

Summary of Neighbourhood Plan Preparation Stages

	Defining the Neighbourhood Area	Early Engagement & Evidence Gathering	Pre-Submission	Submission	Examination	LPA's Consideration of Recommendations
What to expect	4-6 weeks consultation on the boundary of the neighbourhood area. The detail will depend on the nature of the proposals (e.g. it will be minimal where a town/parish proposes to use its own boundary).	There are no set rules for how the body preparing the plan (the qualifying body) should approach engagement at this stage but some consultation is likely as the pre-submission plan is supposed to be the body's preferred plan.	6-weeks consultation on the qualifying body's preferred plan, which should include the policies that it wants to see adopted.	6-weeks consultation by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on the plan submitted to it by the qualifying body. The body should also submit a basic conditions statement, which is a useful document to review.	Expected to be carried out by the examiner considering written representations made on the submission plan but can also involve hearing sessions.	Where the LPA decides not to follow the recommendations of the examiner, they will need to consult for a minimum of 6 weeks on the plan that they do propose to put to referendum.
Opportunity to influence?	LPAs can only refuse to designate a neighbourhood area where the boundary is inappropriate.	Depending on the nature of the consultation, this stage represents an excellent point to make your views known about the strategy and the approach to the waterway, where relevant. Where available, evidence can be provided or sign-posted.	Changes requested do not have to be limited to those that are required to ensure that the plan meets basic conditions tests. However, arguments may be more successful where this is the case.	Representations at this stage need to set out why changes are required to ensure that the plan meets the basic conditions if they are to have any hope of convincing the examiner of the case for change.	There's likely to be very little opportunity to influence the plan at this stage because the examiner is unlikely to be inviting more representations. Where a hearing is held they will still only focus on whether the plan meets the basic conditions.	This will depend on the nature of the changes being considered by the LPA. Proposals should be reviewed at this stage to see whether they introduce new issues.