

St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan General Information Statement by St Albans City and District Council

This statement is produced and published as required by Regulation 4(3)(b)(v) of the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012.

What is neighbourhood planning?

Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work.

A community can prepare a neighbourhood plan. This plan can show how the community wants land to be used and developed in its area.

What is a neighbourhood area?

A neighbourhood area can cover single streets or large urban or rural areas. The boundaries of a neighbourhood area are put forward by:

- Town or parish councils
- A neighbourhood forum (a group of at least 21 people in areas without parish councils)

In St Stephen, the boundary of the neighbourhood area was determined by St Albans City and District Council. It is identical to the parish area of St Stephen.

Who can prepare a neighbourhood plan?

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils, or neighbourhood forums. In this case, the St Stephen Neighbourhood Plan was prepared St Stephen Parish Council as the relevant 'qualifying body'.

What is a development plan?

In England, planning applications are determined by local planning authorities in accordance with the development plan. A development plan is a set of documents that set out the policies for the development and use of land across the entire local authority area. Within St Albans City and District the local planning authority is St Albans City and District Council.

What is a neighbourhood plan referendum?

The referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures similar to those used at local government (council) elections.

The referendum will consider whether the local planning authority should use the neighbourhood plan for the area concerned to help it decide planning applications. All those registered to vote within the neighbourhood area are entitled to vote in the referendum.

St Albans City and District Council must "bring into force" the neighbourhood plan (i.e. make it part of the development plan) if more than half of those voting in the referendum vote in favour of the plan. Once brought into force and adopted the neighbourhood plan will be part of the statutory development plan and will be used in determining decisions on planning applications.