

Neighbourhood Planning Advice Notes

Number 1: Neighbourhood Area Designation

1. First steps

- 1.1 The first formal step in the neighbourhood planning process is to apply to designate your neighbourhood area. To do this, an application must be made by a parish or town council, neighbourhood forum or a prospective neighbourhood forum (or a community organisation in the case of a Community Right to Build Order) to the local planning authority. **In Northumberland, the application can only be made by Parish or Town Councils.**
- 1.2 Prior to making an application, please contact the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Team to discuss making your application
- 1.3 The County Council website contains an [application form](#) which must be completed by the Chair of the Parish or Town Council, together with a statement which states why the Council believes that the proposed neighbourhood area is an appropriate area and a map of the proposed neighbourhood area itself.

2. Deciding on the extent of your neighbourhood area

Single Parish Neighbourhood Areas

- 2.1 Before you apply for designation of a neighbourhood area, you must first decide on the extent of your neighbourhood area. Within Northumberland, every neighbourhood area is currently based on parish boundaries although you can focus on a smaller area if you wish, or work with neighbouring parishes to prepare a plan that would cover multiple civil parishes (please see below for more details).

Multi-Parished Neighbourhood Areas

- 2.2 While many existing neighbourhood areas in the county are based on single parishes, some parish councils decided to work together on a single plan and formed a single neighbourhood area made up of a number of parishes.
- 2.3 Where parish councils decide to work together with neighbouring parishes to prepare a neighbourhood plan, they must agree which parish council will take the lead on the process. This means that they will be the 'qualifying body' and any applications for grant funding from central government must be made by them.

3. Submitting your neighbourhood area designation application

- 3.1 In order to submit your neighbourhood area designation application, the chair of your parish council must complete the application form and submit it to the County Council alongside a map showing the extent of the proposed neighbourhood area. The County Council can assist with producing a map, so please contact the Neighbourhood Planning Team for assistance.
- 3.2 Where parish councils decide to work together with neighbouring parishes to prepare a neighbourhood plan, they must agree which parish council will take the lead on the process. This means that they will be the 'qualifying body' and any applications for grant funding from central government must be made by them.
- 3.3 Where parish councils decide to work together with neighbouring parishes to prepare a neighbourhood plan, they must agree which parish council will take the lead on the process. This means that they will be the 'qualifying body' and any applications for grant funding from central government must be made by them. The lead parish council must also submit the Plan to the County Council.
- 3.4 For multi-parished neighbourhood areas, the application form (completed and signed by the chair of the lead parish council) must also be accompanied by minutes from each of the other parish councils involved in the plan, showing that they have agreed to formally become part of the process at a parish council meeting.

4. Next steps

- 4.1 Once you have decided on the extent of your neighbourhood area, the County Council's Neighbourhood Planning Team will be able to arrange for a map of your neighbourhood area to be produced, to support your application for neighbourhood area designation.
- 4.2 Once you have submitted your area designation application, the County Council will assess it and, if your application is considered appropriate, your neighbourhood area will be formally designated.

Neighbourhood Planning, Planning Services, Northumberland County Council

T: 0345 600 6400 E: neighbourhoodplanning@northumberland.gov.uk

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Planning/Neighbourhood.aspx>