

CITYWIDE NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP
CONFERENCE
PLANNING AND NEIGHBOURHOOD
PARTNERSHIPS

7th February 2015 9.30am – 4pm

Circomedia

St Paul's Church

Portland Square



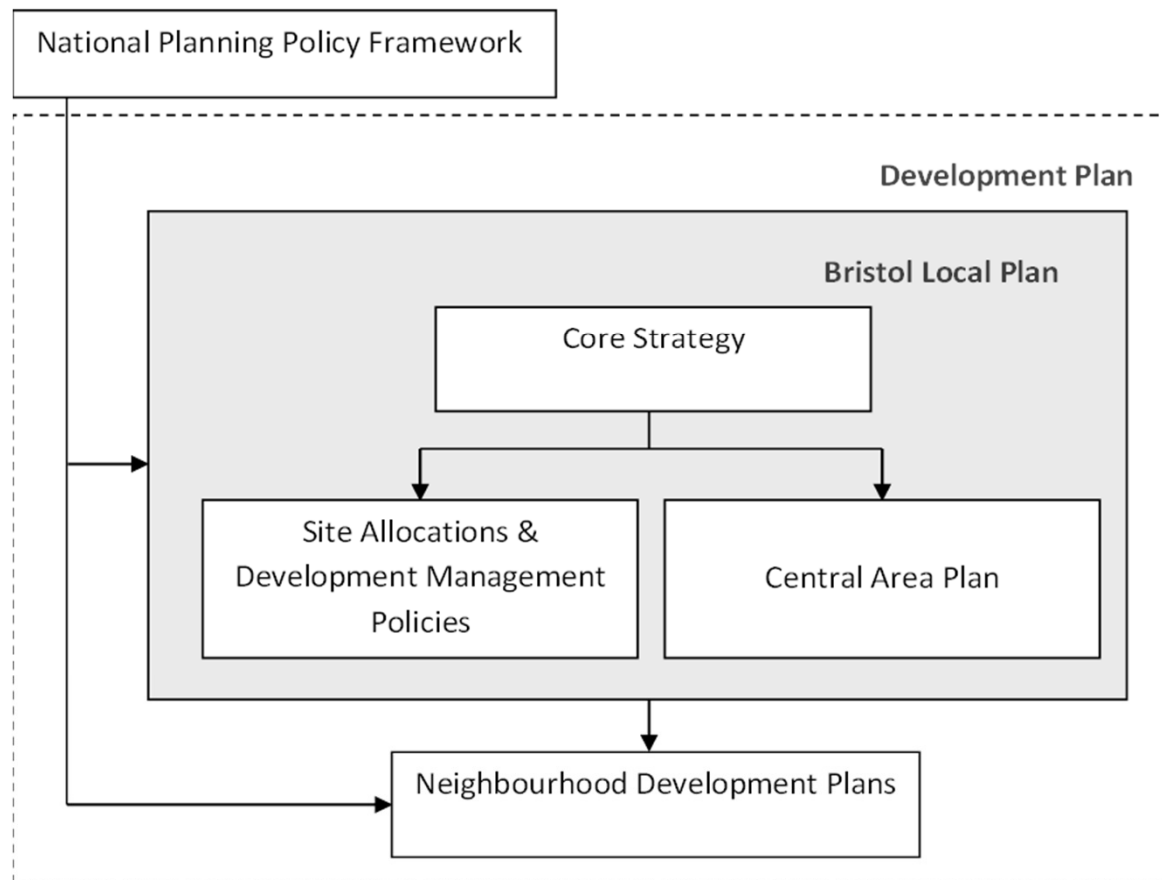
What is planning

– how can you influence outcomes

- Planning is a statutory system
- Governed by the Planning Acts
- Full of process, rules and legislation!
 - National Planning Policy Framework
 - National Planning Practice Guidance
 - Bristol Development Plan
 - Local planning advice and guidance
 - Planning Applications
 - S106
 - Community Infrastructure Levy
- But you *can* get involved and influence outcomes.....



Influencing planning – in the plan preparation process



Influencing planning – in the plan preparation process

- Local Plan preparation processes:
 - you can get involved with influencing the content of policy and site proposals in formal documents for the period to 2026:

Core Strategy

Site Allocations and Development Management

Central Area Plan



Influencing planning

– in the plan preparation process

- How has community involvement made a difference?
- Core Strategy
 - Detail of tree policy, sustainable energy policy, affordable housing policy, houses in multiple occupation
- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies
 - Green spaces
 - Site specific information
- Central Area Plan
 - Details on individual sites,
 - Historic value of sites and character of areas
 - Castle Park detail



Influencing planning – in the plan preparation process

- Local Plan preparation processes:

Core Strategy

Site Allocations and Development Management

Central Area Plan

- These stages now almost complete, many will have been involved and helped to shape where we are – you'll be pleased to know it doesn't stop there.....



Influencing planning – in the plan preparation process

- Review!
- Success of housing policies
 - delivering current and likely future demand
 - accommodating employment needs for our future
- So...
- Looking to needs of our communities in 2036
- in Bristol....
- and adjoining authorities



Influencing planning

– in the plan preparation process

- Introducing
 - the **WoE Joint Strategic Planning Strategy**
 - housing numbers for the West of England
 - spatial distribution of growth for housing and employment and critical infrastructure
 - A full statutory document, part of the Development Plan for Bristol (and WoE UAs)
 - With community engagement in its preparation

West of England

Bath & North East
Somerset Council



North
Somerset
Council

South Gloucestershire
Council

Timetable for JSPS preparation

Plan phase	Time period	Stage
Commitment to joint working	March 2014	Memorandum of Understanding agreed.
Plan preparation	December 2014	Pre-commencement document published (Reg 18)
	Autumn 2014-Summer 2015	Assessment of evidence base; gap analysis; undertaking of additional studies; initial identification of spatial options.
	Summer 2015-Autumn 2015	Consideration of, and consultation on, issues and spatial options.
	Autumn 2015 to end 2015	Preparation of draft spatial strategy
	Spring 2016	Consultation on Submission document (Reg 19/20)
Examination	Summer 2016	Submission (Reg 22)
	Autumn 2016	Examination hearings (Reg 24/25)
Adoption	Spring 2017	Adoption (Reg 26)

JSPS Getting involved -

Pre-commencement document

- What, why and when...
- opportunity to comment on the scope and content of the JSPS by 6th March 2015

<http://www.westofenglandlep.co.uk/jointstrategicplanningstrategy>

Evidence

- Call for sites by 6th March 2015
- <http://bristol-city.gov.uk/page/planning-and-building-regulations/call-sites-housing-and-economic-land-availability-assessment>

West of England

Bath & North East
Somerset Council



North
Somerset
Council

South Gloucestershire
Council

Influencing planning – in the plan preparation process

- Neighbourhood Development Plans

- What

- Localism Act 2011, Statutory part of Development Plan

- Who

- Designated Neighbourhood Planning Forums and Areas

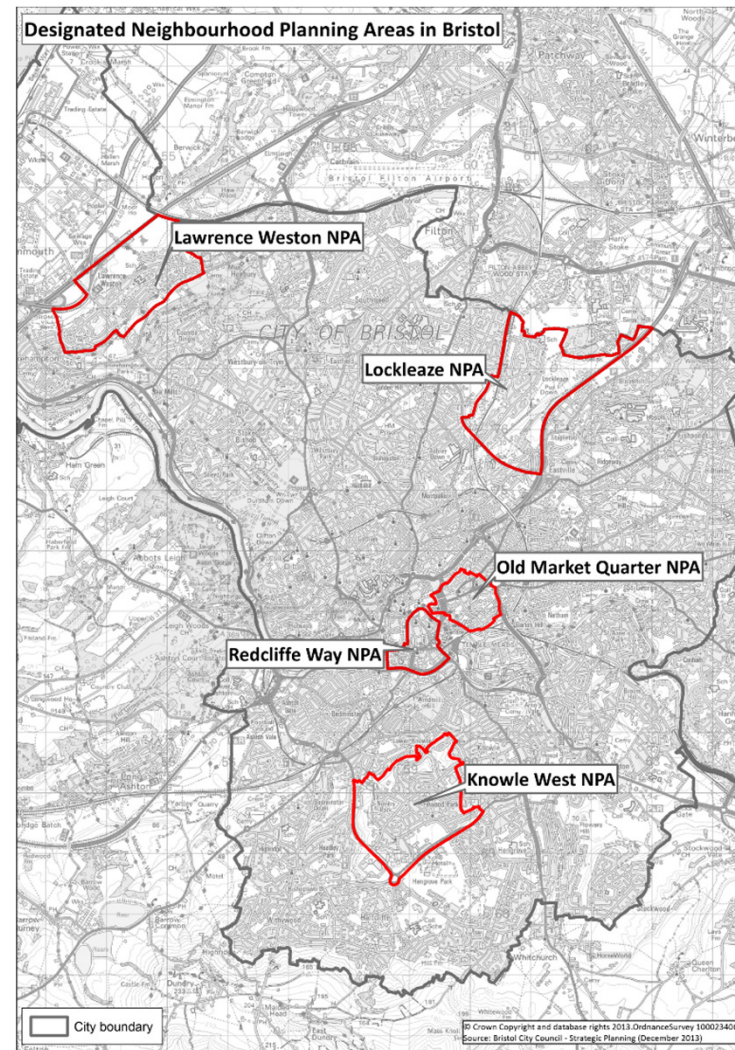
- Why

- Shape and *enable* development for the Neighbourhood area



Influencing planning – in the plan preparation process

- Where
 - Lockleaze
 - Redcliffe Way
 - Lawrence Weston
 - Old Market
 - Knowle West



BRISTOL
2015 EUROPEAN
GREEN CAPITAL

Influencing planning

– in the plan preparation process

- How - resources
- How long? - variable....
- Old Market – submitted!!!
May 2013 - Jan 2015
- Lawrence Weston –first draft consultation
May 2013 - Feb 2015
- Lockleaze – first draft consultation
July 2012 – Feb 2015



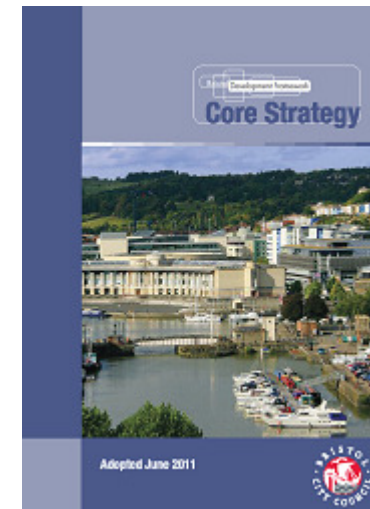
Influencing planning policy? working through the Neighbourhood Partnerships

- Residents Planning Groups
- Neighbourhood Planning Groups as sub-groups of Neighbourhood Partnerships
- Neighbourhood Planning Forums under the Localism Act
 - Future expectation that these will be directly linked to the relevant Neighbourhood Partnership
- Statutory consultees?
 - No but....



When is the best time to get involved in planning decisions?

- Before policy or planning applications are decided, during the period when **options** are being considered
- and the **preferred option** is developed into a final **design** or **policy**.
- For Planning Applications this is at the **Pre Planning Application** stage.



Why engage in pre application community involvement?

Advantages for the Community:

- It is an **opportunity** for the community to tell the developer about things that they want in their area,
- This can include the **types of development** eg family houses, or particular wishes for the site eg a **route** through it or specific **building materials**



Advantages for the Developer:

- The developer can learn from the community about **the area and the site**, and which aspects of his proposed development are going to cause the most **opposition** and can decide whether to **redesign** or **bluff it out!**



How to engage in pre application community involvement 1

As soon as the opportunity presents itself.

- A developer is on a **tight programme**; he will not stop his development design programme until the community is ready to meet him.
- It is therefore essential that the community has a group ready and willing to meet **at the earliest opportunity**. Planning groups should have the **experience** of previous planning cases in the area, often on the site in question, and should be able to **mobilise** a couple of members to **meet the developer quickly**.



How to engage in pre application community involvement 2

In the most effective way.

- Negotiation is most likely to work when a **small number of people** talk together in a **reasonable** way. Large numbers of **protesters shouting** at a developer **will not persuade** him to make any concessions; a couple of people talking reasonably might.



It is also more likely to work if the community has the **experience** of previous planning cases to draw on and can use their experience and the **evidence** that they have of similar cases to show that they know what they are talking about.

How to engage in pre application community involvement 3

Throughout the design development process period.

- It is good practice to have a **series of meetings**, especially if the proposed development is large or complex, as the design is developed. To be effective, this must be with the **same set of people**.

It is important that all participants attend the **same meetings** rather than have separate meetings.

This allows everyone to hear each other's views and stops the developer **picking and choosing** from different responses as it suits him.



How to find out about development at pre application stage

- All councillors and the NPN administrators are sent lists of '**pre application enquiries**' to BCC, as the local planning authority, each week. This is when a developer applies to BCC for 'in principle' guidance on a development proposal.
- The **NPN administrators** contact the local **NPN planning group** and the **developer** to put them in touch with each other and tell the developer about **the pre application process in Bristol** with all the information they need about the **SCI** and the **Guidelines**.
- Not all developers make '**pre application enquiries**', preferring to go straight to application stage. In this case, they may contact NPN direct to ask the administrators to identify the relevant community groups to approach.



How could NPs get involved at pre app stage?

- Neighbourhood Partnerships and Forums usually meet on a 3 monthly cycle, often with different people at each meeting.
- So usually neither of these meetings can work to the **developer's programme** nor comply with the **SCI groundrules** on **continuity**.

However, NPs could invite developers to **exhibit the drawings or models at pre application or at planning application stage at Neighbourhood Forums**

This is not effective as 'community involvement' but can be useful as **information sharing**.



Do NPs need to set up planning groups as NP sub groups?

- The NP will usually find it most effective to work through the **existing residents' planning groups** in their area rather than starting from scratch.
- Many NPs have a **number** of residents' planning groups in their area.
- Some NPs have set up a NP Planning Panel or **NP working group** with representatives from each of their existing NPN residents' planning groups.

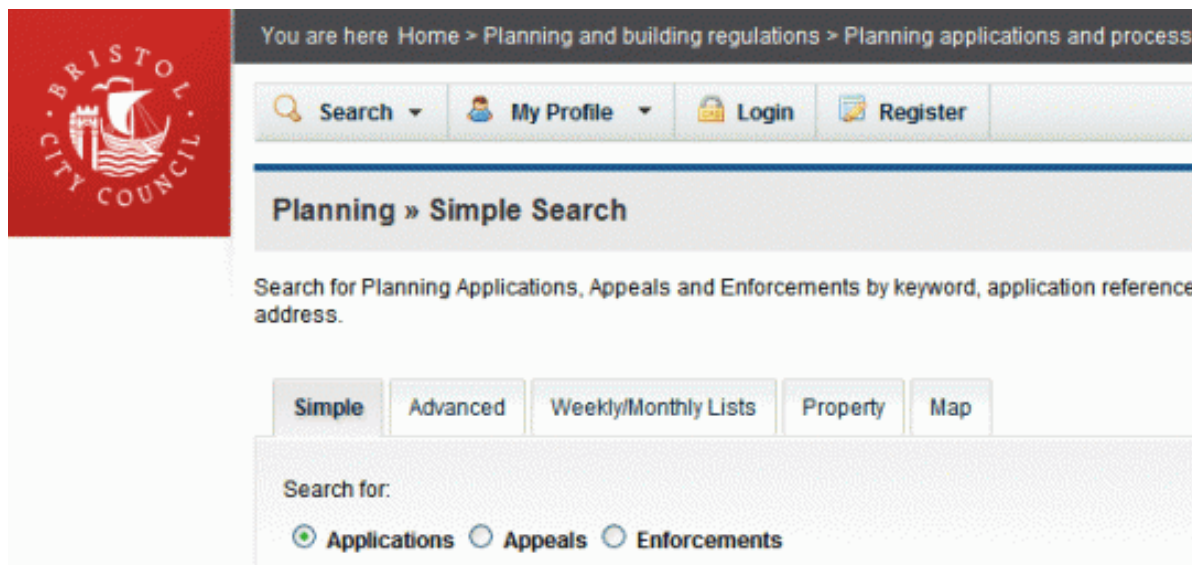
The existing residents' planning groups have **valuable experience** which NPs can call on

The NP and NPN groups can work together to be able to agree the **most effective involvement process** for their community with the **developer**.



What support can the development management team give our NPs?

- The planning department cannot support planning groups on a regular basis; they have no spare capacity.
- The **Planning Online** automated system for planning applications has been set up to allow the community to get **notifications of applications** and to **search for applications**.



The screenshot shows the Bristol City Council Planning Online interface. On the left is the Bristol City Council logo. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: "You are here Home > Planning and building regulations > Planning applications and process". Below this is a navigation bar with "Search", "My Profile", "Login", and "Register" options. The page title is "Planning » Simple Search". A description reads: "Search for Planning Applications, Appeals and Enforcements by keyword, application reference address." There are five tabs: "Simple" (selected), "Advanced", "Weekly/Monthly Lists", "Property", and "Map". A "Search for:" section has three radio buttons: "Applications" (selected), "Appeals", and "Enforcements".



How can people find out about planning applications in their area?

- The [Planning Online](#) service sends out notifications of applications in particular areas such as wards or Neighbourhood Partnerships.
- You can sign up for these notifications by logging into the **Planning Online** website.
- See **NPN website > News and Reference > A-Z of topics** for details of how to [set up a saved search](#).
- There is a **weekly list of applications** on the [BCC website page](#) which you can check for applications or decisions in your area.
- There is also a private service called [Planning Finder](#) which you can sign up for.



Can the community or planners stop development if they don't like it?

- In many cases **NO**.
- The planning officers have to assess the application against current **national and local planning policy**.
- The planning committee can only refuse development proposals on **planning grounds** (or material considerations like the need for a school).
- The government **National Planning Policy Framework NPPF** states that
*'The purpose of the planning system is to **contribute to the achievement of sustainable development...***
There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.'
- The planning officers and planning committee have to assess **each application on its own merits**



What is good about new development in an area?

- New development can help to address issues in the community by bringing in **amenities which are lacking** (such as a primary school) or a type of residential development which the community needs more of.
- and as a result of development additional money is made available to support infrastructure projects through the **Community Infrastructure Levy CIL** and through **section 106** developer contributions to mitigate the impact of their development

(such as putting in a new zebra crossing near the development, or planting replacement trees).



How effective can getting involved in planning applications be?

- It depends on what you want to achieve.
- You can get improvements made to development in your area
- You can't stop all development
- The developers are less likely to engage with the community, if they know that their proposal is going to be opposed whatever they do.
- So the planning groups that can work with developers and planning officers, to try to achieve a mutually acceptable outcome, find that engaging in the planning system is most effective.



How to make an effective planning application comments

- Only **planning policy** and **material considerations** can be taken into account. For instance, you have no right to a view but you do have right to 'light' so your windows cannot be blocked by new development. Objecting to loss of view is not something that can be taken into account.
- There is plenty of guidance on what planning officers can take into account on the council website in '[A guide to planning legislation and practice](#)' and '[Your chance to have your say](#)'. You will also find information on the [BristolNPN](#) website and on [Planning Portal](#).
- Using the planning policy documents to support your comments is the most effective way of making your response effective.



Does Bristol City Council want community involvement in planning application decisions?

- Bristol is more supportive of pre application community involvement than any other local planning authority.
- Other core cities do not make available the information at pre application stage to the community.
- Bristol has supported this as an effective way of communities to be involved in development decisions because Bristol is unique in having the Bristol Neighbourhood Planning Network of residents' planning groups which works in an effective way to engage with developers and planning officers.

- *Alison Bromilow*



Influencing planning

- **What information is out there for you to use:**
- National Planning Policy Framework
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>
- National Planning Practice Guidance
- <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/>
- BCC Local Plan documents
- <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/planning-and-building-regulations/bristol-local-plan>
- Core Strategy
- Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Local Plan
- Bristol Central Area Local Plan
- Statement of Community Involvement – under review
- Planning Advice and Guidance notes on topics



Influencing planning

- **What information is out there for you to use:**
- Locality guidance on Neighbourhood Planning
- <http://locality.org.uk/projects/building-community/>
- <http://locality.org.uk/resources/neighbourhood-planning-roadmap-guide/>
- Localism Network- Choices and Choosing
- [http://www.localismnetwork.org.uk/Localismnetwork.org.uk/Localism Network files/CPRE%20hyperlinked.pdf](http://www.localismnetwork.org.uk/Localismnetwork.org.uk/Localism%20Network%20files/CPRE%20hyperlinked.pdf)
- BCC website on Neighbourhood Planning
- <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/planning-and-building-regulations/neighbourhood-planning-bristol>
- Including links to the 5 Neighbourhood Planning Forums