

**National Planning Practice Guidance Extract – Designating  
Neighbourhood Areas**

## National Planning Practice Guidance – Relevant Extracts

### **What flexibility is there in setting the boundaries of a neighbourhood area?** (Paragraph: 032 Reference ID: 41-032-20140306 - Revision date: 06 03 2014)

In a parished area a local planning authority is required to have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the area of a parish or town council as a neighbourhood area (see 61G(4) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990). Where only a part of a parish council's area is proposed for designation, it is helpful if the reasons for this are explained in the supporting statement. Equally, town or parish councils may want to work together and propose that the designated neighbourhood area should extend beyond a single town or parish council's own boundaries.

In areas where there is no parish or town council those wishing to produce a neighbourhood plan or Order must put forward a neighbourhood area using their understanding and knowledge of the geography and character of the neighbourhood.

### **What could be considerations when deciding the boundaries of a neighbourhood area?** (Paragraph: 033 Reference ID: 41-033-20140306 - Revision date: 06 03 2014)

The following could be considerations when deciding the boundaries of a neighbourhood area:

- village or settlement boundaries, which could reflect areas of planned expansion
- the catchment area for walking to local services such as shops, primary schools, doctors' surgery, parks or other facilities
- the area where formal or informal networks of community based groups operate
- the physical appearance or characteristics of the neighbourhood, for example buildings may be of a consistent scale or style
- whether the area forms all or part of a coherent estate either for businesses or residents
- whether the area is wholly or predominantly a business area
- whether infrastructure or physical features define a natural boundary, for example a major road or railway line or waterway
- the natural setting or features in an area
- size of the population (living and working) in the area

Electoral ward boundaries can be a useful starting point for discussions on the appropriate size of a neighbourhood area; these have an average population of about 5,500 residents.