in the referendum. If more than 50% of people voting in the referendum support the plan or order, then the local planning authority must bring it into force.

Stage 5: legal force

Once a neighbourhood plan is in force following a successful referendum, it carries real legal weight. Decision makers are obliged to consider proposals for development in the neighbourhood against the neighbourhood plan.

A neighbourhood order grants planning permission for development that complies with the order. Where people have made clear that they want development of a particular type, it will be easier for that development to go ahead.