

Central Lincolnshire Local Plan

The Relationship between the Local Plan and
Neighbourhood Plans

June 2021



Neighbourhood plans under the Local Plan

1. The Local Plan provides the strategic planning policy framework for Central Lincolnshire, distributing the growth required and setting out the broad requirements that development proposals need to satisfy in order to be acceptable in Central Lincolnshire.
2. Neighbourhood plans play a key role not only in delivering the strategic policies of the Local Plan, but in understanding and tackling local issues and opportunities. A large part of Central Lincolnshire is now covered by neighbourhood plans which provide an important additional layer of detail to the Local Plan's broader strategic policies. One of the key tests (or 'basic conditions') that neighbourhood plans must pass is in "general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan".
3. The purpose of this note is to provide clarity over how neighbourhood plans can relate to the strategic policies in the Local Plan and add value by building in locally-specific and finer grain detail into the planning policy framework for the area. It is hoped that this will promote the continued successful relationship between neighbourhood plans and the Local Plan, and where possible enhance the opportunities for Neighbourhood Planning by ensuring neighbourhood plans are specific to their area, whilst maintaining consistency and avoiding repetition and conflict. The note is primarily for the benefit of community groups clarifying how their neighbourhood plans can operate and interact alongside the Local Plan.
4. The note outlines what a neighbourhood plan should contain in relation to the Local Plan and how it can deliver its strategic policies at the detailed level. It also provides advice for neighbourhood plans which are being prepared or begun during the transition period between the current local plan and its review.

What should a neighbourhood plan contain?

5. The main driver for a community group to embark on a neighbourhood plan is to develop specific and more bespoke policy for their area which will become part of development plan when it is made. As planning law states, once a neighbourhood plan is made it becomes part of the development plan for that area. All importantly, the law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, including neighbourhood plans, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
6. The development plan must at least include strategic policies to address an area's priorities for the development and use of land. In Central Lincolnshire the development plan (which includes the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan, the Minerals and Waste Plans for Lincolnshire, and made neighbourhood plans) primarily comprises strategic policies. Neighbourhood plans cannot conflict with strategic policies in the Local Plan, and should avoid duplication where this is not necessary. Neighbourhood plans can add the greatest value where they focus on specific details and characteristics of their area through the development of non-strategic, locally-specific policies only. Neighbourhood plans can also allocate additional sites to any being allocated in the Local Plan. Put together they can effectively be viewed as chapters of the same decision making document forming the development plan.
7. Strategic policies in the Local Plan set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development in Central Lincolnshire. The Local Plan makes sufficient provision for key land uses and makes explicit which policies are strategic ones through a simple prefix at the start of the policy (S for strategic and NS for non-strategic). These are limited to those necessary to address the strategic priorities of the area and provide a clear starting point for any non-strategic policies that are needed and are best dealt with by neighbourhood plans.
8. Non-strategic policies in a neighbourhood plan can set out detailed policies for specific locations, neighbourhoods or types of development which can add real value. This can include allocation of sites (where capacity allows), the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, designating local green spaces, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, and

supporting community-led initiatives and priorities including those related to renewable and low carbon energy.

9. Neighbourhood plans can identify the special qualities of their areas and explain how this should be reflected in development. They can provide additional clarity about design expectations, using visual tools such as local design guides and codes. In the absence of a conservation area appraisal they can also describe features of historic significance (including the historic evolution of the settlement) and how the setting and significance of those features should be accounted for through development proposals. These provide a framework for creating distinctive local places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design.

The Local Plan Review

10. A neighbourhood plan submitted for examination must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan in force at the time if it is to pass examination. The current Local Plan came into force in April 2017 and in response to significant changes to national policy, a review is required to ensure it remains up to date. This work is in progress and it is expected that the Local Plan Review should be completed by the end of 2022.
11. For community groups embarking or preparing neighbourhood plans it is crucial for them to know when they are expecting to be submitting their plans for examination with respect to the adoption of the Local Plan Review. This will help determine whether their plans should be aligning with the current Local Plan or its emerging replacement. Groups should seek the advice and agreement of their respective local planning authority (West Lindsey, North Kesteven, Lincoln City) as early as possible in the process so as to confirm which version of the Local Plan they should best follow.
12. For neighbourhood plans being produced during the review it can often be useful to develop policies which will be consistent with both the 2017 Local Plan and the emerging draft Local Plan. This will help to ensure that it can proceed without delay and that it will not be made 'out of date' by the new Local Plan when it is adopted.
13. Equally Neighbourhood Plan Groups should be aware that because of the interdependence between the Local Plan and neighbourhood plan that significant changes to the Local Plan through a review may require the neighbourhood plan to be reviewed. As with all policy there is a 'shelf-life' and as such understanding and factoring in review periods for neighbourhood plans is important to ensure continued weight can be given to the policies contained within them.
14. Each parish, and currently designated neighbourhood area has been given a strategic housing requirement in Appendix 1 of the Local Plan. As the Local Plan makes sufficient provision to meet the Central Lincolnshire housing requirement, this number is based on homes expected to be built on allocated sites or sites with planning permission. All neighbourhood plans should be prepared with the expectation that this number will be achieved as a minimum.

How neighbourhood plans can help deliver Local Plan policies

15. The table below takes selected strategic policies from the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan Consultation Draft version June 2021 and for each policy provides examples of how a neighbourhood plan can take forward the policy's objectives and requirements and apply them at the detailed level adding substantial value to the strategic policies to the benefit of a neighbourhood. Where policies are not included, this is because it is considered unlikely that a neighbourhood plan would interact with the policy. Should this not be the case, it is highly recommended that contact is made with the relevant district council to discuss.
16. Most examples are based on the neighbourhood plan using policy map based or policy guidance approaches or a combination of both. The map based approach would involve for instance a

neighbourhood plan allocating land for development, designating land to be protected or defining key boundary lines while policy guidance would be additional to that provided by the local plan such as that provided by design codes for neighbourhoods.

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Strategic policies	Examples of how neighbourhood plans (NPs) can help deliver the strategic policies
<p>Policy S1: The Spatial Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy</p> <p>1. Lincoln Urban Area</p> <p>2. Main Towns</p> <p>3. Market Towns</p> <p>4. Large Villages</p> <p>5. Medium Villages</p> <p>6. Small Villages</p> <p>7. Hamlets</p>	<p>NPs in the Lincoln Urban Area should recognise the strategic and regional importance and role of Lincoln and aim to maintain and enhance this as required by Policy S1 (1). This can be achieved by NPs allocating sites for housing, employment, retail and wider service provision, additional to sites allocated in the Local Plan.</p> <p>NPs for main towns should aim to maintain and enhance their role as required by Policy S1 (2). This can be achieved by NPs allocating sites for housing, employment, retail and wider service provision, additional to sites allocated in the Local Plan.</p> <p>NPs for market towns should aim to maintain and enhance their role as required by Policy S1 (3). This can be achieved by NPs allocating sites for housing, employment, retail and wider service provision, additional to sites allocated in the Local Plan.</p> <p>NPs for large villages should help maintain and enhance their role as required by Policy S1 (4). NPs can help achieve this by allocating sites for housing, employment, retail, and key services and facilities for the local area, additional to any sites allocated in the Local Plan, where this is appropriate for the village.</p> <p>NPs for medium villages should ensure the vitality of the settlements while protecting their rural character as required by Policy S1 (5). NPs can help achieve this by identifying growth additional to any proposed by the Local Plan, where this is appropriate for the village, possibly through the allocation of additional small sites.</p> <p>NPs for small villages should ensure the vitality of the village while protecting its rural character as required by Policy S1 (6). NPs can help achieve this by identifying limited growth, additional to any sites proposed by the Local Plan, where this is appropriate for the village, possibly through the allocation of additional small sites.</p> <p>For hamlets, the Local Plan only permits single dwelling infill developments within their developed footprints, as stated in Policy S1 (7).</p> <p>NPs can assist the provision of infill sites in hamlets by the identification of their developed footprint boundaries. Infill sites should be located within it. The NP can also allocate infill sites in hamlets.</p> <p>Should a NP wish to grow a hamlet above these limited circumstances, it is highly recommended that the district council is involved in any discussions to understand why this might be beyond appropriate in the context of the Local Plan. Any development beyond</p>

Countryside	<p>infill in hamlets should only occur where this is truly sustainable and can be fully justified by evidence.</p> <p>NPs can effectively define the extent of the countryside in their areas. They can do this by identifying developed footprint boundaries for their village/s and hamlet/s. The countryside would in most cases be that area outside those boundaries.</p>
Policy S2: Growth Levels and Distribution	The majority of growth is expected to come forward on Strategic sites and sites in urban areas and larger, well-serviced or well-connected villages. Above allocations made in the Local Plan, neighbourhood plans can help to deliver growth that is needed locally to support the local economy, grow the community or to meet other local needs.
Policy S4: Housing Development in or Adjacent to Villages	<p>To support their role and function, NPs can allocate appropriately sized housing sites in large, medium, and small villages, additional to sites allocated in the local plan.</p> <p>For unallocated/ windfall sites, NPs may assist their provision via the identification of developed footprint boundaries for large, medium and small villages. To be appropriately located such sites would need to be sited inside the boundaries.</p> <p>To assist the provision of First Homes and/or rural affordable housing NPs can identify exception sites on greenfield sites adjacent to identified developed footprint boundaries of large, medium, or small villages.</p> <p>It is important to note, that any boundary being introduced will not necessarily be in place in perpetuity and will need to be reviewed through subsequent neighbourhood plan reviews.</p>
Policy S5: Development in the Countryside	<p>NPs can effectively identify the extent of the countryside in their areas. This can be achieved by identifying the developed footprint boundaries for their village/s and hamlet/s. The countryside would in most cases be that area outside those boundaries.</p> <p>Neighbourhood plans may wish to identify sites in the countryside for specific developments, but these should be limited to development that is consistent with Policy S5. Any other proposals should be discussed with the district council at the earliest opportunity to understand the suitability of the proposed development.</p>
Policy S6: Reducing Energy Consumption – Residential Buildings	Neighbourhood plans may, if there is adequate evidence to justify and to demonstrate viability, include additional, locally-specific detail for delivering higher energy efficiency standards, but should not seek to deliver less. Any sites being allocated in a neighbourhood plan should be capable of meeting these standards.
Policy S7: Reducing Energy Consumption – Non-Residential Buildings	Neighbourhood plans may, if there is adequate evidence to justify and to demonstrate viability, include additional, locally-specific detail for delivering higher energy efficiency standards, but should not seek to deliver less. Any sites being allocated in a neighbourhood plan should be capable of meeting these standards.
Policy S8: Reducing Energy Consumption – Decentralised Energy Networks and Combined Heat and Power	Should the opportunity be present or arise, a neighbourhood plan may seek to facilitate the delivery of a decentralised energy network. Any approach such as this would require sufficient evidence of deliverability.
Policy S13: Renewable Energy	Neighbourhood plans may wish to allocate specific sites to deliver renewable energy, potentially for community energy schemes within an areas identified in the Local Plan as being suitable for such

	<p>infrastructure. Sites for renewable energy generation should only be allocated following an assessment of the suitability of the site against the criteria in Policy S13 demonstrating that it would be suitable and following adequate consultation with the community.</p> <p>Additional, locally-specific criteria may also be added to help identify the impacts that would need to be considered in any relevant application for renewable energy. This should be based on evidenced analysis of the local area and should solely focus on local factors.</p>
Policy S16: Carbon Sinks	Neighbourhood plans may wish to protect carbon sinks within their area. Additionally, neighbourhood plans could seek to secure funding from development in their area to improve these carbon sinks.
Policy S21: Affordable Housing	NPs can allocate sites for affordable housing including specifying exact tenure mix. Such allocations would need to be supported by evidence of an up to date local housing needs assessment and may also be informed by the Central Lincolnshire Housing Needs Assessment (2020) or subsequent housing needs document. NPs can identify exception sites on greenfield sites adjacent to their identified developed footprint boundaries.
Policy S22: Meeting Accommodation Needs	Where identified by an up to date local housing needs assessment, NPs can provide housing solutions that contribute to meeting specialist needs of the local area. This could entail NPs expecting housing to be delivered at: higher access standards, exact housing type mix, and care accommodation. Viability assessments may be needed to enable such requirements being made.
Policy NS23: Custom and Self-build Housing	Where identified by up to date local evidence, NPs can require housing developments to provide plots for custom and self-build housing. NPs may also consider allocating sites specifically for custom and self-build plots or developments. Design codes may be included to provide specific requirements for custom or self-build developments on a site.
Policy S27: Spatial Strategy for Employment	NPs can seek to retain existing employment areas and can identify small scale sites for new economic development additional to any employment areas and allocations identified by the Local Plan.
Policy S38: Market Rasen and Caistor Town Centres	NPs can identify schemes that positively contribute to the viability and vitality of these town centres. This can include schemes for new village centre, residential, or commercial uses and can also include car parking provision and public realm enhancements.
Policy S39: District, Local and Village Centres	Schemes that positively contribute to the viability and vitality of the village centres can be identified in their NPs. These schemes can be for new village centre, residential, or commercial uses and can also include car parking provision and public realm enhancements.
Policy S41: Sustainable Urban Tourism	NPs for urban areas can recognise activities that will deliver high quality sustainable visitor facilities such as culture and leisure facilities, sporting attractions and visitor accommodation, potentially allocating specific sites for such uses.
Policy S42: Sustainable Rural Tourism	NPs for rural areas can identify activities that will deliver high quality sustainable visitor facilities and tourism attractions that are appropriate for the area, potentially allocating specific sites for such uses.
Policy S47: Walking and Cycling Infrastructure	NPs can ensure well designed, safe and convenient access for all both into and through development sites.

	They can also protect and improve existing walking and cycling routes including closing gaps or reducing deficiencies in their area's network.
Policy S48: Parking Provision	Where supported by local evidence, NPs can require alternative parking standards to those required by the local plan.
Policy S49: Community Facilities	Community facilities are an integral part of a settlement and can include leisure facilities, libraries, public houses, places of worship, community halls, any registered asset of community value, doctor's surgeries and hospitals, public houses, children's playgrounds, and sports facilities. NPs can identify specific facilities that are important locally and help prevent such facilities being lost to development. Sites for new community facilities can be allocated in NPs.
Policy S50: Creation of New Open Space, Sports and Leisure Facilities	Where open space is to be created in new housing developments, NPs can guide how this is to be provided, identifying local priorities.
Policy S52: Design and Amenity	<p>NPs can make a significant contribution to ensuring that development in their areas contributes positively to local character, and landscape and is inclusive to all.</p> <p>This can be facilitated by NPs producing character assessments, masterplans, design guides and design codes to support and inform the NP in ways such as to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect historic features • guard important local views. • prevent coalescence with other settlements • halt ribbon development. • deliver walkable and cyclable neighbourhoods • preserve natural features including hedgerows, trees, and waterbodies • strengthen and extend wildlife corridors and the green infrastructure network • identify valuable parts of the vernacular.
Policy S53: Health and Wellbeing	<p>NPs can promote access to healthy, fresh and locally produced food by identifying and enhancing the role of allotments, orchards, gardens and food markets in their areas.</p> <p>NPs can allocate sites for new health care facilities which should relate well to public transport services.</p>
Policy S56: The Historic Environment	NPs can identify non-designated heritage assets such as buildings and structures, but this can also include parks, gardens, cemeteries, landscapes or known archaeological monuments or sites. Such assets are not formally designated (listed), but are recognised locally as having a degree of significance because of their heritage, architectural or artistic interest.
Policy S58: Green Infrastructure Network	<p>Using map based policies, NPs can designate and thereby protect a range of green infrastructure assets such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allotments, community gardens and orchards, • amenity greenspaces - including play areas, communal spaces within housing areas, and village greens, • cemeteries, churchyards, • green corridors – including rivers and canals, main drains, rail corridors, hedgerows, ditches, cycle routes, pedestrian paths and rights of way,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • natural and semi-natural greenspaces – including woodland, scrub, grassland, wetlands, open water, existing sites of national and local biodiversity importance, • parks and gardens – including urban and country parks, • historic parks and gardens, and • previously developed land that is wildlife rich. <p>NPs can also identify and protect the linear features of the green infrastructure network that provide connectivity between green infrastructure assets, including public rights of way, bridleways, cycleways and waterways, and take opportunities to improve and expand such features.</p>
Policy S59: Protecting Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Networks of wildlife sites and corridors can be designated by NPs to help retain, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity features of such areas.
Policy S60: Biodiversity Opportunity and Delivering Measurable Net Gains	Networks of wildlife sites and corridors can be designated by NPs to help retain, protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity features of such areas.
Policy S62: Green Wedges	To prevent their coalescence, NPs can designate green gaps between neighbouring settlements.
Policy S63: Local Green Space	Green areas of value to local communities can be designated as local green spaces by NPs in order to protect them from unwanted development where these meet the required standards set out in national policy.
Policy S64: Important Open Space	NPs can designate additional important open spaces. Such spaces should be consistent with Policy S64 and should avoid the inclusion of churchyards, cemeteries, school playing fields, recreations grounds and allotments.
Policy S65: Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows	Tree groups, woodlands and hedgerows can be protected by NPs using map based policies. NPs can also seek to deliver additional trees and woodland or strategies for improving the local green