

Neighbourhood Plan for Pontesbury Parish

Consultation on designation of proposed Neighbourhood Plan area

Pontesbury Parish Council has agreed that a formal Neighbourhood Plan should be prepared for Pontesbury Parish. The first step is to designate the neighbourhood area. A neighbourhood area essentially defines the total area to be covered by the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The Parish Council proposes to designate the whole of Pontesbury Parish as the neighbourhood plan area.

Before making a formal application to Shropshire Council we are seeking local residents' views on this proposal. If you have any comments, please contact the Parish Clerk by 30th June 2016.

After this deadline an application for the neighbourhood area will be submitted to Shropshire Council and they will need to approve this before the plan can move to the next stage. Shropshire Council will publicise any application online and across the neighbourhood area by site notices in prominent places for a period of 4 weeks if the whole parish administrative boundary is included and 6 weeks in all other cases.

What happens next?

The views and involvement of the community are important to the success of preparing any Neighbourhood Plan, so following approval of the designated area by Shropshire Council, Pontesbury Parish Council will be organising community events to provide more information and seek your views on what should be in the plan. If you would like us to contact you with updates please email the Parish Clerk.

Volunteers needed

We will need volunteers to help produce the plan so if you have the skills or willingness to be involved in this exciting project, we need your help and we are keen to hear from you.

Background on Neighbourhood Plans

Following the 2010 General Election one of the new Government's main priorities was localism. A key part of this is the aim to return planning powers to local people. To try and achieve this, the Government has created a new neighbourhood planning tier that will be led by the community, rather than the relevant district, county or unitary council.

Neighbourhood planning was formally introduced by the Localism Act 2011, which, along with associated regulations, lays out all the processes for preparing and putting in place neighbourhood planning tools.

Parish and town councils and neighbourhood forums can write a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for their area. The NDP can set out policies and plans for that area, like a Development Plan Document but on a very local scale. Subject to conforming to national policies, as well as local plan policies for the area, and gaining support through a referendum of the local area, this plan will be adopted as a formal part of the development plan. This

means that planning decisions have to be made in accordance with the neighbourhood plan (and other parts of the development plan) unless *material considerations* indicate otherwise.

The neighbourhood plan cannot cover strategic issues, for example mining or major development, but can guide local issues. For example the plan should be able to say which important green spaces will be protected, or could identify sites that are appropriate for new local shops or a small affordable housing development. NDPs could also guide design standards in their area, to make sure that new development is of a high quality.

NDPs have to conform with 'the strategic priorities' of the relevant local plan, but in planning decisions, if there is a conflict between a neighbourhood policy and a non-strategic local policy, the neighbourhood policy will take precedence. 'Strategic priorities' are defined in the National Planning Policy Framework as:

- the homes and jobs needed in the area
- the provision of retail, leisure and other commercial development
- the provision of infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat)
- the provision of health, security, community and cultural infrastructure and other local facilities
- climate change mitigation and adaptation, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment, including landscape.

Additional information about Neighbourhood Plans is available online including the following website - <http://locality.org.uk/resources/neighbourhood-planning-roadmap-guide/>

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