



**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## **GROWING TOGETHER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

### **GENERAL STATEMENT ABOUT THE PLANNING SYSTEM AND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS**

#### **Introduction**

On Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 there will be a referendum for residents on the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan. This Statement explains more about the referendum taking place and how you can take part. It also gives you information about the Town and Country Planning System

#### **The Referendum**

The referendum will ask you to vote yes or no to a question. For this referendum, you will have a ballot paper with this question:

**Do you want Northampton Borough Council to use the neighbourhood plan for the Growing Together Neighbourhood Area (namely: Blackthorn, Cherry Lodge, Goldings, Lings, Lumbertubs and Overstone Lodge) to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?**

The referendum area is shown on a map in the Information Statement for the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan.

#### **How do I vote in the Referendum?**

You show your choice by putting a cross (X) in the “Yes” or “No” box on your ballot paper. Put a cross in only ONE box or your vote will not be counted.

If residents vote in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan, it will be made. If it is rejected, the Plan will not be made. If made, the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan.

## **The Town and Country Planning System**

The planning system in the UK manages the use and development of land and buildings.

The planning system has two main parts to it:

- Plan making – setting out a plan for how an area will develop over time as a guide to future development.
- Managing development – when development is agreed through planning permission.

Northampton Borough Council is responsible for deciding the majority of development proposals within its administrative area. Decisions on planning applications are based on national policy, the Development Plan (including the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan Part 1, the Northampton Central Area Action Plan and any relevant made Neighbourhood Plan) and other material considerations.

## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 27th March 2012. The Framework gives guidance to local councils in drawing up local plans and on making decisions on planning applications. It includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This document is accompanied by National Planning Practice Guidance which explains in detail how the NPPF is applied.

## **Local Plans**

Local plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. They must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

The adopted plan for Northampton consists of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Local Plan Part 1 and the Northampton Central Area Action Plan, together with Saved Policies from the Northampton Local Plan and relevant Neighbourhood Plans that have been made. The policies set out in these Plans will be used for decision making purposes along with national policy.

## **Neighbourhood Planning**

Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 to give members of the community a more “hands on” role in the planning of their neighbourhoods.

Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums (community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes) can now use neighbourhood planning powers to establish general planning policies for the

development and use of land through the preparation of a neighbourhood plan (sometimes referred to legally as 'neighbourhood development plans'). The plan must be prepared through a process of consultation with local residents before an independent examiner reviews the plan.

The legislation, however, sets out that neighbourhood plans have to meet a number of 'Basic Conditions' to ensure they are legally compliant and take account of wider policy considerations.

The Basic Conditions are that the plan must:

- Have regard to national planning policy and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State (e.g. National Planning Policy Framework);
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- Be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the local area;
- Be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements

An examiner will need to be satisfied that a neighbourhood development plan meets these conditions before it can be voted on in a local referendum. This is to make sure that referendums only take place when proposals are workable and of a decent quality.

If more than half of those voting in a referendum have voted in favour of the neighbourhood plan, the local planning authority must make it part of the statutory development plan and use it when making decisions on planning applications in the Plan Area.

### **The Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan**

The Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by the Growing Together Neighbourhood Forum which is made up of people from the local community. The Neighbourhood Plan contains a vision for the Growing Together Neighbourhood Area, objectives and a set of policies.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been produced in accordance with the statutory requirements and following extensive public consultation with residents and key stakeholders over a number of years and a recent independent examination. The Plan has, subject to minor modifications, been recommended to proceed to referendum.

## **Where can I see a copy of the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan?**

A copy of the Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying documentation is available to view at the following locations:

<b>Location</b>	<b>Opening Times</b>
<b>Blackthorn Children's Centre</b> Longmead Court, Blackthorn, Northampton, NN3 8QD	Monday - Thursday: 9 am - 5 pm Friday: 9 am - 4.30 pm
<b>Blackthorn Good Neighbours Nursery</b> Blackthorn Bridge Court, Blackthorn, Northampton, NN3 8QH	Monday - Friday: 8.15 am - 3.30 pm
<b>Brookside Community Hub</b> Billing Brook Road, Northampton, NN3 8NP	Monday: 9 am – 3 pm Wednesday 9 am – 12 noon
<b>Northampton One Stop Shop</b> The Guildhall, St Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE	Monday – Friday: 9am – 5pm
<b>Northampton Central Library</b> Abington Street, Northampton, NN1 2BA	Monday – Friday: 9am – 6pm Saturday: 9am – 5pm Sunday: 11am – 2pm
<b>Weston Favell Library</b> 56 Weston Favell Centre, Northampton, NN3 8JZ	Monday - Friday: 9.00 am - 7.00 pm Saturday: 9.00 am - 5.00 pm Sunday: 11.00 am - 2.00 pm

The Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying documentation is also available to view online at:

<http://northampton.gov.uk/gtnp>