

The evidence base for your Neighbourhood Plan

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Aim of session

Determining what evidence you will need to include in your neighbourhood plan and why



National Planning Policy Framework

- Paragraph 158 states that *“each local planning authority should ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area”*
- Similar principles apply to the preparation of neighbourhood plans though groups are expected to use a proportionate evidence base

Why develop an evidence base?

- A portfolio of information and documents that support the development of a neighbourhood plan
- It demonstrates that all the information is up-to-date and provides a clear picture of the existing 'state' of an area
- Not solely based on anecdotal comments by local community
- It demonstrates that the plan is 'sound'
- Failure to produce or use a good up-to-date evidence base could result in the plan not meeting the basic conditions

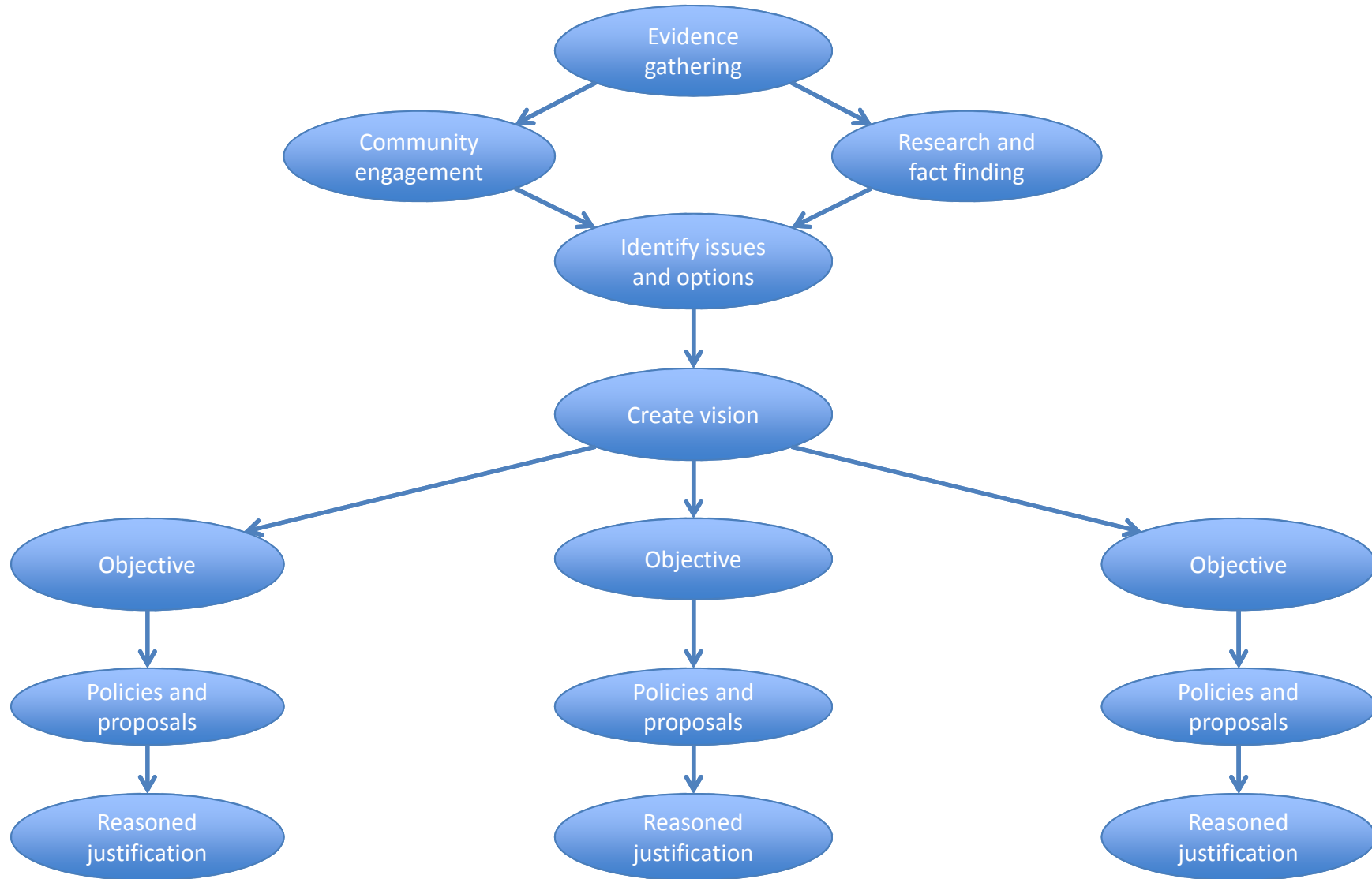


What can an evidence base contain?

The evidence base should contain two elements:

- community engagement – the views of the local community and other stakeholders who have an interest in the future of the area
- research/fact finding - evidence that the choices made by the plan are supported by the background facts (such as Census data)





What do we mean by evidence?

- Community engagement
- Published statistics (e.g. Census)
- Bespoke surveys (e.g. housing need)
- Existing policies (coverage and gaps)



Community engagement

- What local people think about the area is important
- This helps to identify the issues to be addressed
- You need to be inclusive and get representative response
- Is it anecdotal evidence that requires further research?
- Your vision and objectives can be derived from this and should link clearly to the eventual policies
- However you need to be clear about what are planning related matters
- The latter dealt with through other means



Existing information

- Examples include 2011 Census, Index of Multiple Deprivation, Health Statistics
- Information held by statutory providers, County Council, Government agencies and voluntary sector bodies
- Contact umbrella business organisations e.g. Chamber of Commerce
- Planning history
- Information used by the local planning authority when preparing their own local plan



Local plan

- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
- Housing Needs Assessment
- Conservation Area Appraisal
- Local Services and Facilities Assessment
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)
- Existing Monitoring Data (AMR)
- Open Space and Play Pitch Assessment
- Local Transport Study
- Landscape Character Assessment



Bespoke research

- A local housing needs survey
- A local shopping survey – uses, vacant units, etc
- A local landscape survey – characteristics, important views, sensitivity analysis
- Quantity, quality and accessibility of open spaces
- Traffic surveys
- Demand surveys e.g. for workshops
- Townscape features, character assessments and any local heritage features



National and local planning policies

- You should not duplicate what is already covered by National Planning Policy Framework or the adopted Local Plan
- Be mindful what is in any emerging Local Plan
- Work with the local authorities to review what is already in place and identify any gaps for the neighbourhood plan to focus upon



Group Exercise

What evidence do you need and where will you get it from?



Theme	Your Evidence
Population and Housing	<i>Interactive exercise – work through with the group to complete this</i>
Character and Setting	
Wildlife and Nature Sites	
Flood Prevention	
Health Care	
Education	
Community Facilities	
Employment	
Transport	
Commitments	

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