

Stage 2: Developing your Vision, Objectives and Key Issues

Your vision will define what you want to achieve for your community today and in the future. It should be realistic, clear and inclusive. By identifying your vision and objectives at the outset, communities will be able to identify their own priorities to help establish the most appropriate approach to delivering their Neighbourhood Plan.

What is visioning?

Your Neighbourhood Plan should set out the community's overall vision for the area and should include overall objectives for its future development and growth. These can relate to a wide range of planning and regeneration issues – social, economic and environmental. The vision and objectives of the plan can then be translated into detailed policies, guidance and proposals.

Visioning can be summarised as:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?

To answer these questions you might want to:

- gather information about your area
- assess your area's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats
- draft a vision statement for your community
- identify a series of objectives.

Community engagement

Early endorsement of your vision and objectives with the local community will help gain support and consensus. This will help define key issues and aims for the plan. You could consider talking to local residents, stakeholders and community groups. This stage is not a requirement but it is important to keep the local community fully informed of what is being proposed so they can make their views known throughout the process.

Identifying key issues and priorities

Identifying a vision and objectives will help you identify the key issues of concern at an early stage. The results will help identify the range and detail of your key issues and the priorities to be addressed by your neighbourhood plan. The objective is to create a clear 'delivery plan' which will identify the most appropriate means of delivering your vision and objectives.

At an early stage a series of options should be identified to help address the key issues. Assessing the impacts of these reasonable alternatives is an important part of your neighbourhood plan and makes sure that sustainable development is promoted.

Developing an Evidence Base

If a Plan is to be relevant, realistic and address local issues effectively it should be based on an understanding of the place it relates to. A detailed evidence base will be important. We advise that you should first look at the Local Plan evidence base (at www.southeastlincslocalplan.org) to see what information already exists. You could also look at:

- socio-economic data for district/ward (census, Office for National Statistics and public transport data etc.)
- mapping of local area
- conservation area appraisals and statutory lists e.g. for listed buildings
- details of environmental designations, such as tree preservation orders and sites of special scientific interest
- plans from other public bodies or statutory undertakers such as the Environment Agency or utility companies like Anglian Water
- existing plans for an area, such as a parish plan

It may also be necessary to develop new evidence (or update existing evidence) at a neighbourhood level. This could include:

- Economic: business surveys, vacancy/floorspace survey, land values;
- Social: housing condition survey, housing needs survey, audit of community facilities, traffic/pedestrian flow surveys;
- Environmental: heritage audit, review of local lists, urban design analysis;