

STROUD TOWN CENTRE NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN BRIEFING

What is the Neighbourhood Development Plan? A document that will establish general planning policies and proposals for the development and use of land for Stroud Town Centre and its environs (see map overleaf). It is a statutory plan which will become part of the Development Plan for Stroud District and carry the same legal weight as the Stroud Local Plan (once approved) when planning decisions are made by the District and Town Councils. The designated area for our Neighbourhood Development Plan affects all in the town and has been chosen to build on opportunities presented by the canal restoration and railway upgrade to make the town centre economically stronger, more attractive and more usable.

What is it for? It is a plan which can be used to make things happen and to inform decisions on planning proposals which affect the future of Stroud Town Centre.

Who is responsible for it? The Town Council has the legal power to make the plan but it is a community based plan which will be prepared using volunteers and experts from across the Stroud Town Council area.

Who decides on what is in the plan? The Plan is intended to reflect the views of people who live, work, shop, enjoy and have an interest in Stroud Town Centre. It must be in general accordance with the Stroud District Local Plan and with government policy. Ultimately the decision on whether the plan is to go ahead will be decided by a formal referendum involving local people.

How will it be paid for? The Town Council has successfully applied for the maximum grant awarded by Locality which administers Government money for supporting Neighbourhood Planning. It has also allocated funding for the project.

What is the role of the District Council? The DC has to approve the choice of area for the Neighbourhood Plan (which they have done) and they are responsible for organising an independent examination of the Plan and the eventual referendum.

How can people get involved? The Town Council is setting up a Steering Group to oversee the process. This will comprise about 15 people including representatives from the Town and District Councils. It will have an independent chair. Other members will bring a range of skills and expertise to the Steering Group to ensure that it is capable of managing the process of preparing the plan. The Steering Group will set up a number of Thematic Groups which will look at a wide range of issues that are relevant to the Plan. Anyone with an interest in a particular theme can become part of a Thematic Group.

How will the issues to be looked at in the Plan be identified? The Steering Group will develop a community engagement plan the aim of which will be to get as many people involved as possible and to ensure that all sections of the community have an input to, and can influence the plan.

What is the timetable for the Plan? There are 4 main stages for the Plan:

1. Gathering evidence to identify strengths and issues to address
2. Identifying and assessing options and developing the policies and proposals
3. Finalising the plan and independent examination
4. Referendum and approval

Throughout stages 1-3 there will be a lot of engagement with the community to ensure that the Plan represents what people want. The aim is for the plan to be submitted for examination in Spring 2015 and the referendum to take place in early Autumn of that year.