



## Neighbourhood Development Plan

### A Milestone for the Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Development Plan is now poised to enter an important and exciting new phase. After 2½ years of collecting and analysing evidence, formulating and drafting policies, and organising the evidence into a written supporting document, we now have a draft Plan. It has been submitted to the three parish councils for review and comment, and the draft policies have been submitted to the Borough Council's Planning Policy Team for initial comment.

In the next phase of work the Neighbourhood Plan will go through a series of legally required processes before it can finally be adopted and come into effect. From now on, progress will largely be in the hands of the Borough Council, and will also depend on the outcome of each step.

The first step is **Environmental Screening**. We hope that by the time you read this article the complete draft Plan will have been submitted to the Borough's Planning Policy Team. They will send the Plan to three governmental agencies: Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency for review and comment. This is expected to take about 2 months. Depending on the results we may be able to proceed straight to Local Consultation, or a technical review called **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** may be required. SEA would assess the Plan's likely impact on the local environment. If SEA is required, it is likely to take 3-4 months.

The purpose of Neighbourhood Plans is to enable "local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community", and the **Local Consultation** is one of the most important stages in making the Plan. This is the stage when the local community is invited to review and comment on the draft Plan and its policies. We hope that all eligible residents will participate in the Local Consultation.

The Local Consultation will take 6 weeks. Every household will be notified and all residents aged 16 years or over will be invited to say whether or not they agree with the Plan and its policies, and to submit any other comments that they wish to make. The draft Plan will be available on the parish council and Neighbourhood Plan websites, and printed copies will be placed in accessible locations such as the village halls and churches. A number of informal drop-in consultation sessions will be held at Whitmore village hall, the most central meeting point in the Neighbourhood Area.

Following the Local Consultation all responses will be reviewed and some changes to the draft Plan and its policies may be necessary. The completed Plan will then be submitted to the Borough Council. The Council must then conduct a second 6-week consultation on the Plan, following which it will proceed to **Independent Examination**. If the Independent Examiner finds that the Plan meets what are called the "basic conditions" he or she will recommend that it proceeds to Local Referendum. The Examiner may also recommend that prior to the referendum some modifications should be made to the Plan.

The **Local Referendum** will be the final stage. If 50% or more of those voting in the Referendum vote "Yes", the Neighbourhood Plan will be passed and its policies will come into effect and must guide decisions on planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area.

**It's your neighbourhood – please support the Neighbourhood Plan!**

**Please participate in the Local Consultation**

**Visit the website: [www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.cmaw-neighbourhoodplan.org.uk)**

**Email us: [cmaw-neighbourhoodplan@hotmail.com](mailto:cmaw-neighbourhoodplan@hotmail.com)**