



Value My Land

Maximising Returns for Landowners

Neighbourhood Plans & Development Land

A Practical Guide for Landowners

How community-led planning policies, site allocations, settlement boundaries and Local Green Space can affect your land.



Value My Land

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What Is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A neighbourhood plan is a community-led planning document prepared for a defined area. It can contain planning policies, allocate development sites, establish design expectations and address settlement boundaries, infrastructure, community facilities and Local Green Space.

Once the statutory process has been completed, the plan becomes part of the development plan used to determine planning applications. For a landowner, its policies and mapped proposals can therefore support, reshape or restrict the future development potential of land.

A neighbourhood plan can become part of the statutory development plan and directly affect planning applications and development land.

Why do neighbourhood plans matter?

Neighbourhood planning gives local communities a direct role in shaping development while operating within national policy and the strategic Local Plan. A well-prepared plan should use proportionate evidence, compare realistic alternatives and contribute positively to sustainable development.

- Establish locally specific planning policies and design expectations
- Allocate suitable sites for housing, employment or community uses
- Define or refine settlement boundaries where strategically appropriate
- Identify infrastructure, facilities, green space and local priorities
- Become part of the statutory development plan following the required process

Where does it sit in the planning process?

Neighbourhood area and evidence → draft policies and site options → consultation → examination → referendum → made neighbourhood plan

[Read the Full Online Neighbourhood Plans Guide](#)

Why Landowners Should Pay Attention

Landowners sometimes become aware of a neighbourhood plan only after preferred sites, settlement boundaries or Local Green Space proposals have already been identified. By that stage, the evidence base and direction of the plan may be difficult to change.

Early engagement allows the landowner to explain the site, provide accurate ownership and availability information, respond to local objectives and ensure that constraints are assessed using evidence rather than assumption.

Early engagement can influence site options

During the evidence and options stage, a neighbourhood planning group may invite sites, review land already identified by the council or prepare its own assessment methodology. A clear submission made at this stage can influence which alternatives are tested and how the site is understood.

The plan can support or constrain development

A neighbourhood allocation can provide valuable policy support. Conversely, a restrictive boundary, Local Green Space proposal or poorly drafted site policy can affect development capacity, planning risk and value. The mapped boundary and exact wording are often as important as the general objective.

Use more than one planning route

The neighbourhood plan should not be treated as the only route for promoting land. A site may also need to be submitted through the council's Call for Sites, HELAA or SHLAA and Local Plan process. These submissions should use consistent boundaries, capacities and technical evidence.

The best time to engage is before preferred sites, boundaries and policy wording have been fixed.

Check Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan Progress

What Can a Neighbourhood Plan Say About Development?

A neighbourhood plan can influence the location, scale, design and local requirements of development. It must remain in general conformity with strategic policies and should not be used to plan for less development than the wider planning framework requires.

Site Allocations The plan can allocate suitable land for housing, employment, community facilities or other locally appropriate development.	Settlement Boundaries Where consistent with strategic policy, the plan may define or refine a built-up area or settlement boundary.
Design & Character Policies can address scale, density, materials, views, movement, landscape, heritage and the relationship with existing development.	Housing Mix & Local Needs The plan may support locally evidenced housing types, sizes or tenure outcomes where these remain deliverable and strategically consistent.
Infrastructure & Facilities Policies can identify transport, open space, community, education and other infrastructure priorities connected with growth.	Local Green Space The plan can designate qualifying land of particular local importance where every national criterion is properly evidenced.

What should a landowner check?

- The neighbourhood area, qualifying body, timetable and current plan stage
- Whether the plan intends to allocate sites or invite land submissions
- Proposed settlement boundaries, policy maps and development limits
- Local Green Space proposals and the evidence supporting each designation
- Housing, employment, design, landscape and infrastructure objectives
- The relationship with the Local Plan, HELAA or SHLAA and strategic policies
- Consultation deadlines and how formal representations must be submitted

A neighbourhood plan can add important local detail, but its policies must be evidence-based, clearly written, capable of delivery and consistent with the strategic planning framework.

What Makes a Strong Landowner Submission?

A strong landowner submission does more than identify a parcel on a plan. It explains why the land is a realistic option, how it responds to local and strategic objectives and how known planning and technical constraints can be addressed within a deliverable development framework.

1. **Identify the land clearly** - Provide an accurate red-line boundary, ownership information, current use and confirmation that the site is available.
2. **Explain the planning and community case** - Relate the proposal to the Local Plan, neighbourhood objectives, local needs, services and sustainable development.
3. **Present a realistic development concept** - Explain the proposed use and capacity and, where helpful, provide an indicative plan showing the developable area.
4. **Address constraints and solutions** - Review access, drainage, ecology, landscape, heritage, topography, utilities, neighbouring uses and title matters.
5. **Test policy conformity and alternatives** - Show how the site supports strategic policies and why it should be fairly compared with other reasonable options.
6. **Demonstrate availability and delivery** - Explain ownership control, infrastructure, viability, likely planning route, lead-in periods and the anticipated programme.

A strong submission explains why the land is a realistic and locally responsive development option - it does not rely on ownership or availability alone.

Could Your Land Be Allocated Through a Neighbourhood Plan?

Evidence That Can Strengthen a Site

The evidence should be proportionate to the site and the stage of the neighbourhood plan. The objective is not to commission every possible report immediately, but to provide enough reliable information for the planning group to understand whether the land is a genuine and deliverable option.

Site & Ownership Plan An accurate boundary, ownership information and availability statement establish exactly what land is being promoted.	Planning Policy Context The Local Plan, strategic policies, neighbourhood objectives and national policy explain the proper planning role of the site.
Settlement & Sustainability Evidence on services, facilities, public transport and settlement relationship helps demonstrate a sustainable location.	Access & Highways An initial access appraisal can identify a safe connection, visibility requirements and any land needed for improvements.
Environmental Constraints Flood risk, drainage, ecology, landscape, heritage, topography and neighbouring uses should be reviewed proportionately.	Concept Masterplan An indicative framework can show the developable area, access, green infrastructure, drainage and response to local character.
Utilities & Infrastructure Early enquiries can identify servicing options, network constraints, community infrastructure and abnormal delivery costs.	Availability, Viability & Delivery A realistic capacity, ownership position, lead-in period and programme demonstrate that the allocation can be implemented.

The strongest evidence is coordinated: it uses the same site boundary, capacity, access concept and core facts across the neighbourhood plan, HELAA or SHLAA, Call for Sites and Local Plan processes.

The Main Stages of a Neighbourhood Plan

The exact programme varies between areas, but most neighbourhood plans pass through a recognisable sequence. Landowners can participate at several stages, although earlier engagement normally provides the greatest opportunity to influence evidence, options and policy wording.

1. Area and qualifying body - The neighbourhood area is designated and the town or parish council, or an approved neighbourhood forum, leads the process.

2. Vision, objectives and evidence - The group identifies local issues, gathers proportionate evidence and establishes the matters the plan should address.

3. Policy and site options - Alternative policies, boundaries and development sites are identified and compared using a clear and consistent assessment method.

4. Pre-submission consultation - The draft plan, maps and evidence are published for consultation and the qualifying body considers the representations received.

5. Submission and publicity - The revised plan and supporting documents are submitted to the local planning authority, which publicises them for further representations.

6. Examination and referendum - An independent examiner tests the basic conditions and legal requirements before a compliant plan proceeds to local referendum.

7. Plan made, applied and reviewed - A successful plan is brought into force, used in planning decisions and reviewed where strategic policy or local circumstances change.

A made neighbourhood plan carries statutory weight, but its policies must still be read with the Local Plan, national policy and other material considerations.

Read: Planning Policy and Development Land

Read: Local Plan Allocation Guide

What If Your Land Is Proposed as Local Green Space?

Local Green Space is one of the neighbourhood planning proposals most likely to affect privately owned development land. The designation provides significant protection and should be based on the national criteria rather than used as a general means of preventing growth around a settlement.

The land should be reasonably close to the community it serves, demonstrably special and locally significant, local in character and not an extensive tract. The designation must also be consistent with sustainable planning and the delivery of sufficient homes, jobs and essential services.

A focused response can include:

- Checking the exact mapped boundary and the total area proposed
- Testing the claimed local significance and evidence of special value
- Reviewing proximity, character, scale, public access and community use
- Identifying planning permissions, allocations or strategic development options
- Assessing consistency with housing, employment and infrastructure needs
- Explaining whether another policy already protects the identified interest

Respond before the designation becomes part of the plan

Private ownership does not prevent Local Green Space designation, and public access is not always required. A landowner should therefore monitor draft evidence and consultation maps closely. Where the criteria are not met, the representation should address each test, identify the change requested and provide supporting plans and evidence. Waiting until a future planning application is made may be too late because the designation may already carry full development plan weight.

Local Green Space should be treated as a specific evidence test - not as a blanket means of preventing development around a settlement.

How Can a Neighbourhood Plan Affect Land Value?

A neighbourhood plan does not itself create development value. Its importance lies in changing the planning policy position. A site allocation or supportive policy can improve certainty and developer interest, while a restrictive boundary or Local Green Space designation may increase planning risk.

The effect depends on the stage and status of the plan, the wording of the policy, the site's relationship with the Local Plan and whether the land remains suitable, available and achievable. An allocation will normally still require a planning application and detailed technical evidence.

The value outcome is site-specific

Development capacity, access, infrastructure, affordable housing, abnormal costs, market conditions, planning obligations and timing all influence value. A neighbourhood allocation can be valuable, but an over-prescriptive or technically untested policy may reduce the number of homes that can actually be delivered.

Understand the plan before agreeing terms

Before selling, granting an option or entering into a promotion agreement, a landowner should establish the current plan stage, mapped proposals, consultation timetable and relationship with the strategic Local Plan. This helps avoid transferring the benefit of a planning opportunity or accepting terms based on an incorrect policy assumption.

For many landowners, the important question is not simply whether a neighbourhood plan exists, but whether its policies create, protect or restrict a realistic planning opportunity.

Find Out What Your Land May Be Worth

How Value My Land Can Help

Value My Land can review an emerging or made neighbourhood plan, the Local Plan, HELAA or SHLAA and the site-specific evidence affecting your land. The aim is to identify whether the site should be promoted, whether a draft policy or designation should be challenged and the strongest route for progressing the opportunity.

Neighbourhood Plan Review We review the plan stage, draft policies, evidence, maps, site options, settlement boundaries and Local Green Space proposals.	Site Promotion Submission We can prepare a clear site plan, planning case, availability evidence and supporting material for the neighbourhood process.
Representations & Policy Review We identify policy, boundary or site-assessment concerns and prepare focused representations explaining the change required.	Technical Team Management Where evidence is needed, we coordinate access, drainage, landscape, ecology, heritage, utilities and masterplanning work.
Coordinated Local Plan Strategy We align the neighbourhood submission with HELAA or SHLAA, Call for Sites and Local Plan promotion so the core case remains consistent.	Landowner-Focused Approach The strategy is proportionate to the plan stage, the realistic planning potential of the land and the landowner's objectives.

Promotion Agreements

Where we enter into a Promotion Agreement, we fund and manage the agreed planning and promotion process at our own cost and risk. This can include neighbourhood plan submissions, Local Plan representations, technical appraisals, masterplanning and, where appropriate, a planning application.

The landowner retains ownership and control of the land throughout the promotion process. Our remuneration is linked to the sale proceeds, aligning our objective with securing a deliverable planning position and maximising the value achieved for the land.

[Request a Free Neighbourhood Plan Review](#)



Is a Neighbourhood Plan Affecting Your Land?

If your land is within an emerging or made neighbourhood plan area, Value My Land can review the plan stage, policies, site allocations, settlement boundaries, Local Green Space proposals and the most appropriate route for promoting or protecting the development opportunity.

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**Value
My Land**

Delivering Sustainable Development

Further reading: [Neighbourhood Plans Guide](#) | [Planning Policy Guide](#) | [Local Plan Allocation Guide](#) | [Settlement Boundaries Guide](#)

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