



What is Neighbourhood Planning?

The Localism Act 2011 gives local communities more power to influence the future of the places where they live by preparing neighbourhood plans.

Neighbourhood plans can establish a vision for an area as well as general planning policies for the development and use of land in a neighbourhood. They should be about local rather than strategic issues. For example, they could cover where new shops, offices or homes should go and what green spaces should be protected or other planning related issues.

Neighbourhood plans should be focused on guiding development rather than stopping it. They also have to be in line with national policy and Wiltshire Council's local planning policies. Once adopted they will become part of the statutory planning framework and be used to guide decisions on planning applications.

What is the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan?

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

A Neighbourhood Plan can...

- Decide where and what type of development should happen in the neighbourhood.
- Promote more development than is set out in the Wiltshire Core Strategy.
- Include more detailed policies, for example on design standards.

A Neighbourhood Plan cannot conflict with strategic policies or prevent developments that are in the Core Strategy prepared by Wiltshire Council.

Because of its dependence on the Wiltshire Core Strategy, Cricklade's Neighbourhood Plan must cover the same time period up to 2026.

How does this relate to the Town Plan?

The Town Plan completed last year is a very useful starting point for the Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst it deals with more topics than land use, and any views expressed can be given weight when planning decisions are made by Wiltshire Council, there is no statutory requirement to follow its recommendations. The Neighbourhood Plan on the other hand is confined to dealing with the use of land within the parish and once adopted will have statutory force. Preparation of it is therefore a more formal process than was the case for the town plan with the required steps laid down by statute. However, what emerges will have statutory power in any planning decision affecting land use.

Why would this interest me?

If you have concerns about the lack of appropriate housing in Cricklade, whether for families, young single people struggling to get started on the housing ladder or older people seeking to downsize, about the style, size and

density of new housing development, about flooding, about traffic through the town, about maintaining open spaces and recreational facilities within the town, about business sustainability and expansion, about maintaining a rural buffer between Cricklade and Swindon, then you should be interested in neighbourhood planning.

Who will prepare them?

The Localism Act specifies that, where it exists, a parish council is responsible for the delivery of a Neighbourhood Plan covering all or part its parish. However a Neighbourhood Plan needs to be supported by the whole community before it can be adopted and so the process to deliver it must provide opportunity for all relevant stakeholders to be involved, including local organisations and businesses as well as residents and national agencies such as Natural England and English Heritage. To ensure the process and content is robust all Neighbourhood Plans will be subject to an independent check for compliance with relevant legislation and other planning policies before being put to a local referendum where the plan will need to get majority support before it can come into force.

What is Cricklade's Neighbourhood Area?

In principle any area can apply to its Local Planning Authority (for Cricklade this is Wiltshire Council) to be designated a Neighbourhood Area and have its own Neighbourhood Plan.

In December 2012 Cricklade Town Council applied to designate the parish of Cricklade as its own independent Neighbourhood Area. The application was formally approved on 28th February 2013.

Board 1B

What is Wiltshire Council's role?

Wiltshire Council as Local Planning Authority has a duty to provide technical advice and support to those producing a neighbourhood plan. It also has to:

- agree the boundary of the area to be covered by a neighbourhood plan
- organise the check by an independent examiner into a neighbourhood plan and the referendum
- adopt the neighbourhood plan and bring it into force.

How can I influence the Neighbourhood Plan?

You can express your views during these events or subsequently through the questionnaire. We are also seeking volunteers representing all parts of the community to join focus groups dedicated to examining relevant issues in more detail.

What happens next?

The next stage of the consultation will be focus groups which will cover specific issues in more detail. At the same time, we will also be working on a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal to ensure that the plan is robust. The plan will be completed during 2014.

