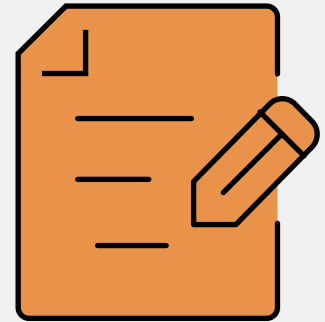




03

Testing your plan

Testing and approving your plan



Once your draft neighbourhood plan and supporting documents are formally submitted (Regulation 15), we will check that it has followed the proper legal process.

Submission consultation (Regulation 16)



Provided the requirements are met, we will publicise your draft Neighbourhood Plan proposal for not less than a six week period of consultation. We will invite representations, and notify any consultation body (The consultation bodies are set out in [Schedule 1 to the Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#) referred to in your Consultation Statement.

You can assist our formal consultation by publicising your draft neighbourhood plan on your neighbourhood plan/town/parish council website(s), newsletter(s) and by putting up posters (supplied by us).

Once the consultation period has closed, we will submit your draft neighbourhood plan alongside the representations received during the consultation for an independent examination.

Independent examination



We will arrange and pay for an independent examiner who will consider the contents of the draft neighbourhood plan proposal. The appointment of the independent examiner will be made with the consent of the qualifying body.

The sole purpose of an independent examination is to assess whether a draft neighbourhood plan meets certain basic conditions and requirements set out in statute. Most examinations are dealt with by written representation, but in rare circumstances an exploratory meeting may be held and/or a public hearing depending on the circumstances.

Examinations usually take between 5 to 10 days; however, these are not usually consecutive working days. However, this could be longer if the examiner requires clarification on some points which normally be dealt with through an exchange of correspondence with both the local planning authority and you as the qualifying body. In rare circumstances, an exploratory meeting to clarify matters may be called by the independent examiner.

The role of the examiner is to recommend one of the following outcomes of the examination:

- the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or
- the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum as modified (based on the examiners recommendations); or
- the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

If the examiner recommends that the draft neighbourhood plan goes forward to referendum, he/she must consider whether or not the referendum area should extend beyond the neighbourhood area to which the plan relates.

Apart from correcting errors, modifications will only be recommended by an independent examiner where they are necessary to enable the plan to meet the basic conditions, and other statutory requirements.

The local planning authority retains responsibility for determining the extent to which a draft neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions. The local planning authority decides whether it will proceed to referendum, with or without modifications.

Community referendum

Once your draft neighbourhood plan is finalised and any suggested amendments have been made, we will organise and pay for a local referendum. The referendum will usually be for all those on the electoral roll within the area covered by the draft neighbourhood plan. However, it may also include those within neighbouring parishes if the examiner considers the plan proposals directly affect them.

We will publish an 'Information Statement' not fewer than 28 working days before the date of the referendum. This will provide details of the referendum process, including where and when it will be held, the question which will be asked, a map of the referendum / the neighbourhood area designation and details of where the draft neighbourhood plan documents can be inspected. Copies of the documents will be made available at our principal offices and other appropriate premises which are open to the public in the referendum area.

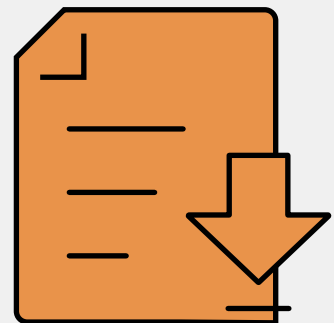
Voters living in the referendum area will receive a poll card similar to those used at elections. People can choose to vote in person at a polling station, by post or by proxy.

The referendum will ask "Do you want Wiltshire Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for [Neighbourhood Area name] to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?".

Adopting your Neighbourhood Plan

If more than 50 percent of people who vote in the referendum support the draft neighbourhood plan and vote 'yes', it comes into force as part of the statutory development plan for the area. As soon as possible after, the local planning authority will decide whether or not to make plan.

Adopted Neighbourhood Plans will be published on our website. We will also send copies of the decision to adopt the plan to the town or parish council and any person who asked to be notified of the decision.





All material within this document is copyright Wiltshire Council except where indicated otherwise and may not be used, copied, or reproduced without permission. All rights reserved.