

Introduced in 2011 as part of the Localism Act, Neighbourhood Planning gives communities more direct control over the type, location, size, pace and design of developments in their area. It provides a statutory right for local people and businesses to plan for the future of their area.



## A Neighbourhood Plan IS:

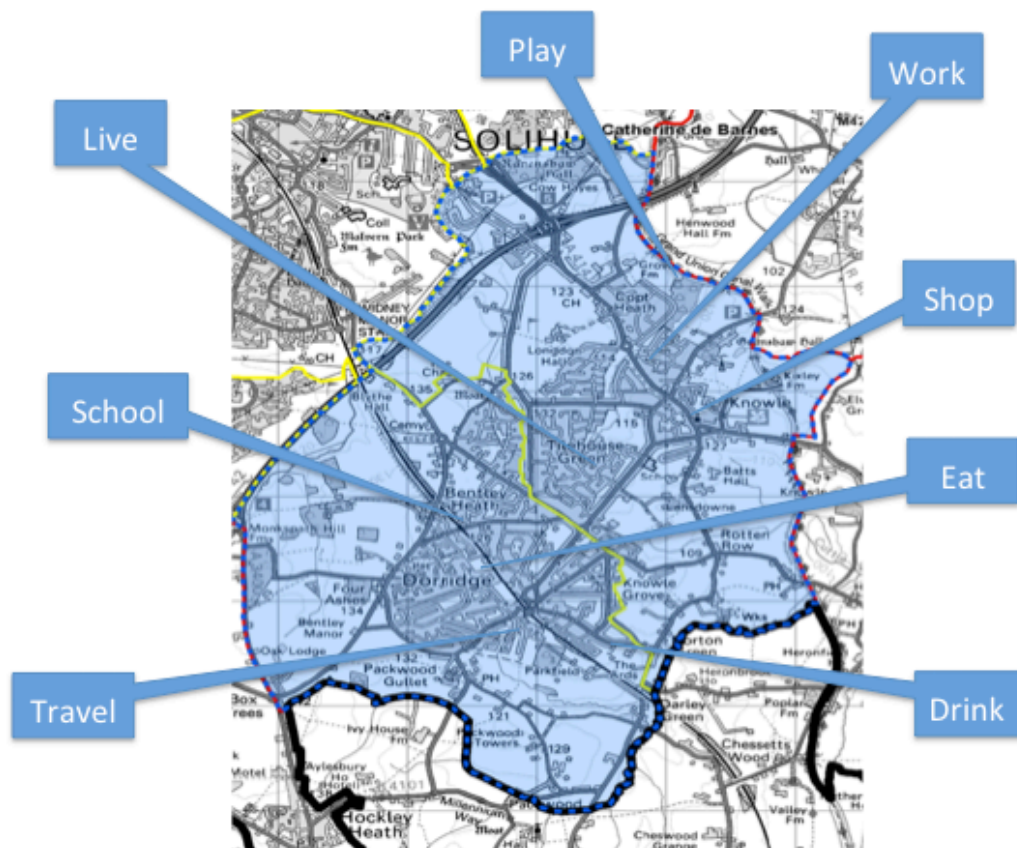
- A document that sets out planning policies for a neighbourhood area. Planning policies are used to decide whether to approve planning applications.
- Written by the local community - the people who know and love an area - rather than the Local Council's Planning Authority.
- A way to ensure the community gets the right types of development, in the right place.

## A Neighbourhood Plan IS NOT a way of stopping growth, BUT...

...can help inform, direct and shape local development in a positive manner. Plans may not propose less development than in the local Council's plan - but can, for example, propose more homes or businesses; or alternative sites; or higher design standards for buildings etc....

## What does a Neighbourhood Plan cover?

Essentially, it's about development and land use.....



.....which can, in fact, cover many important aspects of daily life in our community.

## What does a Neighbourhood Plan look like?

There are three different types of Plans - some can even go so far as to grant permission for certain types of smaller, local development. Most, however, take the form of Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) - which is currently what we anticipate doing.

An NDP sets out a vision for an area and planning policies for the use and development of land. It allows us to define in greater detail the specific needs and priorities of our community.

## Why do we need a Neighbourhood Plan?

Creating a Plan gives us a real say and influence over future development in our area. We have the opportunity to set out policies to protect the things our community VALUES and to mitigate CONCERNS as much as possible – which means that we can be more confident that new development will suit our needs.

Policies, for example, that:

- address big issues, like the location and scale of new development
- provide for enhanced local services and infrastructure through development benefits
- capture and protect what is distinctive about their neighbourhood.

## Who decides on whether the Plan is put into force?

It is important to understand that neither the Forum leaders, nor its membership alone, have the final say on whether the draft Plan is ultimately approved. This will be determined by way of an independent Referendum, with everyone who lives, works or runs a business in the area able to vote.

## In practice, what weight does the Plan really carry?

A neighbourhood plan is an important document with real legal force. If the Plan receives a 'Yes' vote at local referendum and is adopted by the local authority, it will form part of the statutory development plan for Solihull Council. As such, the policies we set down in the Plan will take precedence over Solihull's Local Plan in determining planning permission for local (non-strategic) development.

Any new planning application will be assessed by Solihull Council against the policies in our Neighbourhood Plan and permission would normally be refused if it does not conform with them. If an application goes to appeal, our policies will have equal weight with national and district policies.

## What's the process to create a Plan and where are we now?

As you would expect given the potential impact of the plan, development is required to follow a rigorous process that typically takes around 2 years. Much of this time is taken up in community engagement and consultation. We are at the very early stages, having just (July 2015) applied to Solihull Council for our Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum to be officially recognised.

Meanwhile, we have created three Focus Groups to address what we currently understand (from resident feedback to date) to be priority topics for discussion. Emerging areas include affordable housing, parking, traffic, infrastructure, learning and community facilities, green belt and maintaining the identity of our villages.

### Neighbourhood Plan snapshot

- 1335 applications for designation
- 1058 designated areas
- 76 plans at or passed examination
- 1 NDO passed examination
- 54 through referendum
- 37 plans made
- Ave turnout 32%
- Average yes vote 87%
- 57% LPAs with NP areas designated

» Numbers from June 2014