Section 1

Introduction

Neighbourhood Plan Boundary (figure 1)

Introduction

1 according with the Cornwall Local Plan: Strategic Policies 2010-2030 timetable

2 subject to conformity with the Strategic Policies of the Local Plan, as required by paragraphs 184 and 185 of the National Planning Policy Framework

The community and Town Council of Torpoint has made significant strides in working towards making improvements to the town and its immediate surroundings. This is expressed in 'A Vision for Torpoint' completed in early 2016.

This Neighbourhood Plan is a tool to assist in achieving the objectives set out in the Vision document. It cannot deliver all of the objectives, as some will depend on initiatives outside the control of the planning system, but can provide guidance of statutory significance for development proposals up to 2030[1]. This Neighbourhood Plan should be read in conjunction with the Vision document and applies to the area shown in figure 1 below. Whilst national and local policy provides an important framework for production of the Neighbourhood Plan.

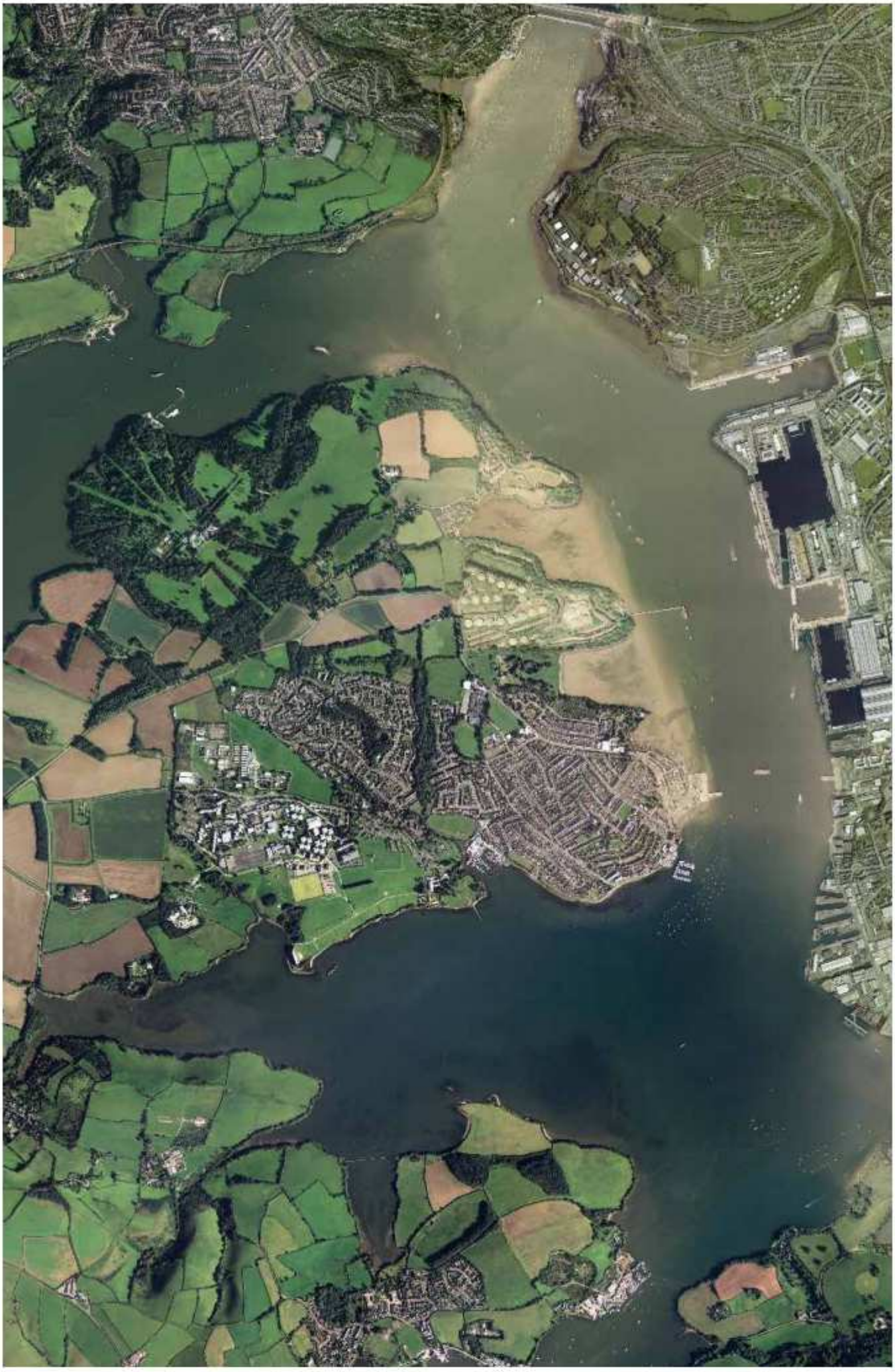
Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that *"if regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise".*

The National Planning Practice Guidance (ref. Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 21b-007-20140306) states that *"the statutory development plan is the plan for the future development of an area. It consists of:*

- *Local Plans: development plan documents adopted by local planning authorities, including any 'saved' policies from plans that are otherwise no longer current, and those development plan documents that deal specifically with minerals and waste.*
- *Neighbourhood Plans: where these have been supported by the local community at referendum and subsequently made by the local planning authority".*

Therefore, an adopted Neighbourhood Plan for Torpoint has equal status in determining planning applications as the Cornwall wide Local Plan[2].

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), at paragraph 183, states that *"neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need".* Paragraph 184 goes on to state that *"neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies".*



Introduction

3 Whilst the emerging Rame Peninsula Neighbourhood Plan mentions Torpoint only three times in passing, Torpoint Town Council considers that the interdependencies and linkages between Torpoint and the wider peninsula are an important consideration for this Neighbourhood Plan.

The Cornwall Local Plan: Strategic Policies has recently been adopted covering the plan period 2010 to 2030. This Neighbourhood Plan conforms with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, providing a finer grain of policy detail relevant to delivery in Torpoint.

How can the Torpoint Neighbourhood Plan make a difference?

The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to facilitate and guide delivery of better development, than would be the case without the document existing. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is not just to produce a document; it is to produce a document that makes a difference in forming part of the statutory development plan. As such, it should have purpose, direction and focus.

- The purpose is to make Torpoint a better place for residents and visitors alike;
- The direction and focus for the Neighbourhood Plan is to realise the Vision for the town.

The objective of making Torpoint a better place in which to live, work and visit will be achieved through implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan policies in tandem with Local Plan policies. The overall aim is for the neighbourhood planning process to form a focus for catalytic change, where marginal gains can be achieved in all development proposals through the guidance provided by the development plan, including this Neighbourhood Plan. At the end of the plan period in 2030 the Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure that;

- Sufficient high quality market and affordable housing has been provided to meet the needs of all residents;
- Sufficient employment floorspace has been provided so that more job opportunities are provided within the town and that more residents are able to live and work within Torpoint;
- The vitality and vibrancy of the town centre is protected and enhanced and that more residents meet more of their retail needs within the town;
- Residents have sufficient opportunity to access greenspace, within the town or part of the wider Rame Peninsula;
- The existing greenspaces are improved and made more attractive, welcoming and better used;
- The town becomes a more attractive place to stop rather than being somewhere to pass through and that there is a consequent increase in the 'capture' of revenue.

If there is to be a theme linking the various and disparate aims of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is that more benefit for the town is gained through making new linkages and also making more of existing linkages. This spreads across a numbers of areas as set out below.

- Torpoint to the rest of the Rame Peninsula[3]
- Torpoint to Plymouth
- Existing and new housing to existing and new employment
- Existing and new housing to existing and new retail
- Existing and new housing to existing and new leisure opportunities
- Existing and new housing to existing and new community facilities
- Green Infrastructure links across the town and also towards the surrounding countryside
- Town to the waterfront
- Links to the AONB
- Links to Antony House.

Introduction

The Neighbourhood Plan accepts and seeks to harness the opportunities afforded by meeting the identified housing and employment development needs. The Neighbourhood Plan provides the opportunity for the community to take control of growth and direct it in the most appropriate way and also to identify infrastructure requirements that can be delivered through the acceptance of growth.

It is important to state that this Neighbourhood Plan is one step in a longer journey to improving the town for residents and visitors. It should be subject to constant review and monitoring. In addition it will very important that the outcomes of the Neighbourhood Plan are communicated effectively with the community. An on-going dialogue within the town between all stakeholders where progress is both monitored and clearly vocalised will be essential to ensure that the Plan makes a difference.

The Neighbourhood Plan has to meet a number of basic conditions[4] prior to proceeding to a referendum. These are summarised below;

- It complies with national policy;
- It has special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or it's setting;
- It contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- It is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan;
- It does not breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations; and
- It is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

There is no statutory requirement for a Sustainability Appraisal to be undertaken in respect of neighbourhood plans. However, given that one of the basic conditions is that the Plan should contribute towards sustainable development[5], this has been undertaken and is set out in Appendix 2. The 19 sustainability indicators suggested by Cornwall Council are replicated.

4 Set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as applied to neighbourhood plans by s38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

5 Paragraph 6 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that paragraphs 18 to 219 (of the NPPF) taken as a whole constitute the government's view of what sustainable development in England means in practice for the planning system.