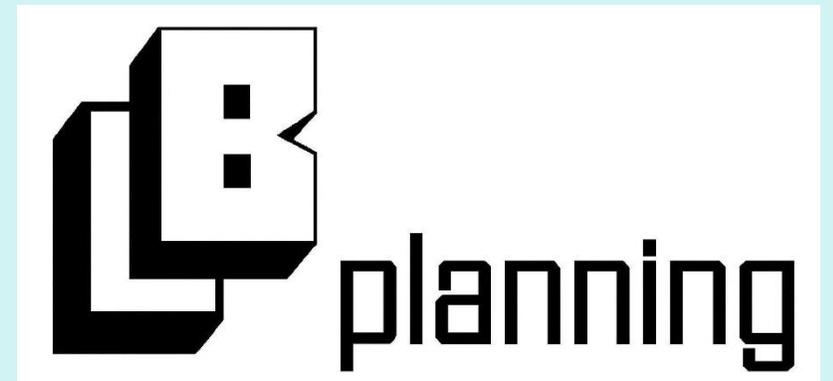


Evidence for Neighbourhood Plans

Liz Beth MRTPI



This Session will consider:

- Drawing up planning policies – evidence-based
- What sort of evidence is needed?
- Examples of evidence used in NPs

Deciding what policies to include in your NP

- Initial Consultation work reveals key issues for people locally.
- Review of existing Development Plan policies and evidence can reveal gaps and mis-match of existing policy to local circumstances.

Examples:

Shortage of Allotments key local issue:

Potential evidence base:

- Waiting List?
- Questionnaire reveals demand?
- Any LPA guidance on number of plots per 1000 residents?

Development Plan – no policy on local heritage

Evidence base:

- existing local list with the LPA?
- Group could identify local features and buildings and include in draft plan;
- Local Civic Society has done some work?

Housing Policies and Evidence

- There is no compulsion on NP groups to allocate housing in their area.
- If you do allocate housing, you will need to undertake or commission an objective site assessment and allocation exercise.
- Local preferences for sites can't be the only evidence base, but it is a legitimate factor to consider in any selection process.
- If you want to require particular types of housing (market or affordable) you will need evidence to justify this.

Housing Evidence for NPs

- LPA will have a SHLAA – assessment of sites offered as available.
- LPA will have commissioned a SHMA – some work on affordability here.
- LPA required to monitor annual permissions and completions situation.
- LPA will have agreed housing allocations for their district – or be working on them.

NP Group may need to commission evidence:

Housing Needs Study

- Hidden households? – ie still at home
- What level of affordable housing needed?
- Sheltered housing needed?
- Intermediate housing in demand?
- Examples: West Dean; Somerford

Site Assessment Report

- Considers suitability of sites available;
- Shortlists best sites – consultation here?
- Choice of sites for allocation – can include local preferences but needs to be based on objective technical attributes;
- See Highworth example (Swindon Borough)

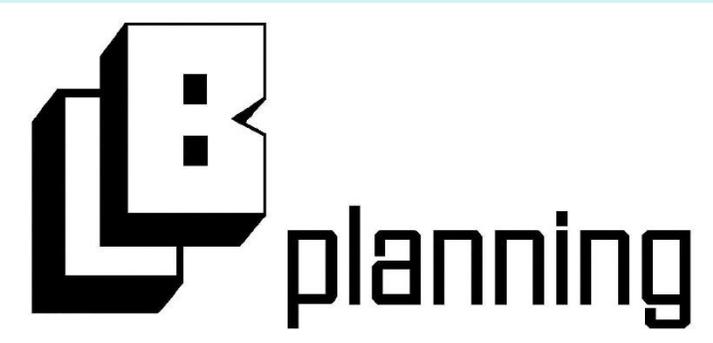
Key Pointers on Evidence

- ‘Proportionate’, in line with the voluntary nature of neighbourhood planning, allows in wider and more informal sources;
- The evidence base of the Local Plan will often be the main source of technical evidence for a NP;
- The further your policy is from an adopted plan policy or national policy and guidance, the more robust the evidence will need to be to justify why local circumstances allow flexibility in interpreting ‘general conformity’.
- Do not expect locally expressed desires to be enough evidence on their own.

Policy and Evidence example - LGS

- LGS [Local Green Space]: each site needs to be justified in terms of the NPPF requirements (paras 76 and 77);
- Setting this out in a table format or similar useful but not essential;
- Marking each site on every criteria (beauty, recreation, historic, access etc) not useful – a site can be designated because of one outstanding attribute and still average despite meeting all of them;
- Examiners will be alert to attempts to use LGS designation as an effective green belt barrier to development;
- Designate if a site worth it – not just when you judge protection needed;
- REM: ‘extensive tract of land’ is not about a particular size – attributes key.

Thanks for listening!



Liz Beth MRTPI Dip Design in the Built Environment

Tel: 0117 941 2167

liz@lbplanning.uk