



## **Waters Upton Neighbourhood Plan Referendum**

### **About this leaflet**

There will be a referendum on **Thursday 5 May 2016** concerning a neighbourhood plan for your area. It is called the Waters Upton Neighbourhood Plan. This leaflet explains more about the planning system in England, neighbourhood planning and how you can take part in the referendum.

### **The Planning System**

The planning system helps decide what gets built, where and when. It is essential for supporting economic growth, improving people's quality of life, and protecting the natural environment. Most new buildings, major changes to existing buildings or major changes to the local environment need planning permission. Without a planning system everyone could construct buildings or use land in any way they wanted, no matter what effect this would have on other people who live and work nearby.

Telford & Wrekin Council is responsible for deciding whether most forms of development should go ahead within the borough. Decisions are based on **national planning policy** and the local **development plan**.

### **National Planning Policy**

There are two main documents that set out the Government's policy on planning. The first of these is the National Planning Policy Framework. This provides guidance to local councils in drawing up local plans and on making decisions on planning applications. The Government also has an online Planning Practice Guidance resource which helps planning practitioners in their work.

You can find out more about national planning policy by going online to:

<http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>.

### **The Development Plan**

The development plan is a set of documents that set out the policies for the development and use of land across the local authority area. For Telford & Wrekin, the development plan comprises:

- The Telford and Wrekin Core Strategy (adopted December 2007)
- Saved policies of the Wrekin Local Plan (adopted February 2000)
- Saved policies of Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin Joint Structure Plan (adopted November 2002)
- Saved policies of Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Minerals Local Plan (adopted April 2000)
- The Central Telford Area Action Plan (adopted March 2011).

The Council is also in the process of preparing a new Local Plan - the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan - to replace these documents. The Council anticipates that it will be adopted in early 2017.

### **Neighbourhood Plans - what are they?**

Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011. It aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work by showing how the community wants land to be used and developed.

Neighbourhood Plans are required to meet certain “basic conditions” by having regard to national planning policy, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, being in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the borough as well as being compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements. They should not promote less development than set out in the development plan or undermine its strategic policies.

### **Who makes them?**

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils or neighbourhood forums and there is a statutory process that must be followed to make a plan.

The first neighbourhood plan made in the borough of Telford & Wrekin was prepared by Madeley Town Council.

### **How are neighbourhood plans made?**

The plan must be prepared through a process of consultation with local residents and businesses before an independent examiner reviews the plan and checks whether it meets the basic conditions and other legal requirements. The examiner then reports whether any modifications should be made to the plan and whether it should proceed to the next stage in the process which is the referendum stage.

The referendum will consider whether the Council should use the neighbourhood plan to help it decide planning applications in the area concerned. All those registered to vote within the neighbourhood area are entitled to vote in the referendum.

### **What status do they have?**

If more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the neighbourhood plan the Council must make it part of its development plan for the area to be used in determining decisions on planning applications.

Additional information in relation to neighbourhood planning online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning>.

Feel free to phone the Council’s Environment and Planning Policy team (01952 384241) if you have any queries about this leaflet.

Vincent Maher  
Strategic Planning Programme Manager