

**Examination of the Welwyn Hatfield
Local Plan**

**Council's Statement for the
Stage 4 Hearing on
Thursday 28th June 2018**

Session 17

**SP26
Neighbourhood Planning**



Policy SP 26 Neighbourhood Planning

55) Are any Neighbourhood Plans specifically proposed?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a) To date, one Neighbourhood Planning Area has been designated in the borough, the Northaw and Cuffley Neighbourhood Area, covering the whole of the Parish of Northaw and Cuffley, which was designated in October 2014. To date, the Parish Council have not yet published a draft of their Neighbourhood Plan for public consultation, and work on the Neighbourhood Plan appears to have stalled for now.

56) Are any Neighbourhood Plans likely to be proposed?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a) It is possible that other Neighbourhood Plans may be proposed in the borough, but the Council has not received any requests to designate any new Neighbourhood Areas, and is not aware of any actively coming forward at the present time.

57) Does the plan clearly indicate what action would be taken by the Borough Council to support local communities in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a) No, the Local Plan focuses on the relationship between the policies of the Local Plan and any future Neighbourhood Plan as both will form part of the development plan for an area. This will assist relevant neighbourhood plan making bodies in formulating appropriate policies for their area.
- b) The Council sets out what support will be provided for neighbourhood plan making bodies in the preparation of Neighbourhood Plans on its website¹. In practice, the level of support that will be provided will vary, depending on the needs of the body making the Neighbourhood Plan, but it is anticipated that it will include advice and guidance on the requirements for the production of a Neighbourhood Plan as set out in the regulations, sharing evidence and information on planning issues which impact the neighbourhood planning area, advice on national and local plan policies which the neighbourhood plan must adhere to, advice on consultation techniques and constructive comments on emerging draft policies in the Neighbourhood Plan.

¹ <http://welhat.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning>

58) Should the Local Plan specifically require Neighbourhood Plans to have regard to specific information on the local need for new homes and jobs in their areas?

Welwyn Hatfield Response

- a) To be successful at examination, national policy requires that a Neighbourhood Plan must meet a number of tests, known as 'basic conditions'. The basic conditions include having regard to national planning policies and advice, including the NPPF and the PPG, contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and being in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Local Plan for the area.
- b) The neighbourhood planning PPG [Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306] states that Neighbourhood Plans should be supported by appropriate evidence and that they 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.
- c) The requirement in Policy SP26, that Neighbourhood Plans should demonstrate that they have had regard to information on local need for new homes, jobs and facilities for their plan area, is necessary to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared in accordance with the advice contained in the PPG, in relation to responding to the needs of their specific locality.