

DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING PROTOCOL FOR EXETER CITY COUNCIL

Council Role: General Support

The Council will:

Produce a 'Neighbourhood Planning Protocol' to set out the Council's role in supporting Neighbourhood Planning (this document).

Maintain an up to date Neighbourhood Planning webpage that summarises the powers available under Neighbourhood Planning and the key stages to developing Neighbourhood Planning.

Provide contact details of key officers in the Council that will be dealing with Neighbourhood Planning.

Provide a basic process checklist to make sure all regulations are met for those undertaking Neighbourhood Planning (available to download from the website or on request).

Make available information on local case studies as they emerge.

Provide information relating to funding, resources and skills.

Offer explanation and advice to help communities understand Neighbourhood Planning and whether it is the right approach for them.

Offer to attend inaugural meetings of groups wishing to pursue Neighbourhood Planning.

Council Role: Designating Neighbourhood Areas and Neighbourhood Forums

The Council will:

Seek to determine applications for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area in Exeter as expeditiously as possible and in all instances within three months of receipt of a valid application. Responsibility is delegated to the Assistant Director City Development in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development and Transport.

Seek to determine applications for the designation of a Neighbourhood Forum in Exeter as expeditiously as possible and in all instances within three months of receipt of a valid application. Responsibility is delegated to the Assistant Director City Development in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Development and Transport.

Use its website, public notices in the Express & Echo and site notices placed in prominent locations, to publicise Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Forum applications to those who live, work or carry on business in the area. The Council will seek support and help from applicants in maintaining site notices and removing them after the publicity period has ended.

Work in collaboration with neighbouring authorities where a cross-border Neighbourhood Area/Neighbourhood Forum/Neighbourhood Plan/Development Order is pursued to establish a process which all parties can agree to.

Council Role: Supporting Neighbourhood Plan Making

The Council will:

Explain where it is with its own plan making activities and share evidence and information on planning issues (specifically in the form of the Core Strategy evidence base).

Provide advice on national and local plan policies with which the Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order will need to fit.

Provide electronic maps of Neighbourhood Areas and relevant planning designations.

Provide advice on how best to involve and engage the local population and how to communicate with partners and statutory consultees.

Provide advice on information and evidence gathering.

Provide support for community planning events.

Council Role: Formal Validation

The local planning authority will validate Neighbourhood Plans against national planning policy, local planning policy and will flag up any issues in relation to other legislation e.g. Habitat Regulations in order to make sure it is ready to go to Independent Examination. It is proposed that this is undertaken under delegated authority to the Assistant Director of City Development in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder. It is best to approach the local planning authority at an early stage to flag up key policy issues before this formal validation process is triggered.

Council Role: Independent Examination

The local planning authority will publish the Neighbourhood Plans/Orders on their website and give details of how to respond to it in advance of the Independent Examination (in line with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations). In consultation with the Neighbourhood Forum the local planning authority will appoint an Independent Examiner. The Council will fund the Inspector's costs and will provide a venue for the examination as needed. The Council will consider the Inspector's recommendations.

Council Role: Referendum

The Council's Electoral Services team will administer and fund the local referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan. The details of how referendum are to be run are forthcoming, but are likely to involve a review of the Local Authorities (Conduct of

Referendums) (England) Regulations 2007. This is proposed to include specification of the question(s) to be asked by the referendum. The local planning authority will publish the results of the referendum on their website.

Council's Role: Adoption

Adoption of a Neighbourhood Plan/Development Order will require ratification by full Council. Once adopted the Neighbourhood Plan/Neighbourhood Development Order will be published on the Council's website and hard copies will be available for inspection at the Civic Centre. Once adopted the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan and will be used to determine planning applications within your Neighbourhood area.

NOTES FOR GROUPS AND FORUMS:

Please give ample notice to enable the Council to respond to your requests in the most helpful way.

The Council will not have any specific grant funding for Neighbourhood Planning. However, we can advise you on any local or national community funding opportunities.

June 2012