

WEST HORSLEY

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

What are neighbourhood plans?

Neighbourhood plans are a new type of plan that give communities important new rights around local planning. They are written by local communities so the people who know and love the area can:

- choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built;
- have their say on the design of new buildings;
- protect and improve the vitality of local business;
- preserve local green spaces and heritage.

What weight will be given to neighbourhood plans in planning decisions?

A neighbourhood plan is a legal document which has the same legal status as a borough's development plan; and which must be used by councils when they decide on planning applications in the local area.

What is the difference between neighbourhood plans and local plans?

The Council's Local Plan covers all things important to a community, including land use, and contains strategic policies that neighbourhood plans must generally be in line with. Neighbourhood plans are restricted to land use and development matters.

What about school places, GPs, transport and congestion?

Strategic issues cannot be addressed in a neighbourhood plan.

Can a neighbourhood plan stop development from happening in the area?

No, a neighbourhood plan is not a tool for residents to oppose proposals for new developments close to them. It cannot change the Green Belt nor stop the Council from proposing strategic housing sites in its Local Plan. But it can guide development to be more appropriate to local context and help decide where it goes within the area. It can only include proposals for an equal (or greater) amount of growth than is set out in the Council's development plan.

What needs to be done?

Before a neighbourhood plan can be brought in to force by the local planning authority there are a number of steps a community must take.

1. Identify the plan area (*West Horsley Parish*)
2. Set up a neighbourhood forum (*West Horsley Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group*)
3. Ask local people about issues that matter
4. Use good evidence on which to base the draft plan
5. Gather the views of the community before submitting the plan
6. Have the plan checked by an independent examiner to ensure it meets basic conditions
7. Gain successful vote at a local referendum

How long does a neighbourhood plan last?

A neighbourhood plan will normally last for five years at which point it should be reviewed.

www.westhorsleyneighbourhoodplan.org