



Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council

Audley Rural Neighbourhood Plan

A STATEMENT SETTING OUT GENERAL INFORMATION AS TO TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING AND THE 25th SEPTEMBER 2025 REFERENDUM

Introduction

1. This Statement has been prepared in order to meet the requirements of the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended), which require that certain 'specified documents' are made available for inspection in advance of Neighbourhood Development Plan referendums. One of these specified documents is:

'a statement that sets out general information as to town and country planning (including neighbourhood planning) and the referendum, which is prepared having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State'.

(Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended):

[The Neighbourhood Planning \(Referendums\) Regulations 2012](#)

2. This Statement, along with the Independent Examiner's report, and other specified documents as set out within the Borough Council's Information Statement, can be viewed on the Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council website at: <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/planning-policy/referendum/> and at other locations as set out within the Borough Council's Information Statement.
3. This statement provides general information about the planning system, the role of Neighbourhood Plans, and summarises how they are produced.

The Planning System

4. The planning system manages the use and development of land and buildings, with the aim of creating sustainable places to live and work. Without a planning system in place, development would not be controlled and could take place anywhere, resulting in considerable impact on the environment and amenity of residents. Potential development is managed through planning applications, using local plans as a basis to make decisions.

5. The planning system has two parts which are usually the responsibility of the local planning authority (Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council):
 - Plan making - setting out proposals for development and policies to guide development
 - Development management – where planning decisions are made through the assessment of planning applications
6. Not all forms of development require planning permission as some proposed development, depending on the scale and type, is covered by ‘permitted development’. In the case of development that requires planning permission, the Borough Council is responsible for deciding whether this development should go ahead.

National Planning Policy

7. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF gives guidance to local planning authorities in drawing up development plans and on making decisions on planning applications. The NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and sets out core planning principles. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) supports the NPPF and provides further guidance on planning issues, including Neighbourhood Planning.

Local Plans

8. Local Plans are prepared by local planning authorities and set out the strategic priorities and planning policies for the local authority area. The policies in a Local Plan set out to deliver key development including the homes and jobs required, the provision of retail and community facilities and infrastructure. Policies relating to managing climate change, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment may also be included. Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy.

Newcastle under Lyme Borough Local Plan

9. The statutory Development Plan for the Borough currently consists of a number of documents and some saved policies. These are as follows:
 - Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy (adopted 2009)

- Saved policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (adopted 2003, with saved policies established in 2011)
- Minerals Local Plan (2015 – 2030) prepared by Staffordshire County Council
- Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Waste Local Plan (2010-2026)
- Several ‘Made’ Neighbourhood Plans for areas in the Borough such as Loggerheads & Madeley.

10. Once adopted, the new Local Plan (2020 – 2040) for the borough, which has in recent months been subject to Examination in Public, will replace the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy (2009) and Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan (2003).

Neighbourhood Planning

11. Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the 2011 Localism Act. It provides the opportunity for local communities to shape future development in their local area, through the development of a Neighbourhood Plan, which will be used alongside local and national planning policies when determining planning applications.

12. The development of a neighbourhood plan is led by a ‘qualifying body’, whether a Town or Parish Council, or a Neighbourhood Forum.

13. Plan preparation takes place over a number of years, with publicity, community engagement activities and consultation events together with a range of evidence gathering.

14. Once a Neighbourhood Plan has been submitted to the Council, further public consultation is undertaken to inform the Examination process. Once appointed, an Independent Examiner will check that the plan meets the Basic Conditions and other requirements set out in legislation.

15. The (relevant) basic conditions are:

- having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to ‘make’ (adopt) the neighbourhood plan.
- the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

- the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
- the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- prescribed conditions are met in relation to the plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (or neighbourhood plan).

16. The Borough Council then decides, following liaison with the Parish Council, and having regard to the statutory criteria, whether it agrees with the recommendations, whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and whether the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to referendum. The outcomes of which are presented in the Council's Decision Statement.

17. The referendum is organised by the Local Planning Authority (Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council).

18. People who are registered electors in the Neighbourhood Area will be entitled to vote in the referendum. This will be conducted following similar procedures to those used at local government elections. Further information on the conduct of the referendum, including deadlines for registration, postal and proxy votes can be found in the 'Information Statement'.

19. If at least 50% plus 1 of voters in the referendum support the plan, the Local Planning Authority must bring it into force. In most cases, the Local Planning Authority must make (adopt) the Neighbourhood Plan following a successful referendum result.

20. Once Made, a Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the statutory Development Plan and be used in determining planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area.

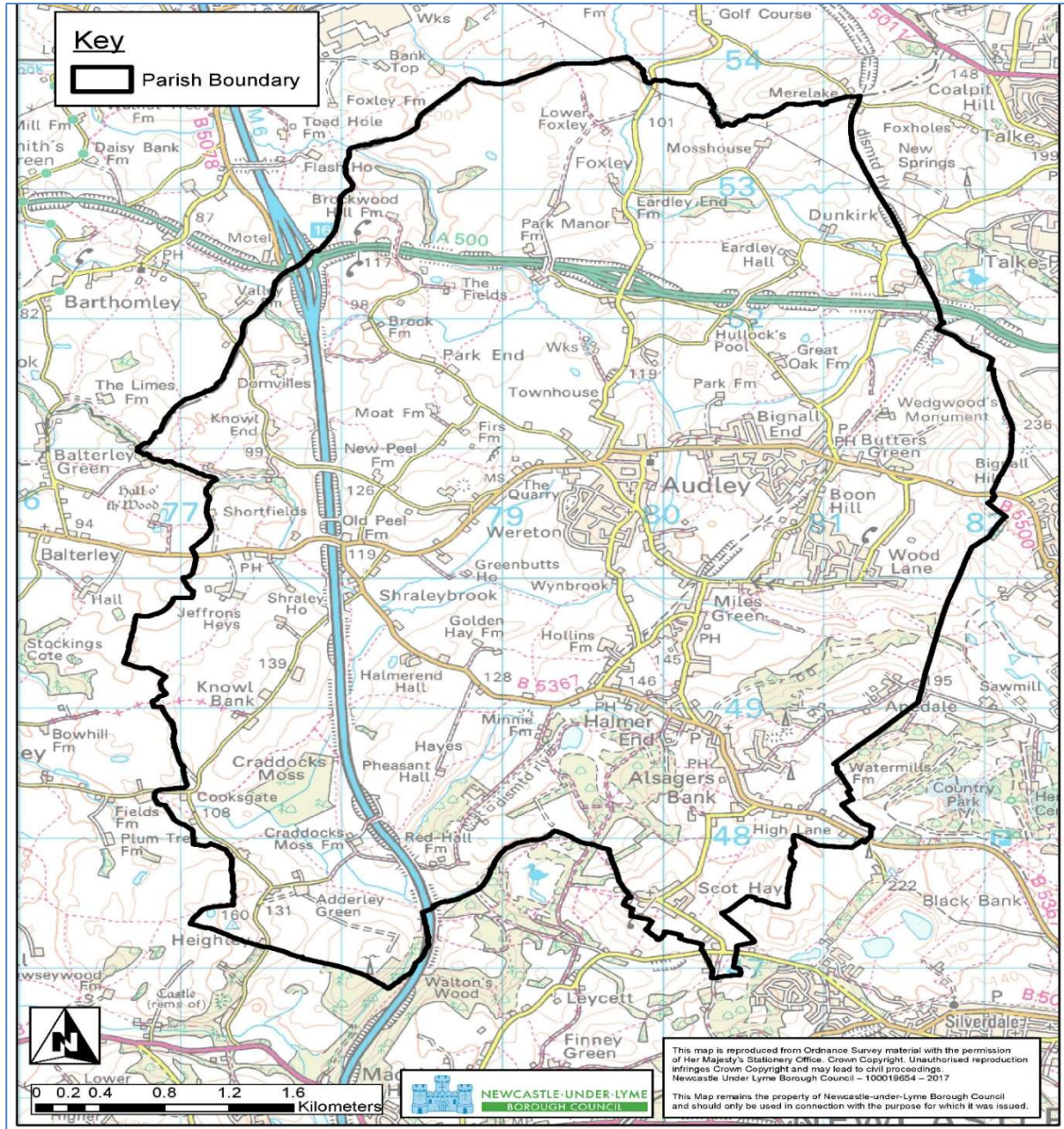
Questions and Answers

21. **What is a Neighbourhood Plan?** A planning document which contains priorities for an area, mainly in relation to housing, other buildings, the environment and the way in which land is used.

22. **Who has prepared the Neighbourhood Plan?** The Audley Rural Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Audley Parish Council (the 'Qualifying body')

23. Where does the Neighbourhood Plan cover? The Neighbourhood Plan covers the Audley Neighbourhood Plan Area (as per the map below), and as such, only the residents within this area are entitled to vote in this referendum.

Map of Audley Parish designated area for Neighbourhood Plan



24. What will the Neighbourhood Plan be used for? The Borough Council will use the Neighbourhood Plan to help determine the outcome of planning applications in the Audley Neighbourhood Plan Area.

25. What happens next? The referendum requires a simple 'yes' or 'no' vote. If there is a majority vote of 'yes' (at least 50% plus 1), then the Neighbourhood Plan will

(following a formal decision to this effect being reached by the Borough Council) become Made and form part of the statutory Development Plan.

26. If there is a majority vote of no, then the Audley Rural Neighbourhood Plan will not be Made (adopted).

Further Information

27. This Statement is available to view on Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council's website at:

<https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/planning-policy/referendum/>

28. If you have any questions or would like any further information in relation to the Audley Rural Neighbourhood Plan or this Statement, please feel free to contact the Borough Council's Planning Policy Team by phone (01782) 742456 or via email at planningpolicy@newcastle-staffs.gov.uk

Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council

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