



Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

INFORMATION FOR VOTERS

About this booklet

On 8 July 2021, there will be a referendum on a neighbourhood plan for the Emsworth area.

This booklet provides an overview of what you need to know about the Neighbourhood Plan and how it fits into the wider system of Planning, in order to make an informed decision on how to vote at the referendum.

It covers the following topics:

- Overview of the English planning system
- What is the 'Development Plan'?
- How does the Neighbourhood Plan fit in?
- What area is covered by the Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan?
- What the referendum will ask and how you can take part

The Planning System

The planning system manages the use and development of land and buildings. It exists to ensure that development not only profits developers, but is in the public interest and contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. The system seeks to balance the requirements of the economy, community needs for homes, jobs, transport and infrastructure and the protection of the natural and built environment.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied at a local level.

At the local authority (Havant Borough Council) level, planning activities have two main parts:

- **Plan preparation and policy making:** This involves considering the development needs of the area into the future and setting out policies to guide that development, both in terms of location and in terms of standards it should meet.
- **Development management:** This involves the consideration of planning applications made by developers and householders, before development is allowed to proceed.

The two areas interact because the planning system in England is 'plan led', that is to say the starting point for making decisions on planning applications is the Development Plan for the area (see below). For development that requires planning permission, Havant Borough Council is responsible for deciding whether the development should go ahead, and in the first instance will consider whether it is in line with the policies in the Development Plan.

The Government has published a plain English Guide to the Planning system:
www.gov.uk/government/publications/plain-english-guide-to-the-planning-system

What is a Development Plan?

The Development Plan is a set of documents that set out the policies for the development and use of land in the local authority area. Decisions on planning applications must be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless 'material considerations' indicate otherwise.

The Development Plan for the Havant area (and therefore Emsworth) currently comprises

- the Havant Core Strategy (2011)
- the Site Allocations Plan (2014)
- the Hampshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2013).

These plans are all currently under review. The new Havant Borough Local Plan to 2037 has reached an advanced stage of preparation and is currently subject to an independent examination. If the plan is found 'sound', the Borough Council hopes to adopt the new plan at the end of the 2021 or early in 2022, at which point it will replace the Core Strategy and Site Allocations plans.

The adopted and emerging Local Plans can be found at www.havant.gov.uk/local-plan.

How does Neighbourhood Planning fit into this?

Neighbourhood Plans are similar to borough-wide Local Plans in that they express a vision for the future of an area and set planning policies to help deliver that vision.

When a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted (or 'made'), it becomes part of the Development Plan and is used in the determination of planning applications.

The big difference is that neighbourhood plans are prepared by local people instead of the Borough Council. They cover a much smaller area and are freer to determine what matters to cover.

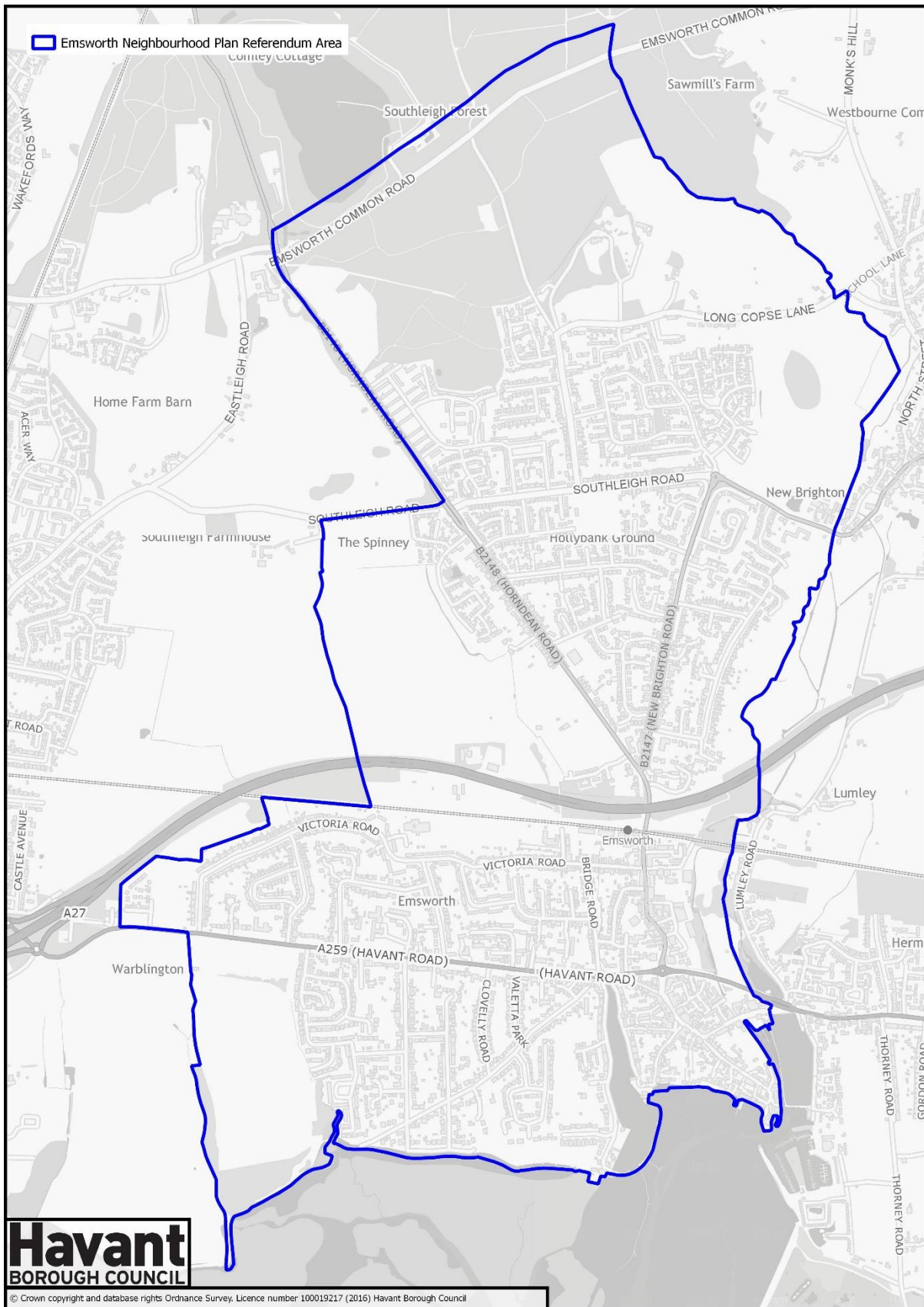
Neighbourhood planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 to give local communities more control in the planning of their neighbourhoods. It introduced new rights and powers to allow local communities to shape new development in their local area, by giving them a direct role in planning.

Neighbourhood plans must, however, be in general conformity with the Local Plan. This means, for example, that they cannot seek to prevent development where the Local Plan has identified the need and sites for growth.

Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils, or neighbourhood forums. Emsworth does not have a parish council, so local people set up a Neighbourhood Forum to create the Neighbourhood Plan. The Neighbourhood Area is the same as the Emsworth ward and is shown on the map overleaf.

The Emsworth Neighbourhood Area



How has the Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan been prepared?

The Emsworth Forum, a group of Emsworth Residents have developed the plan, with the help of expert consultants and with some guidance from Havant Brough Council.

The work started in 2014, and the draft plan went through various stages of consultation, before the Emsworth Forum submitted it for reviewed by an independent examiner in 2019. The examiner found that the, with a few amendments, the plan should move forward to referendum, and the Council agreed with this decision.

You can see the background to the development of the Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan at www.havant.gov.uk/emsworth-neighbourhood-planning, including the final version of the plan that the Referendum is asking you to vote on.

Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

The referendum asks you to vote 'yes' or 'no' on the question:

"Do you want Havant Borough Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Emsworth to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

If more people vote 'yes' than 'no' in this referendum, then Havant Borough Council will adopt the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the Development Plan. The policies in the Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan will then have to be taken into account in determining planning applications in Emsworth.

If more people vote 'no' than 'yes', Havant Brough Council will not adopt the Neighbourhood Plan, and planning applications will continue to be determined in line with the Local Plan that has been prepared by the Brough Council.

Can I vote?

Everyone on Havant Borough Council's electoral register for Emsworth Ward (which is the same as the Neighbourhood Area and the Referendum Area) at the time of the referendum is entitled to vote.

The eligibility criteria to vote are:

- you are registered to vote in local council elections; and
- you are 18 years of age or over on 8 July 2021.

If you are an eligible elector and you are already on the Register of Electors for Hampshire, you do not need to re-register for the referendum.

If you need to register, you can do so here: <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>. The last date for registration in this referendum is 22 June 2021.

Details of where your polling station is located will be found on your poll card, which will be sent out from 3 June 2021.

If you are unable to get to your polling station on 8 July or would prefer to vote another way to cast your vote, you can register for a postal or proxy vote. The relevant form is available at www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote. Completed forms can either be scanned and emailed to elections.office@havant.gov.uk or posted to the Havant Elections Office at the address at the end of this document and must be received by 5pm on 23 June 2021.

Casting your vote safely during coronavirus

Arrangements will be in place at polling stations to help ensure they are safe places to vote, including:

- hand sanitiser
- social distancing
- requirement to wear face coverings
- Electors are welcome to use their own pen or pencil in the polling station.

How to find out more:

You can find the Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan and related documents at <https://www.havant.gov.uk/emsworth-neighbourhood-planning>

For queries about planning issues and neighbourhood planning in general, please contact havant Borough Council's Planning Policy Team on policy.design@havant.gov.uk or 023 9244 6539.

For more information about voting and the arrangements for this referendum, please call: 023 9244 6225 or 6226, email elections.office@havant.gov.uk or write to Electoral Services, Public Service Plaza, Civic Centre Road, Havant, PO9 2AX