

FAQs

St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Plan

Referendum

When will the referendum take place?

The St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Plan referendum will take place on 25 February, between 7am and 10pm, at St Helen's Church, St Helens Gardens, London W10 6LP.

What will it ask?

It will consider the question of whether the local planning authority should use the Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area. The question is:

Do you want The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea to use the neighbourhood plan for the St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?

Who can vote?

A person is entitled to vote in the Referendum if on 31 October 2013:

(a) he or she is entitled to vote in an election of any Councillor of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea whose area is in the Referendum area; and

(b) his or her qualifying address for the election is in the Referendum area. A persons qualifying address is, in relation to a person registered in the register of electors, the address in respect of which he or she is entitled to be so registered.

The referendum only relates to the area covered by the proposed St Quintin and Woodlands Neighbourhood Plan. The Referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

What happens if it passes?

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 Plan will be part of the Council's 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 Plan conflicts with the Council's Development Plan itself then that conflict must be resolved in favour of the policy. Therefore, a Neighbourhood Plan is a significant document of the Development Plan and must be considered when determining planning applications.

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

Background Information on the Planning System

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.