

The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012

Regulation 4 (3b) Specified Document (v)

General information about town and country planning (including neighbourhood planning) and the referendum.

On Thursday 6th May 2021 there will be a referendum on a Neighbourhood Plan for Leekfrith. This statement explains more about the planning system, neighbourhood planning and the referendum.

The Town and Country Planning System

The purpose of the planning system is to help achieve sustainable development. This means deciding what gets built and where so that places can grow for homes, businesses and supporting infrastructure without detriment to future generations and in a way that respects and protects the natural and historic environment.

In Leekfrith Parish, the Peak District National Park Authority is responsible for determining planning applications for the parts of the Parish that lie within the National Park. Outside of the National Park, Staffordshire Moorlands District Council is responsible for most applications.

The Development Plan

Planning applications are determined in accordance with the statutory development plan. This currently includes the Peak District National Park Core Strategy (adopted October 2011) and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (adopted May 2019)¹ and the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (adopted September 2020)².

If the Neighbourhood Plan for Leekfrith is adopted, it will also form part of the development plan and be used by both Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and the Peak District National Park Authority to determine planning applications.

¹ <https://www.peakdistrict.gov.uk/planning/policies-and-guides>

² <https://www.staffsmoorlands.gov.uk/localplan>

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework³ sets out from Central Government policy requirements to local planning authorities on how Local Plans should be drawn up and how decisions about planning applications should be made.

Neighbourhood Planning

What is neighbourhood planning?

Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the 2011 Localism Act and enables local communities to write a Neighbourhood Plan – part of the statutory development plan – for their own area. Neighbourhood Plans must have regard to national planning policy, contribute to sustainable development, be in general conformity with strategic policies in the development plan for the area and be compatible with European Union obligations and human rights requirements.

Who makes Neighbourhood Plans?

Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by town or parish councils or neighbourhood forums.

How are they made?

There is a statutory process that must be followed. The plan must be prepared in consultation with local residents and businesses. An independent examiner checks that it meets legal requirements, reports whether any modifications should be made and recommends whether it should proceed to referendum.

The referendum asks residents to consider whether the local planning authority 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 plans have?

If more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the neighbourhood plan, the local planning authority must make it part of the development plan (see above) for the area to be used in determining decisions on planning applications.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

Leekfrith Neighbourhood Plan and Referendum

Leekfrith Parish Council has prepared a draft Neighbourhood Plan for Leekfrith Parish and has consulted on the proposals. The Plan sets out a vision for Leekfrith parish which reflects the views of local people and contains planning policies, including for the redevelopment of Upper Hulme, parking and the full time rental of holiday cottages.

An Independent examination of the Leekfrith Neighbourhood Development Plan commenced on 27th November 2019. The Examiner's report was issued on 23rd December 2019 which recommended that the plan could proceed to referendum with some modifications.⁴

A Decision Statement was published by the District Council and Peak District National Park Authority on 19th March 2020 which concurs with the recommendations of the examiner.⁵

A Referendum Version of the Neighbourhood Plan which incorporates modifications recommended by the Examiner has been published⁶.

The referendum will be held on 6 May 2021 to determine if the Referendum Version of the Neighbourhood Plan is supported. The question which will be asked in the Referendum is:

“Do you want Staffordshire Moorlands District Council and the Peak District National Park Authority to use the neighbourhood plan for Leekfrith to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

⁴ [https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/media/4739/Leekfrith-NDP-Report-of-Independent-Examination-231219/pdf/Leekfrith NDP Report of Independent Examination 231219.pdf?m=1579255173857](https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/media/4739/Leekfrith-NDP-Report-of-Independent-Examination-231219/pdf/Leekfrith_NDP_Report_of_Independent_Examination_231219.pdf?m=1579255173857)

⁵ [https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/media/4889/Leekfrith-Neighbourhood-Plan-Decision-Statement/pdf/Leekfrith Neighbourhood Plan Decision Statement 2021.pdf?m=1614679261763](https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/media/4889/Leekfrith-Neighbourhood-Plan-Decision-Statement/pdf/Leekfrith_Neighbourhood_Plan_Decision_Statement_2021.pdf?m=1614679261763)

⁶ [https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/media/4929/Leekfrith-Neighbourhood-Plan---Referendum-Verion/pdf/Leekfrith Neighbourhood Plan - Referendum Version.pdf?m=1587145700757](https://www.staffs Moorlands.gov.uk/media/4929/Leekfrith-Neighbourhood-Plan---Referendum-Verion/pdf/Leekfrith_Neighbourhood_Plan_-_Referendum_Version.pdf?m=1587145700757)