



11.10.21

Mrs S Hunt
Town Clerk
Stalham,

Our Ref: Policy/12/01/11.

RE: Application to Designate a Neighbourhood Planning Area

Dear Mrs Hunt

Thank you for your application and supporting statement on behalf of Stalham Town Council to designate the parished area of Stalham as an area in which to undertake neighbourhood planning. This was successfully validated on 22/09/2021.

The proposed Area for Neighbourhood Planning falls into the administrative areas of both North Norfolk District Council, NNDC and the Boards Authority, BA. The application is supported by the Broads Authority ¹ and NNDC. In accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016 through delegated authority to the Planning Portfolio holder in conjunction with the Planning Policy Manager it is resolved to **approve** the designation of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan as detailed in your statement.

The map showing the designated area, application form and supporting statement will shortly be published on the Council's web site:

<https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

Cllr John Toye - Planning Portfolio Holder, NNDC

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Mark Ashwell - Planning Policy Manager, NNDC

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Ashwell".

¹ Development committee 8.10.2021

Information Sheet 11.10.21

Designation letter.

The attached designation letter is your formal notification that the parish area is now designated as a neighbourhood Plan Area. NPA. Please keep this for your records. We will publish this along with a map showing the designated area and other formal correspondence as your Plan progresses on our dedicated neighbourhood planning website, see link below.

Officer support

During the development of your neighbourhood plan you will have access to and support from the qualified professional officers in the policy team here at NNDC. We can assist in many ways from general steer through the process, impartial planning advice, policy formation, evidence base, technical support and the statutory/ legislative matters and review. I would encourage the town council and steering group members to make full use of this resource. This is made easier with video conferencing. So we are happy to meet with you as and when it is needed, especially through this means. We would encourage continual engagement and encourage you to seek advice on individual areas as the plan is prepared. I would be pleased to set up an initial discussion to help set out the initial stages and set the process off on a sound footing.

I draw you attention to a number of specific local guidance notes and check sheets which have been produced, please check regularly for updates. These are available at:

<https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning>

In addition, the growing evidence base of the emerging Local Plan is available in the document library <https://www.north-norfolk.gov.uk/tasks/planning-policy/document-library>

Officers may also be able to assist in helping to identify other suitable supporting evidence in addition to the published documents and would encourage early and continued discussion throughout the development of your neighbourhood plan.

We recommend that those that are to be involved in the NP read and become familiar with the relevant Planning Practice Guidance - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>. This is the national guidance that sits behind the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It provides detailed implementation guidance on many subjects including housing need, flooding, and explains how the neighbourhood planning system works what should be considered and the requirements to justify approaches through evidence. It also details the stages of neighbourhood planning, links to the legislation and informs all, of the detail and responsibilities throughout the production of a NP.

Further less formal guidance can be obtained from **Locality** which is the community organisation that provides support for Neighbourhood Planning nationally. Along with those produced specifically for North Norfolk by officers there are extensive guides and best practice examples at: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org>. Locality has also published a **road map** and other useful guidance documents which will help get you well-grounded from the start and provide information on how to cover specific subject matters such as design coding, site

allocations etc. Localities are also the organisation that administers the Government's Neighbourhood Planning support and grant requirements.

To date many Neighbourhood Plans across North Norfolk have sought to include policies covering a wide range of policy areas, many have been general in nature, repeated criteria set out in the strategic policies of the District and in cases been in conflict or not probably justified. One of the basic conditions tests for Neighbourhood Planning is that Plans need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the District. Policies that seek to duplicate or repeat existing Development Plan policies and or national policy run the risk of falling foul of such conformity rules and will run the strong risk of deletion at examination if left in. Our advice is that a Neighbourhood Plan should be focused on what additional benefit, including justified growth it can bring to the local area and should not seek to repeat existing local or national policy. A neighbourhood plan can be comprehensive and or focused on a few matters it should not however try replicate the Local Plan. We would therefore advise that the starting point of any Neighbourhood Plan is a review of the existing and emerging Development Plan and policy base, in relation to the chosen policy areas to see what additional considerations could be added and what evidence would be needed to justify such an approach. Officers will be able to assist in helping you identify appropriate approaches and evidence and provide a formal neighbourhood planning group with the emerging Local Plan

Currently the relevant strategic policies, along with the NPPF, and PPG can be found in the North Norfolk Core Strategy, Site Allocations document and emerging Local Plan, along with the recently adopted Broad's Authority Local Plan. There are also a range of adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance documents, SPDs. Each Plan and guidance documents will apply only in the relevant administrative areas of the parish

Although the legislation makes clear that any Neighbourhood Plan needs to be in general conformity with the adopted Development Plan, it should also take account of the emerging Local Plan which as you are aware is well advanced and an emerging copy was provided on the 20.9.21. In the coming months this will be finalised and the final proposed submission version will be available in full.

Guidance note NPG2 on the above link, provides you with conformity information in relation to the Core Strategy and further advice on national policy and the emerging Local Plan can be obtained from officers at the regular meetings envisaged.

The subjects/policies of the NP should be kept to that of Land Use planning and supported by evidence. However in developing your Plan and carrying out community consultation you may wish to identify within the Plan some 'Community Aspirations' which help to meet local expectations around issues expressed by residents but which are not Land Use matters. These should be separate from policies and would not carry any weight in making planning decisions, but can be included as long as they are clearly identified as such.

As the "responsible body" in separate environmental legislation, when the time comes a detailed Screening Opinion request should be submitted to the Councils and we will undertake the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan on your behalf. These are statutory requirements and need to be undertaken by qualified professionals to the satisfaction of the

Council, when the policy content is known. We do not advise that these are undertaken by others without the knowledge and agreement of the Council.

We would recommend that a steering group guides the production of the NP and that terms of reference are drawn up between it and the town council – who remain the “qualified body” in terms of the legislation. If in future you are considering the commission any evidence or external support / project management please keep us informed and where possible seek our guidance prior to appointing a consultant. It would be helpful if the names and contact details of any steering group can be shared for our records and or the main point of contact.

I look forward to assisting the Town Council and the Steering Group through this process.

Iain Withington
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