



Uttlesford
District Council



Neighbourhood Plan Protocol

July 2016



Table of Contents

Aims	1
Introduction	1
What type of plan is right for your community	1
Neighbourhood Development Plans	2
Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan	3
What area is covered by a Neighbourhood Plan	3
The role of the parish/town council	3
How to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan – The Process	4
Preparation	4
Strategic Environmental Assessment Process	5
Developing the Neighbourhood Plan	6
Community Engagement	6
Identify and Assess Options	7
The Draft Plan	8
Writing the Policies	9
Pre-Submission	9
Submission	9
Independent Examination	10
Referendum	11
Adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan	11
The role of the Council	11
Appendix 1 – Summary of Neighbourhood Planning Process	13
Appendix 2 - Summary of Local Plan Evidence Base	14
Appendix 3 – List of Consultee Bodies	18
Appendix 4 – Frequently Asked Questions	20

Neighbourhood Planning Protocol

1. Aims

- 1.1 The aim of this protocol is to provide clear guidance for those involved in the neighbourhood planning process. It sets out the stages required in working towards a neighbourhood plan and identifies the responsibilities of those involved.
- 1.2 This protocol also aims to help local communities decide whether neighbourhood planning is the right tool for what they want to achieve. As a statutory document, neighbourhood plans hold more weight than non-statutory documents such as community plans. They are, however, restricted to planning matters and must follow a statutory process which can take some time. It must be remembered that neighbourhood planning is not a 'no growth' agenda it is intended to guide and promote development.
- 1.3 Uttlesford District Council will be actively involved in the development of neighbourhood plans, and will help local communities to decide whether this is the right tool for them by offering guidance from officers in the planning policy team.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Localism Act and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) offers an opportunity for local communities to lead and prepare statutory plans for their localities. This opportunity requires communities to take on new roles and responsibilities for preparing statutory planning documents.
- 2.2 To support communities the Council has produced a Protocol for Neighbourhood Planning in Uttlesford. This is intended to :
 - Provide general overview and advice to interested local community groups on the Neighbourhood Planning process;
 - Provide guidance on how the Council will support and process Neighbourhood Plans; and
 - Provide a coordinated approach within the Council in relation to Neighbourhood Planning

3. What type of plan is right for your community?

- 3.1 A community should consider carefully the reasons why it wants to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. There may be other existing tools that could meet its objectives, including:
 - Parish Plans
 - Design Statements
 - Village Plan

3.2 Different issues will need different planning responses. The aim is to use the most appropriate form of plan to achieve the required outcomes. The table below demonstrates the difference between community plans and neighbourhood plans.

	Village Design Statement	Parish Plans	Neighbourhood Plans
Aims	To encourage developers and householders to design new development so that it is in keeping with local character	To take a holistic approach. It sets out a vision for how the community wants to develop in the future and to identify the actions required to achieve it.	Community-led planning framework for guiding the future development, regeneration and conservation of an area.
Scope	It should be about the design of new development and not be used to detail what type of development should take place in a village or to seek to protect local services/amenities	They can include everything that is relevant to the community, including social, economic and environmental issues. It can include more than planning related issues.	It is primarily about the use and development of land. It may contain a vision, aims, planning policies and proposals for improving the area or providing new facilities. It may allocate key sites for specific kinds of development. buildings
Status	If the VDS is adopted by the Council it can be used by officers as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications	If the Parish Plan is adopted as a material consideration, it can be used by officers in the determination of planning applications.	A formally adopted neighbourhood plan carries far more weight in the decision making process than parish plan and VDS. It will be part of the statutory development plan for the area, if successful at referendum

4. Neighbourhood Development Plans:

4.1 Communities can write a plan which, if passed at examination and successful at referendum, becomes part of the statutory planning framework for the area.

4.2 These Plans allow communities to establish general planning policies for the development and use of land within a defined neighbourhood area and so influence the type, design, location and mix of new development. These plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan for the District and be appropriate having regard to national planning policy and guidance. They should support the strategic development needs set out in the adopted Local Plan, plan positively to support local development and **should not promote less development** than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

4.3 A neighbourhood Plan will need to:

- Be led by a parish/town councils and relate to one neighbourhood area;
- Specify the period for which it will have effect;
- Be appropriate having regard to national policies and guidance
- Be in broad conformity with strategic policies in the Districts adopted Local Plan
- Be compliant with EU regulations and human rights requirements;
- Be accompanied by a proportionate Strategic Environmental Assessment or an SEA screening determination;
- Enable development, not prevent it
- Be considered and accepted at an independent examination;
- Be supported at a local referendum

5. Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

5.1 A Neighbourhood Plan must be initiated and prepared by a 'qualifying body'. Where there is a parish or town council for the whole or any part of the area to be covered by a Neighbourhood Plan then they will be the 'qualifying body'. For Uttlesford this means that all Neighbourhood Plans will be led by parish or town councils.

6. What area is covered by a Neighbourhood Plan?

6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area must be one that includes the whole or any part of the area of the parish. It is also possible to work with neighbouring parishes to produce a Neighbourhood Plan covering two or more parish areas.

6.2 An application for a Neighbourhood Area is submitted to Uttlesford District Council, who then determines whether the Neighbourhood Area is appropriate. The application needs to specify the period for which it is to have effect. At this stage public consultation is carried out by the District Council for 4 weeks to seek comments on the proposal.

7. The Role of the Parish/Town Council

7.1 In Uttlesford it is the parish and town councils who will initiate and lead the process of formulating a Neighbourhood Plan. It is important that the plan is not prepared in isolation from the rest of the community. There is a need to consider how to engage with all residents, community groups, statutory agencies and anyone else that has an interest in your community.

7.2 Parish Councils will be expected to:

- Form a steering group with terms of reference and representative stakeholder engagement;
- Set out a programme to undertake the Plan including date of submission. This should be discussed with officers to help the council safeguard time and resources
- Seek support from organisations funded by the Government to support Neighbourhood Planning (Locality - <http://locality.org.uk/projects/building-community/>);
- Seek opportunities for widespread stakeholder engagement;
- Maintain contact with the Council at key stages in drafting the Plan and advise of changes to programme;
- Adhere to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations' (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/pdfs/uksi_20120637_en.pdf)

How to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan

8. The Process – please see appendix 1.

8.1 The creation of a Neighbourhood Plan can be broken down into five key stages:

- Preparation – evidence gathering, awareness raising , early community and stakeholder engagement, vision and objective development
- Developing the Plan
- Examination
- Referendum
- Adoption

8.2 Once the District Council has made their decision on the Neighbourhood Area application the 'qualifying body' must refer to the regulations which sets out the formal process they must follow before submitting their plan to us.

9. Preparation

9.1 Gathering baseline information and evidence is an important stage in the process, it is vital not to jump too far ahead into the plan writing stage until a suitable evidence base has been prepared.

9.2 The government guidance states that while there are prescribed documents that must be submitted with a neighbourhood plan there is no tick box list of evidence required for neighbourhood planning. However, proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. The evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rational of the policies, and allocations if any are proposed.

9.3 Uttlesford District Council will share relevant evidence, including that gathered to supports its own plan-making (appendix 2) However, some more area specific information may be required and this is likely to depend upon the policies being included in the plan, and also whether sites are being allocated.

- 9.4 If sites are being allocated then site specific analysis will be required. A consistent and coherent approach to assessing sites will be needed in order to show that all sites have been considered and that the site(s) selected are the most sustainable option(s). In some instances the Council may have assessed the sites being considered by the parish/town council, in which case the parish/town council can make use of the Council's analysis when carrying out its own site assessment process. It is suggested that the parish/town council use, as a basis, the District Council's site assessment template for its own consideration of sites (<http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/sites>).
- 9.5 The box below sets out the type of evidence base which is likely to be required to underpin a neighbourhood plan. However, this will be dependent on the complexity and scope of the plan.

- Population size
- Household size
- Family composition
- Place of work and commuting patterns
- Current and emerging proposals that will affect the area
- Values and concerns of the local community
- Information on the area from the Local Plan
- Physical attributes
- Playing fields and open spaces
- Local infrastructure

The evidence base should also assess the area's strength and weaknesses, i.e.

- What is done well in the area
- What could be improved or changed
- What is missing from the area
- What resources are available
- What opportunities are there
- What are the physical and environmental barriers

Opinions could be gathered by surveys, community groups, work shops, focus groups etc.

- 9.6 The Council can provide useful information regarding site specific constraints which will inform the neighbourhood planning process, such as locations of flood zones and important landscape designations.

10. Strategic Environmental Assessment Process (SEA)

- 10.1 The SEA Directive relates to all plans including neighbourhood plans. The SEA process seeks to ensure that the environmental implications of plans are taken into account during preparation and adoption. An SEA is required if the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. The first stage is a screening assessment carried out by the District Council, in order to establish whether significant environmental effects are likely.

The District Council will consult the statutory consultees as part of the process. If the Plan is deemed likely to have significant environmental effects then a full Environmental Assessment will be required and this will need to be carried out in accordance with the relevant legislation. The SEA will need to be factored into the public consultation process associated with the neighbourhood plan and must be submitted with the final version of the Plan.

11. Developing the Neighbourhood Plan

11.1 Before a community group decides to embark on a neighbourhood plan they must be aware that:

- It can be a very intensive and long process
- It requires considerable commitment and funding
- There may be very difficult issues to tackle

11.2 There is no rule on what a Neighbourhood Plan should look like; however, it should contain clear policy statements alongside relevant accompanying maps. It needs to set out policies in relation to the development and use of land in the whole or any part of the neighbourhood area.

A Neighbourhood Plan can.....	A Neighbourhood Plan cannot....
✓ Decide where and what type of development should happen in the neighbourhood;	× Conflict with the strategic parts of the development plan
✓ Promote more development than is set out in the adopted Local Plan	× Be used to prevent development that has been identified in the adopted development plan; and
✓ Include policies for a range of issues including design, community facilities and local green space	× Be prepared by a body other than the parish / town council.

12. Community Engagement

12.1 Good communication, covering all of those interested in or affected by the neighbourhood plan is important right from the start and throughout the process. This will help to ensure that the submission meets the legislative requirements, is backed by a suitable evidence base; results in policies which are realistic and deliverable; ensures the plan gains public confidence and support moving towards the referendum stage; and avoids conflict and delays.

12.2 Government guidance on this issue states that:

“A qualifying body should be inclusive and open in the preparation of its neighbourhood plan or Order and ensure that the wider community:

- *Is kept fully informed of what is being proposed*
- *Is able to make their views known throughout the process*
- *Has opportunities to be actively involved in shaping the emerging neighbourhood plan or Order*
- *Is made aware of how their views have informed the draft neighbourhood plan or Order.”*

12.3 The local community must be engaged as the plan develops through consultation activity. It is advisable to consult the wider community and affected stakeholders on options for the policies in your plan before pre submission stage.

12.4 A consultation statement has to accompany the neighbourhood plan on submission. In light of the above, it will be important to ensure that the engagement process is as extensive as possible and includes relevant statutory consultees. There are a number of ways you can effectively engage with the community and wider stakeholders including:

- Drop in sessions
- Adverts / posters
- Letter and leaflet drops to everyone in the neighbourhood area
- Questionnaires
- Website and social media
- Notices in parish newsletters
- Talking to already local established groups

12.5 As part of the engagement process parish/town council will need to engage with landowners and the development industry. Government guidance states that:

“Other public bodies, landowners and the development industry should be involved in preparing a draft neighbourhood plan or Order. By doing this qualifying bodies will be better placed to produce plans that provide for sustainable development which benefits the local community whilst avoiding placing unrealistic pressures on the cost and deliverability of that development.”

12.6 The District Council has produced a Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) which provides details of the sites currently being promoted for development in the area. The parish / town council is not restricted to just those sites which have been identified in the SLAA.

12.7 It is vital to keep record of what public engagement takes place, as this will need to be included in the Consultation Statement which will be assessed by the independent examiner.

13. Identify and Assess Options

13.1 In the early stages it is necessary to look at various options. For example if sites are being allocated for development a site assessment process would be required, which would involve identifying various options and ranking those against a clearly defined list of sustainability objectives. Once this assessment has been carried out it will then be possible to identify the most sustainable option.

13.2 A range of options could be presented during the course of the public engagement process. This engagement can be used to refine and narrow the options. The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations¹ require that¹ before submitting the plan for examination, the plan’s

¹ The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended 2015)

proposals must be made available for wide community and stakeholder engagement. This means that the document consulted on at pre-submission stage should contain only the preferred approach.

14. The Draft Plan

14.1 There is no specific format which is required for a neighbourhood plan. The guidance below is designed to provide a basic framework for the production of a draft plan. This is not included in order to set out a prescriptive template as to how the plan should be drafted, rather it has been include to provide a helpful outline as to how the document could be organised.

The draft plan

Introduction

- this should clearly set out the background to the plan
- provide details of the body submitting the plan
- set out the neighbourhood area
- clearly state the plan period
- summarise the key findings from the evidence base

Context

This section will generally outline in more detail the nature of the neighbourhood area and provide an explanation of the findings from the evidence bas and public consultations. The information is likely to involve details of the built and natural environment, demographics, and provide details of the key issues affecting the neighbourhood area. This section should effectively form the basis for the policies and allocations. Visual aids should be used such as maps and photographs.

Vision and objectives

The vision and objectives of the plan needs to be clearly set out, with an accompanying supporting or concluding commentary setting out how the vision and objectives feed into the policies and allocations in the rest of the plan.

Policies and allocations

This section will include the draft policies in relation to the themes identified in the vision and objectives section. This could include policies in relation to:

- Housing supply
- Housing mix
- Affordable housing
- Design
- Historic environment
- Landscape
- Community facilities

The plan may also include allocations for development of:

- Housing sites

- Employment sites
- Community facilities

The site allocations will need to be accompanied by a policy setting out the site specific policy requirements and be clearly shown on OS maps. It is important to remember that any specific policy requirements need to be based on evidence.

A monitoring section will need to be provided, setting out how the progress of the plan will be monitored.

15. Writing the Policies

15.1 Policies need to be worded clearly and effectively. The government guidance on neighbourhood planning states that:

“A policy in a neighbourhood plan should be clear and unambiguous. It should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence. It should be distinct to reflect and respond to the unique characteristics and planning context of the specific neighbourhood area for which it has been prepared.”

15.2 Policies need to be positively worded in accordance with the NPPF. They should not restrict development.

16. Pre Submission

16.1 The parish/town council will need to publicise and consult on the draft neighbourhood plan for a minimum of 6 weeks. As part of this consultation the consultation bodies, as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (Schedule 1) need to be consulted with. A list of contact details relating to the consultation bodies is set out in Appendix 3.

16.2 Where an SEA is required the final Environment Report needs to be on consultation alongside the consultation on the draft plan.

16.3 It is advised that the consultation responses are summarised. Any changes proposed should be recorded and the reasons for the changes clearly explained.

16.4 If significant amendments are made to the plan during this process then it may be beneficial to carry out an additional round of public consultation on the amended draft before submission stage.

17. Submission to Uttlesford District Council

17.1 Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been drafted the qualifying body submits it to the Council.

17.2 The following documents are required at submission:

- The draft plan including a plan or statement setting out the area the plan relates to
- Basic condition statement
- Consultation statement
- Report required in relation to SEA

17.3 The District Council checks that the submission complies with relevant legislation and does the following:

- Publicises the proposal for a minimum of 6 weeks and invites representations
- Notifies the consultation bodies referred to in the consultation statement
- Appoints an independent examiner (with the agreement of the parish/town council). This is done through the Neighbourhood Planning Independent Examiners Referral Service.

18. Independent Examination

18.1 Uttlesford District Council is responsible for facilitating and funding the independent examination into the Neighbourhood Plan. The District Council and the Parish will decide who should be appointed to undertake an independent examination.

18.2 The main function of the examination will be to check that the Neighbourhood Plan conforms with the Basic Conditions:

- The strategic content of the Local Plan
- The National Planning Policy Framework and other national policies and advice
- EU directives
- National and international designations

18.3 The examination can normally be done without a hearing, however, where the examiner considers it necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue they must hold a hearing. The subject of a hearing is determined by the examiner.

18.4 The result of the examination will be a report that will have one of the following recommendations:

- That the draft Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum
- That it should proceed to a referendum, subject to certain amendments
- That the proposed Neighbourhood Plan should be refused

18.5 The District Council will publish the examiner's report and considers the examiners conclusions. The District Council needs to be satisfied that the neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions. The District Council can make modifications to the neighbourhood plan, however, this can only be in relation to the need to meet the basic conditions.

18.6 Having considered the examiner's report, where the District Council considers that the plan meets the basic conditions then it will formally decide to send the plan for referendum, however.

18.7 The district council must clearly set out the reasons for their decision and publicise and send a copy to the parish/town council. Where the decision of the district council departs from the recommendation of the independent examiner then the district council may also invite representations on that decision.

19. Referendum

19.1 The District Council is responsible for facilitating and funding the local referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan. The referendum will be open to any individual registered to vote in the parish, but the referendum may be extended to a wider area if appropriate.

19.2 The Plan requires the support of a majority of those who vote in the referendum.

20. Adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan

20.1 The District Council then adopts the plan and the plan is 'made'. The district council will publicise on the website a document setting out their decision and reasoning's, this is the decision document. The district council must send a copy of the decision document to the parish/town council and any other person who asked to be notified of the decision.

20.2 Once the Neighbourhood Plan has been adopted it becomes a part of the statutory development plan against which relevant planning applications will be determined.

21. The role of the Council

21.1 The Council will offer the following support to groups approved to progress Neighbourhood Development Plans:

- A lead officer from Planning Policy team will act as the Council's main point of contact;
- Face to face meetings with the group
- The Council will provide technical advice on the Neighbourhood Planning processes and planning issues;
- Provide available baseline data and make contacts with other parts of the Council as necessary;
- Provide advice on what supporting information will be required;
- Provide feedback on draft reports, etc.
- Advise on consultation requirements
- Provide a full mapping service
- Carry out the SEA Screening

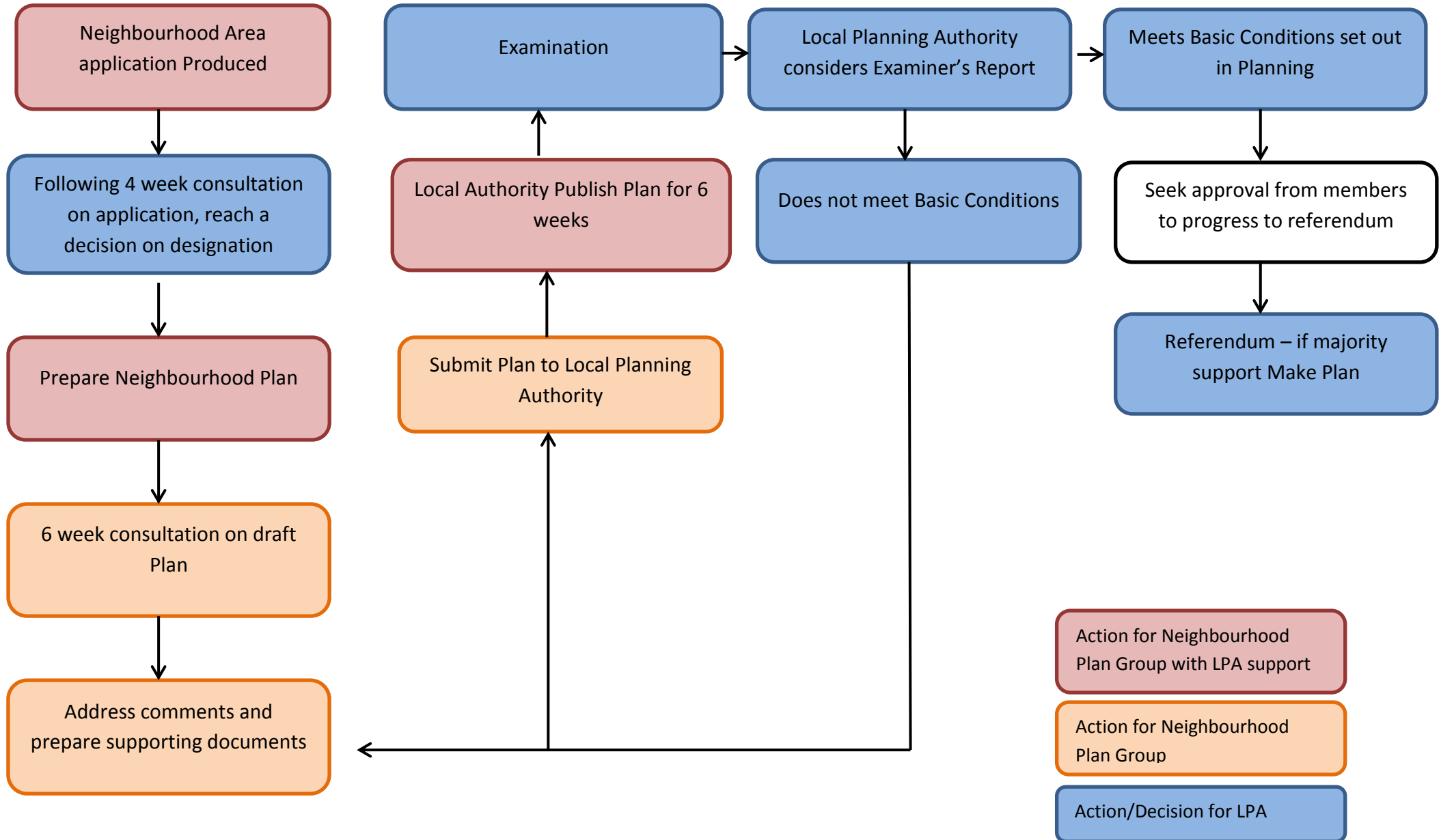
21.2 The Council employ (1 day a week) Modicum Planning to support Neighbourhood Planning groups in the District. A range of support is provided please contact the planning policy team for details.

21.3 Please note that the above assistance will be subject to demand and available resources. The Council ask neighbourhood plan groups to give as much notice as possible to allow the Council to respond to requests in the most helpful way.

- 21.4 The district council will provide feedback on emerging plans and supporting documents prior to submission. If the District council considers that a draft neighbourhood plan may fall short of meeting the basic conditions, they will discuss their concerns with the parish/town council.
- 21.5 The parish /town council is encouraged to submit their draft material to the district council prior to submission so that the Council can provide constructive comments. The district council require 4 weeks in order to properly review the draft document. This will ensure that as many potential problems as possible which could be encountered down the line are avoided.
- 21.6 Comments provided by the district council will typically cover the following:
- The statutory requirements have been met in terms of the designation of the neighbourhood area
 - The plan has been subject to appropriate pre-submission consultation and publicity
 - There has been a programme of community engagement proportionate to the scale and complexity of the plan as well as consideration of the consultation statement prepared
 - Screening has been carried out in relation to EU obligations
 - The policies are clear, unambiguous and appropriately justified
 - Whether there are any obvious conflicts with the NPPF
 - Whether there is conflict with the District Councils strategic policies
 - Whether there are any issues concerning compatibility with human rights legislation
 - Whether there are any obvious errors or other matters that require further consideration
- 21.7 The district council has also set up a Neighbourhood Plans blogging page. This is a closed group for all those involved in the district with neighbourhood plans. This is a tool for steering group members to ask for help, advice and ideas. It also allows the council to keep the groups up-to-date with latest guidance, events and news. Once your neighbourhood plan area has been designated the council will enrol you into this group.
- 21.8 The Rural Community Council for Essex offer support to neighbourhood plan groups. Please contact the planning policy team to discuss your requirements.
- 21.9 Please see appendix 4 for Frequently Asked Questions.

Good luck and we look forward to working with you on your Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 1 - Summary of Neighbourhood Planning Process



Appendix 2 - Summary of Local Plan evidence base

The council has prepared a comprehensive evidence base to inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The following table summarises which studies have been undertaken and when.

Document	Summary
Air Quality Assessment in Saffron Walden - 2013	Air quality assessment of the effects of proposed developments in the withdrawn plan on nitrogen dioxide concentrations. This assessment is aimed at identifying whether mitigation is required and/or possible in the opening year.
Assessment of Development Opportunity Sites - 2012	An assessment of the proposed development opportunity sites, identified in the withdrawn plan, in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted Mountfitchet.
Countryside Protection Zone Study - 2016	An assessment of the Countryside Protection Zone (CPZ) to look at the extent to which the land within the CPZ is meeting its purposes as set out in Policy S8 of the Uttlesford Local Plan. This will enable the Council to make informed decisions, should it decide to amend the CPZ through the Local Plan.
Uttlesford Cycling Study - 2014	Study to identify potential ways to increase cycling in the District, help allocate funding for new cycle schemes, increase the use of sustainable transport and facilitate economic growth and development.
Commercial Workspace Study – June 2015	The objectives of the study are to identify the existing and potential demand in commercial workspace, identify any existing and forecast gaps in the supply of commercial workspace and where any gaps exist identify and evaluate options for filling them within the District.
Employment Lan Review - 2011	This report considers the need for land and premises for employment purposes in the District.
Employment Land Monitoring - 2014	This report looks at the availability of employment land within the District in terms of allocated land and land with planning permission for employment uses.
Green belt Review - 2016	
Essex Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment - 2014	The study seeks to provide an evidence base to enable the authorities to comply with their requirements towards Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople. The main objective of the study is to provide evidence about the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers during the period up to 2033.
Habitats Regulation Assessment - 2014	This report documents the process and findings of a Habitat Regulation Assessment of the Uttlesford Pre-Submission Local Plan. The purpose of the HRA Screening Stage is to determine whether any of the site allocations, strategic polices and development management policies are like to have a significant effect on European protected sites.
Health – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - 2008	A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is a means by which Primary Care Trusts and local authorities will describe the future of health and wellbeing needs of local populations

	and the strategic direction of service delivery to meet these needs.
Historic Settlement Character Assessment 2007 for Great Chesterford Great Dunmow Henham Newport Saffron Walden Stansted Thaxted	This study has been commissioned to inform long term planning for the management and conservation of its historic environment.
Affordable Housing Viability Update - 2012	The purpose of this study was to undertake a strategic assessment of the viability of a range of housing development that will inform planning policy.
Demographic Forecasts - 2014	<p>During 2010-12, the Essex Planning Officers Association (EPOA) commissioned a programme of work which delivered a range of demographic forecasts for its member authorities, providing a suite of scenarios from which future growth trajectories might be evaluated. This project was conducted in four phases and concluded in summer 2012.</p> <p>EPOA has now extended this commission to provide an annual update to the demographic forecasting evidence for its member authorities. This new evidence continues to include a variety of scenarios, including migration-led, dwelling-led and economic-led approaches to demographic forecasts.</p> <p>It will be for Uttlesford to determine its use of the forecasts and other outputs from this project to inform its future spatial policy development.</p>
Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAN) for West Essex and Herts - 2015	This report was commissioned to provide economic evidence that will be used to help calculate the OAN within Essex and East Herts Strategic Housing Market Assessment.
Housing Strategy 2012-2015	The Council's new Housing Strategy has been written alongside the new Local Plan for the District. The documents show the future housing priorities in the District and how they can be delivered. The targets are challenging in a housing market that is still unpredictable.
Five Year Housing Supply	This paper sets out the housing supply situation as at 31 st March 2014
Housing Trajectory and Five Year Supply 2015	Report on housing completions and trajectory 2011-2033
Strategic Land Availability Assessment 2015	The Strategic Land Availability Assessment (SLAA) will consider all sites capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings or economic development on sites of 0.25 ha (or 500m2 floorspace) or above, or Gypsy and Traveller sites which could accommodate 1 or more pitches.
Strategic Housing Market Assessment - 2015	The Council together with its partner authorities of East Herts, Epping Forest and Harlow commissioned

	consultants ORS to carry out a strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). The primary purpose of the Assessment is to inform the production of the Local Plan (which sets out the spatial policy for a local area).
Infrastructure Development Plan - 2014	In order to make sure that new development delivers sustainable communities, the associated infrastructure needs of these populations must be properly planned so that the facilities and services needed are provided on time and to an appropriate standard. The IDP includes details of the infrastructure identified by the Council and other service providers as being needed to support the implementation of the Local Plan.
Landscape Character Assessment - 2006	This study provides a comprehensive assessment of the landscape character within the study area to inform land use planning and land management decisions.
Local Wildlife Site Review - 2007	A re-assessment of selected Local Wildlife Sites.
Open Space, Sport Facility and Playing Pitch Strategy - 2012	This study provides information on the networks of accessible, high quality open spaces, sports and recreation provision for existing and future needs; the need for new provision and the enhancement of existing provision; and provides clarity for developers in terms of the requirements for open space provision.
Protected Lanes Assessment - 2012	Essex County Council's Historic Environment Branch was commissioned by Uttlesford District Council in 2012 to undertake an assessment of the District's existing Protected Lanes using the new Protected Lanes criteria developed for the County (ECC 2009). This report presents the findings of that assessment.
Renewable Energy Study of the District - 2008	This study is a comprehensive review of the renewable energy resources and potential for renewable energy technologies within Uttlesford District.
District Retail Study - 2014	The purpose of the study is to examine the existing shopping patterns in the area, the nature and content of the shopping facilities within the district and the need for additional facilities.
Schools Organisational Plan – 2012-2017	Commissioning school places in Essex 2012/17 sets out the requirement for places in maintained primary and secondary schools until 2017, and identifies the areas where providers will need to match supply with demand.
Sports Facilities Development Strategy - 2016	The aims of this study are to contribute wider aims and objectives for improving health and well-being, to relate facility needs to sports development, to list deliverable projects.
Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - 2016	A study to identify the extent of flood risk in Uttlesford and to supplement current flood policy guidelines.
Town and Village Profiles - 2012	Profiles for District's two towns and the seven Key Villages include details about housing, employment, infrastructure and transport, minerals and waste, the historic environment and recreational land.
Comparative Transport Analysis - 2010	This report analysis the requirements and potential issues of the preferred options. It focuses on the strategic site at

	Elsenham and the alternative sites for new settlements being suggested to the district council; and the maximum development being proposed at Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet and Takeley under options 1 and 2.
Local Plan Highway Impact Assessment – 2013 and 2014	Essex Highways were commissioned to undertake a study to assess the existing situation in key locations, and then assess the implications of the Uttlesford Local Plan (ULP) in highways terms at key junctions, and identify and evaluate mitigation measures, if required. Two future years, 2018 and 2026 have been assessed, with a base year of 2012.
Uttlesford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project – 2009	The historic environment is sensitive to change and needs to be properly understood before change is planned. This document assesses the historic environment to come to some conclusions about the sensitivity, diversity and value of the historic environment resource within the district.
Water Cycle Study - 2012	A water cycle study has been undertaken by Hyder Consulting in association with the district council and key stakeholders such as the Environment Agency and the water companies to make sure that the most sustainable water infrastructure is provided where and when it is needed

The Council is always updating their evidence base so please check the website for a comprehensive, up-to-date list.

<http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/backgroundstudies>

Appendix 3: List of Consultee Bodies

Statutory Consultee	Contact Details
Essex County Council	Essex County Council Environment, Sustainability and Highways Principle Planner County Hall Chelmsford CM1 1QH
Environment Agency	Environment Agency Sustainable Places Team Leader Iceni House Cobham Road Ipswich Suffolk IP3 9JD
Highways Agency	Highways England Network Delivery and Development 2 nd Floor Woodlands Manton Lane Bedford MK41 7LW
Natural England	Natural England Consultation Service Hornbeam House Electra Way Crewe CW1 6GJ consultations@naturalengland.org.uk
Historic England	Historic England Historic Environment Planning Advisor 24 Brooklands Avenue Cambridge CB2 8BU eastplanningpolicy@historicengland.org.uk
Department for Transport	Department for Transport Strategic Planning Team Great Minster House 76 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DR
Telecommunications companies	Mobile Operators Association Moa.annualrollout@monoconsultants.com BT Openreach BT Centre 81 Newgate Street

	London EC1A 7AJ
Gas and Electricity Companies	National Grid/AMEC AMEC Environment and Infrastructure UK Limited Gables House Kenilworth Road Leamington Spa CV32 6JX
Water Companies	Anglian Water Planning Liaison Manager Thorpe Wood House Thorpe Wood Peterborough PE3 6WT
Health	West Essex CCG and NHS England C/O Agent Lawson Planning Partnership 882 The Crescent Colchester Business Park Colchester CO4 9YQ

This is not a complete list and contact details often change, we recommend that you check the address/email details before you consult.

Appendix 4 – Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Neighbourhood Plan?

A Neighbourhood Plan is a plan which will focus on local areas rather than the District as a whole. Neighbourhood Plans are produced by communities, although the District Council will provide advice and support. The plan making process must be led by the local parish or town council. Policies in the Neighbourhood Plan need to relate to the use of land in the area. If 'made' they will form part of the development plan for the District and will be used to assist in the determination of all planning applications in that area.

Who can produce a Neighbourhood Plan in Uttlesford?

Parish and town councils.

What might a neighbourhood plan look like?

Government has said that the neighbourhood should decide what a Neighbourhood Plan contains, but that they should be flexible enough to address different needs and expectations. They could have high level visions and objectives for the future of an area, they could identify development sites.

The Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the formal planning process and set the tone for future change and development. It must be in conformity with national planning policies and the strategic policies in the Councils Local Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan cannot promote less housing development than envisages in the Council's development plan.

Can a Neighbourhood Plan stop development?

No. a Neighbourhood Plan can guide development to be more appropriate to local context and help decide where development should go. However the Government is very clear that it will not be possible to use Neighbourhood Plans to stop development. Indeed it is the Government's expectation that Neighbourhood Plans will at least provide for development to meet local needs and provide the opportunity to identify an increased level of development within their area if appropriate.

What is the difference between neighbourhood plans and community plans or village plans?

Community and village plans can cover all things important to a community. Neighbourhood plans are restricted to land use and development matters, which once adopted will become part of the formal local development plan, should relate to the use and development of land within the neighbourhood area. In addition the process and regulations set out in the Localism Act 2011 will need to be followed when preparing a neighbourhood plan.

What conditions must a neighbourhood plan fulfil?

neighbourhood planning does not mean that communities can plan how and what they like. There are still parameters set by national, regional and local planning policies and neighbourhood plans will have to meet a number of conditions:

- They must have regard to national planning policy;
- They must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained within the local development plan; and
- They must be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements

How much work will be required to produce a neighbourhood plan?

This will largely depend on how much detail the plan goes into. Neighbourhood Plans will need to use appropriate, proportionate and up-to-date evidence to support the proposed policies. In addition there are minimum statutory requirements that will need to be completed.

What evidence has the Council already produced?

The Council has undertaken /undertaking a number of studies and research into a number of planning topics. This evidence base can be used to inform the neighbourhood plan process. To view the Council's current evidence base go to our website:

<http://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/backgroundstudies>

What weight will be given to neighbourhood plans in planning decisions?

When adopted, neighbourhood plans will be statutory planning documents. They will form part of the local development plan. Once adopted, neighbourhood plans will have significant weight in making decisions on planning applications.

What is the Council's role in the neighbourhood planning process?

The Council has a duty to provide technical advice and practical support to those producing a neighbourhood plan. The Council employ a planning consultant to work with neighbourhood plan groups to assist them when required. Council officers meet with neighbourhood plan groups to advice and discuss. It also has to:

- Agree the boundary area to be covered by a neighbourhood plan;
- Organise the check by an independent examiner into a neighbourhood plan before it can go to referendum;
- Organise the referendums; the plan will need to get majority support;
- Adopt the neighbourhood plan and bring it into force

Who will pay for the neighbourhood planning process?

It will be up to the Neighbourhood group to pay for the preparation of a neighbourhood plan. There are grants available from Locality (up to £9,000 in grant for each group) and UDC (between £5,000 and £10,000 per group)

The Council pay for the independent examination and the referendum.

The relationship between a Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan

The Local Plan for Uttlesford will set out the statutory planning policies and proposals for the District.

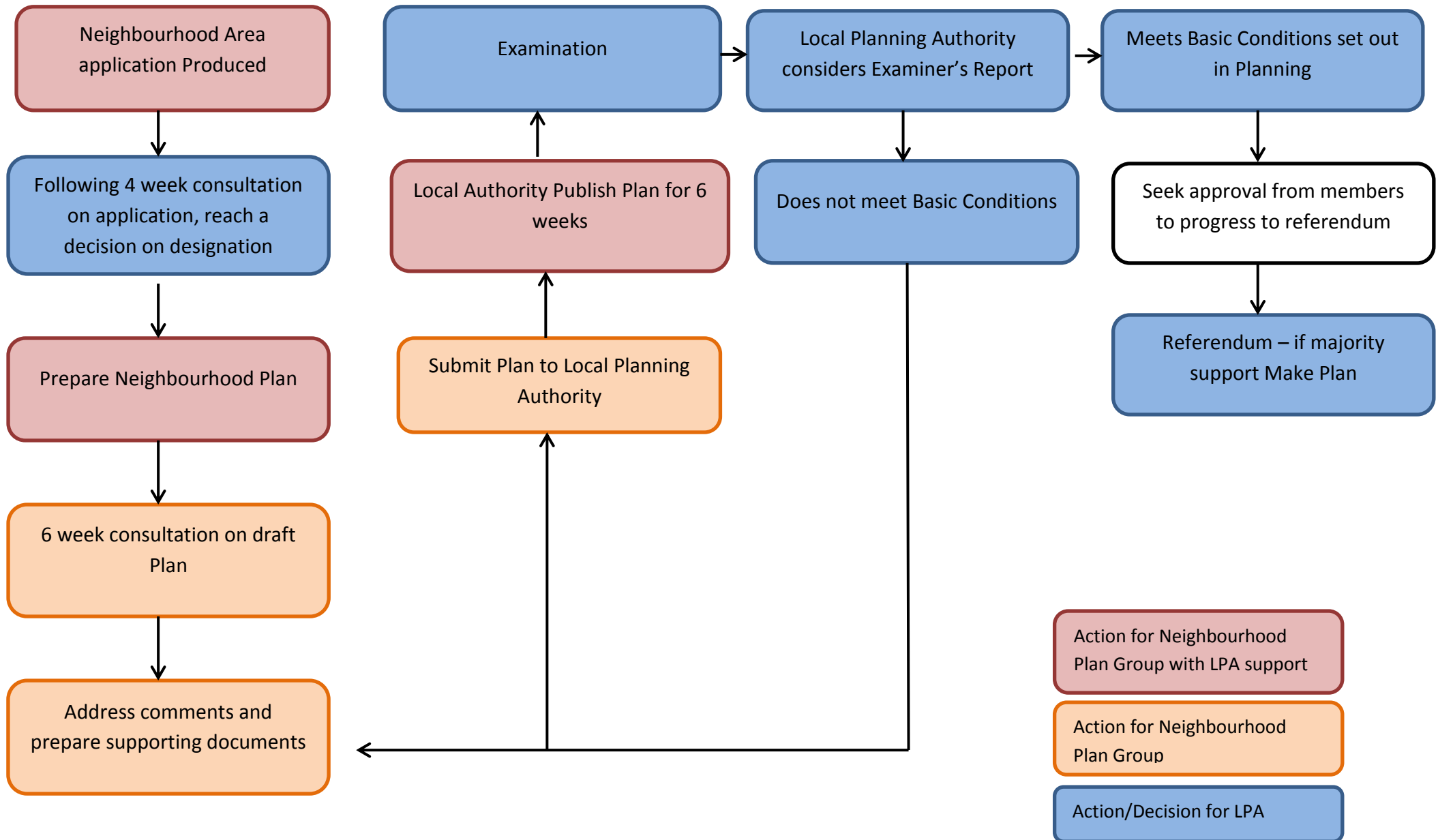
Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with these strategic policies. If a Local Plan that identifies different levels of growth to an adopted Neighbourhood Plan is adopted subsequent to that Neighbourhood Plan then the Local Plan will take precedence over that Neighbourhood Plan. This means that whilst it is possible for a Parish to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan prior to the option of a Local Plan by the District Council this could result in the Neighbourhood Plan being overridden if it does not allocated at least the minimum amount of development allocated in the Local Plan. However, Neighbourhood Plans can be prepared regardless of the stage of preparation of the Council's Plan. Where neighbourhood planning is undertaken before an up-to-date local plan, collaboration between the community and the council is critical. The District Council will take an active role in advising and supporting the Plan preparation process by sharing evidence and information.

It is important to remember that a neighbourhood plan does not have to include site allocations.

Who should I contact if I want to find out more?

Contact the Planning Policy Team by emailing planningpolicy@uttlesford.gov.uk or calling 01799 510637

Summary of Neighbourhood Planning Process



Action for Neighbourhood Plan Group with LPA support

Action for Neighbourhood Plan Group

Action/Decision for LPA