

Statement of General Information relating to Town and Country Planning and the Referendum

Norland Neighbourhood Plan

This document intends to provide information to ensure voters have sufficient knowledge to make an informed decision in the Norland Neighbourhood Plan referendum.

1. The Planning System

Most new buildings or major changes to existing buildings or 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 in their area. The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea is responsible for making decisions on what development should go ahead in the Borough.

Planning involves making decisions about the future of our cities, towns and countryside. This is vital to balance our desire to develop the areas where we live and work with ensuring the surrounding environment isn't negatively affected for everyone

2. Local Plans

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea must prepare a local plan, which sets planning policies within the local authority area. These are very important when deciding planning applications. The examination is the last stage of the process for producing a local plan. The process should have fully involved everyone who has an interest in the document and they should have had the chance to comment.

Local plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in accordance with section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3. National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 27 March 2012. The framework gives guidance to local councils and neighbourhood forums in drawing up local plans and neighbourhood plans and on making decisions on planning applications.

4. Neighbourhood Planning

Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011, giving new rights and powers to local communities to shape new development by coming together to prepare neighbourhood plans.

A qualifying body, in this case a neighbourhood forum, is able to initiate a process to require a local planning authority such as the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to make a Neighbourhood Development Plan. Neighbourhood forums are community groups that are designated to take forward neighbourhood planning in areas without parishes. It is the role of the local planning authority to agree who should be the neighbourhood forum for the neighbourhood area.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in the whole or any part of a particular neighbourhood area. The neighbourhood area is specified in the Plan. There can only be one Neighbourhood Development Plan for each neighbourhood area and it must specify a period for which it is to have effect.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan must be examined in order to check that the proposed plan meets the basic conditions as set out in statute. The independent Inspector reports to the local planning authority and may recommend changes to be made to the Neighbourhood Development Plan. The local planning authority considers the Inspector's report and decides whether to accept the proposed changes. If the plan passes examination the inspector may also recommend that the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan proceeds to a referendum.

The Norland Neighbourhood Plan was examined in August 2013. The report recommended that, subject to modifications, the plan should proceed to referendum.

The Norland Neighbourhood Plan referendum will take place on 5 December 2013. It will consider the question

on whether the local planning authority should use the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications.

The referendum only relates to the area covered by the proposed Norland Neighbourhood Plan. A simple majority is required for the plan to pass referendum. If the referendum vote is in favour of the plan, the local planning authority must adopt the plan as soon reasonably practicable.

Once adopted the Neighbourhood Development Plan will be part of the Development Plan. It only applies within the specific area for which it has been proposed and made and will be one of the documents that will be taken into account in the consideration of applications for planning permissions that are made within the Neighbourhood Area.

If a policy set out in a Neighbourhood Development Plan conflicts with any other statement or information in the Development Plan itself then that conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy. Therefore, the Neighbourhood Development Plan is a most significant document of the Development Plan and must be considered when determining planning applications.

Information in relation to neighbourhood planning is available on the following website www.gov.uk/neighbourhood-planning.