

Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan

Consultation Statement January 2019



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1 Introduction: the Neighbourhood Plan process

The Neighbourhood Plan process is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. These define the main stages that a Neighbourhood Plan must go through before it is voted on at the referendum. Neighbourhood Plans that do not closely follow the Regulations in the way they are produced may be vulnerable to legal challenge at a later date.

Main stages

The diagram on this page illustrates the main stages in preparing the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Neighbourhood plans must be based on relevant evidence about the Neighbourhood Area (the three parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore) and must reflect the views of the local community. The parish councils that appointed the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have therefore been careful to gather the necessary evidence to inform the Neighbourhood Plan and underpin its policies.



The Neighbourhood Plan itself has been led by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, comprised of parish councillors representing the three parish councils and members of the community, also representing the three parishes. The Steering Group has been supported by neighbourhood planning specialists Urban Vision Enterprise CIC. Throughout the process the Steering Group has liaised with Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Staffordshire County Council (SCC), who have provided practical assistance, advice on key issues such as strategic local policy and supporting evidence.

The Steering Group has organised and delivered a variety of consultation events and a Residents' Survey to gauge local opinion at key stages in the production of the Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, a Neighbourhood Plan must be the subject of a 6-week period of statutory consultation in the local community before it can be submitted to the local planning authority. This is the stage when views about the Neighbourhood Plan are formally recorded and responded to, and anyone wishing to make comments must use this opportunity to register them.

During the formal consultation parish councils must advertise that the draft Neighbourhood Plan is available for people to inspect and comment on. Publicity should notify people where they may see a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan, the deadline for submitting comments and where they should be submitted to. In the case of the present Plan, printed copies were available to consult in key locations; and details, an online copy and all relevant documents were available on the three Parish Councils' websites and the dedicated Neighbourhood Plan website (www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org); and forms were available for people to register their comments both on paper and online.

After the formal consultation period all the representations received must be considered and responded to. This includes making appropriate modifications to the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The amended Neighbourhood Plan must then be submitted to the local planning authority, along with a Consultation Statement, a Basic Conditions Statement explaining how the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the defined legal requirements, and a map of the Neighbourhood Area.

It is the local planning authority's duty to check whether the Neighbourhood Plan has followed the proper legal process and has met the legal requirements for consultation and publicity. If it is satisfied in this regard, it will then publish the Neighbourhood Plan and invite representations from the public and from statutory consultees. At this stage comments must focus on whether the Neighbourhood Plan satisfies the basic legal conditions.

Following the 6-week publicity period the planning authority will appoint an independent examiner, with the agreement of the parish councils, to consider the Neighbourhood Plan and any representations made at this stage. The independent examiner's duty is limited to considering whether the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions. This means that there is little scope to alter the content of the Neighbourhood Plan at this stage.

The independent examiner will prepare a report, which can recommend either that the Neighbourhood Plan proceeds to a referendum, or that it proceeds to a referendum with appropriate modifications. If the examiner concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan does not meet the basic conditions he or she will recommend that it does not proceed to a referendum.

If the examiner finds the present Neighbourhood Plan to be satisfactory, with modifications if necessary, then Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council will arrange for a referendum to take place. All people on the electoral register who live in the Neighbourhood Area (Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore parishes) will be entitled to vote in the referendum.

If more than 50% of the votes cast support the Neighbourhood Plan, then the Borough Council will bring the plan into force through a simple resolution of the Council.

2 Initiation of the Neighbourhood Plan

In spring 2015 community members approached each of the 3 parish councils of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore to present the case for preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan to cover the three parishes. As a result, the parish councils jointly formed an intention to make a Neighbourhood Plan. In June 2015 residents of the 3 parishes were invited to a public meeting in Whitmore village hall at which their

views on the parish councils' intention were sought. Following presentations and a question and answer discussion session the meeting gave its support to the parish councils' proposal.

Following this, an application for designation of the Neighbourhood Area of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore was submitted to Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council. The Neighbourhood Area was designated on 16 September 2015.

3 Community engagement strategy

Community engagement is an essential part of the neighbourhood planning process. The community engagement strategy comprised the following:

- Website
- E-mail list
- Regular news updates
- Whole-area leafleting
- Roadshow events
- Publicity banners
- Residents' Survey
- Consultation events
- Stalls at open days

See the community events log at the end of this section for a list of all community engagement activities.

Website

A dedicated website (<http://www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk>) was created for the project. All evidence and reports assembled or created for the Plan were made available online, as were the minutes of Steering Group meetings. All publicity material (newsletter articles, leaflets etc.) were also made available online, as were the Residents' Survey, the draft Plan and the Pre-submission consultation response form. In the early days community events and other items of interest were reported in a blog.

E-mail list

Sign-up to an e-mail distribution list was available on the website. E-mail was used to distribute notifications about events, the Residents' Survey, the Local Green Space Consultation, the Pre-submission consultation etc.

Regular news updates

Throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process the Whitmore Parish Council newsletter and the monthly/bimonthly church newsletter were used to keep residents informed about progress and to present a series of articles on Neighbourhood Plan issues. Because the church newsletter does not reach all parts or all households of the Neighbourhood Area the articles were also posted on all parish council and village hall noticeboards and on noticeboards in the bus shelters in Baldwins Gate.

Whole-area leafleting

At intervals, the entire Neighbourhood Area has been leafleted to keep all residents up to date with progress and developments. Because Chapel and Hill Chorlton Parish Council and Maer and Aston Parish Council do not have newsletters, feature articles appearing in the Whitmore Parish Council newsletter were generally reprinted as leaflets and distributed to households in these 2 parishes.

Roadshows: series 1

To launch the process of opinion gathering and community engagement with the Plan a series of Roadshows were held in 5 locations across the Neighbourhood Area in November and December 2015 and were widely advertised on posters displayed throughout the 3 parishes. Each Roadshow took the form of a presentation and information displays (including a specially made map of the facilities and features of the Neighbourhood Area) followed by open discussion of issues raised by the presentation and other issues brought forward by participants. The Roadshows and the issues raised by participants were reported in a series of blog articles on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

In March 2016 a further Roadshow was held at Baldwins Gate primary school, to which all parents received a printed invitation. Three consecutive sessions were held to accommodate parents arriving at different times.

Publicity banners

In March 2016 publicity banners for the Neighbourhood Plan were set up at 6 strategic locations in the Neighbourhood Area. Each banner had a different slogan and the banners were moved around between locations over several months. In August–September 2016 publicity banners for the Residents' Survey were set up at 2 strategic locations on the A51

The Neighbourhood Map, displayed at all community engagement and consultation events



and A53. Banners were again set up in the same 2 locations for the Pre-submission consultation in June–July 2018.

Residents' Survey

A Residents' Survey was conducted from mid-August to 20 September 2016. Distribution of the questionnaire to households and businesses in mid-August was preceded by publicity in local newsletters; 2 publicity banners were set up at strategic locations in the Neighbourhood Area, on the A51 and A53; notification was distributed via e-mail. Towards the end of the survey period reminder leaflets were distributed throughout the Neighbourhood Area and a reminder was sent to e-mail list subscribers.

In September Whitmore Parish Council organised a 'Family Fun Day' at Whitmore Village Hall. The Steering Group had a stall at which help with questionnaire was available. A short questionnaire for under-16s was available at this event, but it was not well supported.

In all, 2,150 questionnaires were delivered to 1,100 households and businesses in the Neighbourhood Area. Additional copies were available at Station Stores in Baldwins Gate. Collection points were provided at Aston village hall, Chapel Chorlton church, Maer church, the GP surgery in Baldwins Gate and Station Stores. The questionnaire was also available to complete online. A total of 540 completed questionnaires were received, making a response rate of just over 25%. All residents aged over 18 had been requested to complete a questionnaire (i.e. 1 person, 1 questionnaire); however, it is possible that in some cases 1 questionnaire per household was returned.

The entire Neighbourhood Area was leafleted in December 2016 and headline results from the Residents' Survey were reported. A [full report on the Residents' Survey](#) was published on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Roadshows: series 2

In March 2017 a second series of Roadshows were held across the Neighbourhood Area to report in detail on the results of the Residents' Survey and seek residents' views on the proposed vision and aims for the Neighbourhood Plan. These Roadshows took the same format as the previous series of events, with a presentation, information displays and open discussion. After the Roadshows a leaflet about the vision and aims of the plan and an article reporting on the Roadshows were distributed across the Neighbourhood Area.

Consultation events

Local Green Space consultation (see [Appendix 8](#))

Following a Local Green Space audit of the Neighbourhood Area in early summer 2017, a local consultation on proposed Local Green Spaces was held for 3 weeks in August 2017. This was advertised for the whole period on parish noticeboards and the Neighbourhood Plan website and included 2 drop-in consultation sessions held in the village halls at Whitmore and Maer.

Following a request from a community group for several further green spaces to be considered, an additional 3-week consultation period was held in September 2017 regarding those spaces.

The scene at Roadshows at Maer, Aston and Whitmore village halls in March 2017



Displays set up for Local Green Space drop-in sessions



Pre-submission consultation

For community engagement events during the Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultations please see section 4 below.

Stalls at open days

Whitmore Parish Council organised a number of open days at Whitmore Village Hall while the Neighbourhood Plan was in progress. The Steering Group had a stall at each of these events. The first of these was an ‘Information Day’ in March 2016. This was used as an occasion to engage with individuals who had not attended a Roadshow and to engage further with those who had already shown an interest. In advance of the event the entire Neighbourhood Area was leafleted for the first time.

In September 2016 a ‘Family Fun Day’ at Whitmore Village Hall was an occasion to engage people in the questionnaire process and offer help with completing the questionnaire. The event coincided with work on a Heritage and Character Assessment of the Neighbourhood Area and a display aimed to engage people with the area’s heritage assets.

In October 2018 an ‘Information Day and Autumn Fayre’ coincided with the Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation and Steering Group members were available to answer community members’ questions about the draft Plan.

Community engagement and events log (most recent first)

1 December 2018	One Way magazine December/ January issue	‘Onwards to the finishing post’
13 October 2018	Consultation	Regulation 14 consultation stall at ‘Information Day and Autumn Fayre’
1 October 2018	One Way magazine October issue	‘Community participation gives strength to Plan’
19 September–31 October 2018	Consultation	Regulation 14 consultation
September 2018	Whitmore Parish Council newsletter	Article ‘Nearly There!’ (same as Chorlton and Maer leaflet)
September 2018	Leaflet distributed to all households in Chorlton and Maer parishes	‘Nearly There!’
1 August 2018	One Way magazine August/ September issue	‘Policies, Policies, Policies!’
1 July 2018	One Way magazine June issue	‘Consulting on and Finalising the Plan’
27 June 2018	Consultation	Regulation 14 Consultation drop-in event at Whitmore Village Hall
19 June–31 July	Consultation	Regulation 14 consultation

2018

1 June 2018	One Way magazine June issue	'Local Consultation on the Plan'
1 April 2018	One Way magazine April/May issue	'Documenting the Neighbourhood Area'
6 March 2018	Meeting	Joint meeting of Parish Councils and Steering Group with consultant
1 March 2018	One Way magazine March issue	'Our Historic Environment'
February 2018	Whitmore Parish Council newsletter	Article 'A Milestone for the Plan' (same as Chorlton and Maer leaflet)
February 2018	Leaflet distributed to all households in Chorlton and Maer parishes	'A Milestone for the Plan'
1 February 2018	One Way magazine February issue	Article 'A Milestone for the Neighbourhood Plan'
1 December 2017	One Way magazine December 2017/January 2018 issue	Article 'Neighbourhood Plan, Local Plan'
1 November 2017	One Way magazine November issue	Article 'Leisure and Tourism in our Neighbourhood Area'
1 October 2017	One Way magazine October issue	Article 'A Numbers Game'
September 2017	Whitmore Parish Council newsletter	Article 'Summer 2017 progress report'
5 August 2017	Consultation	Local Green Space consultation drop-in event at Maer Village Hall
5 August 2017	Consultation	Local Green Space consultation drop-in event at Whitmore Village Hall
1 August 2017	One Way magazine August issue	Article 'Protecting Rural Character'
1 July 2017	One Way magazine July issue	Article 'The Plan takes Shape'
1 June 2017	One Way magazine June issue	Article 'What is the Countryside'
April 2017	Leaflet distributed to all households in Neighbourhood Area	Leaflet 'Vision and Aims' and article 'Vision and Aims presented at Roadshows'
1 April 2017	One Way magazine April issue	Article 'Protecting rural character while allowing for appropriate development'
20 March 2017	Roadshows	Roadshow at Whitmore Village Hall
15 March 2017	Roadshows	Roadshow at Maer Village Hall
8 March 2017	Roadshows	Roadshow at Aston Village Hall
2 March 2017	Roadshows	Roadshow for parish councils at Maer Village Hall

1 March	One Way magazine March issue	Roadshows announcement
1 February 2017	One Way magazine February issue	Article 'A Plan to Protect'
19–23 December 2016	Leaflet distributed to all households in Neighbourhood Area	Leaflet 'From Views to Vision' (preliminary findings of Residents' Survey)
1 December 2016	One Way magazine December issue	Article 'News Update'
1 October 2016	One Way magazine October issue	Article 'A Work in Progress'
17 September 2016	Family Fun Day	NDP stand at Parish Council-sponsored event, Whitmore Village Hall
13–14 August 2016	Questionnaire	Questionnaires distributed to households throughout Neighbourhood Area; banners set up in Baldwins Gate, Blackbrook and Maer Lane
1 August 2016	One Way magazine August issue	Questionnaire announcement
1 July 2016	One Way magazine July issue	Questionnaire announcement
1 June 2016	One Way magazine June issue	Article 'The Questionnaire'
April 2016	Whitmore Parish Council newsletter	Article 'It's your future!'
3 April 2016	Roadshows	Roadshow event at Baldwins Gate school, 3 sessions after school
1 April 2016	One Way magazine April issue	Article 'Mapping the Neighbourhood'
21 March 2016	Banners	Publicity banners set up at Aston and on Chorlton Moss
12 March 2016	Information Day	NDP stand at Parish Council-sponsored Information Day in Whitmore Village Hall
8–9 March 2016	Banners	First three publicity banners set up in Baldwins Gate, Chapel Chorlton and Stableford
4 March 2016	School event invitations	Invitations sent out to parents for NDP event at school on 13 April
3–8 March 2016	Leaflet distributed to all households in Neighbourhood Area	Leafletting in advance of Information Day
1 March 2016	One Way magazine March issue	Full-page ad for Neighbourhood Plan event at Whitmore parish Information Day
1 February 2016	One Way magazine February issue	Full-page ad for Neighbourhood Plan

		event at Information Day
14 December 2015	Roadshow at Whitmore Village Hall	Fifth of five Roadshows
9 December 2015	Roadshow at Butterton Church	Fourth of five Roadshows
8 December 2015	Roadshow at the Madonna Club, Stableford	Third of five Roadshows
2 December 2015	Roadshow at Maer Village Hall	Second of five Roadshows
December 2015	One Way magazine December– January issue	2-page article about upcoming Roadshows and event schedule
30 November 2015	Reminder about Roadshows	E-mail reminder to all subscribers on Neighbourhood Plan e-mail list, with link to report on Aston Roadshow
26/27 November 2015	Whitmore Parish Council newsletter	Front page article ‘A Roadshow near You’
26 November 2015	Roadshow at Aston Village Hall	First of five Roadshows to initiate community engagement ahead of questionnaire in February 2016
24/25 November 2015	Reminder about Roadshows	E-mail reminder to all subscribers on Neighbourhood Plan e-mail list; relayed by Baldwins Gate Action Group
31 October/1 November 2015	Posters for public meeting	Posted throughout the 3 parishes and distributed to clerks for parish noticeboards
30 October 2015	One Way magazine November issue	Advance notice re Roadshows
15 October 2015	Parish Councils Roadshow at Maer Village Hall	Attended by members of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore parish councils. Update on progress so far and pilot Roadshow
July 2015	Whitmore Parish Council newsletter	Front page article ‘A Neighbourhood Development Plan for our Parishes’
29 June 2015	Public meeting Whitmore Village Hall	Attended by residents from all three parishes. To announce the parish councils’ intention to make a Neighbourhood Development Plan and seek residents’ views/support

4 Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultations

The draft Plan was the subject of two rounds of Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation.

First consultation, 19 June–31 July 2018

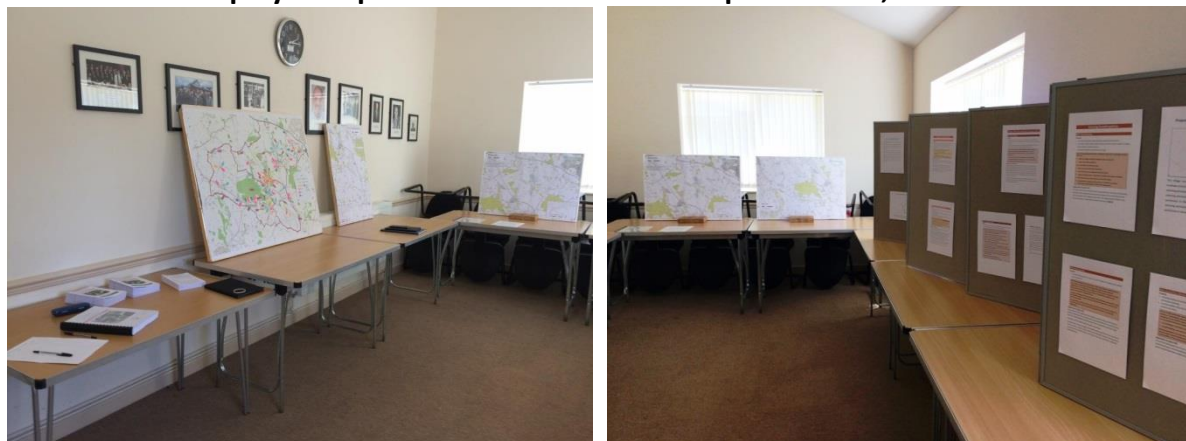
A Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation was held for 6 weeks, from 19 June to 31 July 2018. The consultation was formally advertised, starting a few days before its commencement and during the entire 6-week period, on all parish council noticeboards in the Neighbourhood Area, on the parish council websites and on the Neighbourhood Plan website. Banners were displayed at 2 key locations on the A51 and A53. Each household and business in the Neighbourhood Area received a 16-page booklet containing the colour-coded text of the Plan policies and details of how to participate in the consultation, and 2 copies of a paper response form (see [appendices 2a and 2b](#)). An e-mail notification was distributed to those who were signed up to the Neighbourhood Plan e-mail list. Notification was also sent out on Twitter.

Printed copies of the Plan were available for inspection at 4 key locations in the Neighbourhood Area and at Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's Customer Service centre in Newcastle-under-Lyme town centre. The Plan was also available to read online or download via the parish council and Neighbourhood Plan websites, and a form for online responses was available. The e-mail notices also contained live links to the Plan and online response form. A drop-in event was held on one afternoon and early evening at Whitmore village hall, which is the most centrally located community hall in the Neighbourhood Area. Several days prior to the commencement of the consultation Whitmore Parish Council (the lead parish council) sent notifications to a list of statutory and non-statutory consultees supplied by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (see [Appendix 1](#)). The following additional organisations and individuals were also notified: local GP practice; Baldwins Gate Primary School; all borough councillors; Bellway Homes West Midlands; Kier Living.

A total of 9 responses were received from consultees and 61 responses were received from residents. (See [appendices 3 and 4](#))

Following review of the consultation responses and amendments to the Plan, representatives of the Steering Group and their planning consultant met with a planning

Display set up for Local Consultation drop-in session, June 2018



policy officer at Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council to review the proposed amendments to the policies.

Second consultation, 19 September–31 October 2018

Due to a significant amendment to the Plan it was decided to hold a second Regulation 14 Pre-submission consultation. This took place from 19 September to 31 October 2018. The consultation was again formally advertised, starting a few days before its commencement and during the entire 6-week period, on all parish council noticeboards in the Neighbourhood Area, and on the parish council websites and the Neighbourhood Plan website. Households and businesses in the Neighbourhood Area received a flier informing them of the consultation and providing details of how to participate (see Appendix 5). An e-mail notification was distributed to those who were signed up to the Neighbourhood Plan e-mail list. Printed copies of the Plan were available for inspection at 3 key locations in the Neighbourhood Area. The Plan was also available to read online or download via the parish council and Neighbourhood Plan websites, and a form for online responses was available. The e-mail notices also contained live links to the Plan and response form. A drop-in event during the consultation took the form of a stall at the 'Information Day and Autumn Fayre' held by Whitmore Parish Council at Whitmore Village Hall on 13 October.

Notification of the consultation was sent to the same list of statutory and non-statutory consultees as before and to the same list of additional organisations and individuals. A total

Neighbourhood Plan consultation stall at Information Day, 13 October 2018



of 10 responses were received from consultees and 7 responses were received from residents. (See appendices 6 and 7).

Following review of the consultation responses and amendments to the Plan, representatives of the Steering Group and their planning consultant met with a planning policy officer at Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council to review the proposed amendments to the policies.