



## **South Tyneside Council**

### **Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan: Referendum Version**

### **Referendum Information Statement (including information for voters)**

**Statement Published: 27 June 2022**  
**Referendum Date: 4 August 2022**



## About the Referendum

On 4 August 2022, there will be a referendum on a neighbourhood plan for your area. This statement explains more about the referendum that is going to take place and how you can take part in it. This statement provides information about:

- The referendum and how you can take part;
- The planning system in England and the development plan;
- Neighbourhood plans;
- The Neighbourhood Area; and
- The Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan.

## Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

A referendum asks you to vote 'yes' or 'no' to a question.

For this referendum you will receive a ballot paper with this question:

'Do you want South Tyneside Council to use the neighbourhood plan for Whitburn to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'

## How do I vote in the referendum?

You vote by putting a cross (X) in the 'Yes' or 'No' box on your ballot paper.

If more people vote 'Yes' than 'No' in this referendum, then South Tyneside Council will use the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan to help it decide planning applications in the Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum area.

If more people vote 'No' than 'Yes', then planning applications will continue to be decided without using the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan. Instead, planning applications would be decided using the policies in the various documents that comprise the Development Plan for South Tyneside. These are as follows:

- South Tyneside Core Strategy (2007)
- South Shields Town Centre and Waterfront Area Action Plan (2008)
- Hebburn Town Centre Area Action Plan (2008)
- Central Jarrow Area Action Plan (2010)
- South Tyneside Development Management Policies Document (2011)
- South Tyneside Site-Specific Development Plan Document (2012)

## What is the Development Plan?

In England, decisions on planning applications are made by local planning authorities. Those decisions must be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The development plan is a set of documents that contain policies for the development and use of land in a local planning authority area.

South Tyneside Council is the local planning authority for South Tyneside.

## What is Neighbourhood Planning?

Neighbourhood planning powers were introduced in the Localism Act in 2011. Their aim is to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work. Local communities prepare neighbourhood plans which show how the community wants land to be used and developed in its area. When a neighbourhood plan passes a local referendum, it will become part of the development plan for that development area and must be used to help in making decisions on planning applications in that area.

## Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

Where town or parish councils exist, they are the only organisations that can start the work of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan. Where there is no town or parish council a Neighbourhood Forum can be created to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. Whitburn does not have a Parish Council so in this case the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum.

## What is a neighbourhood area?

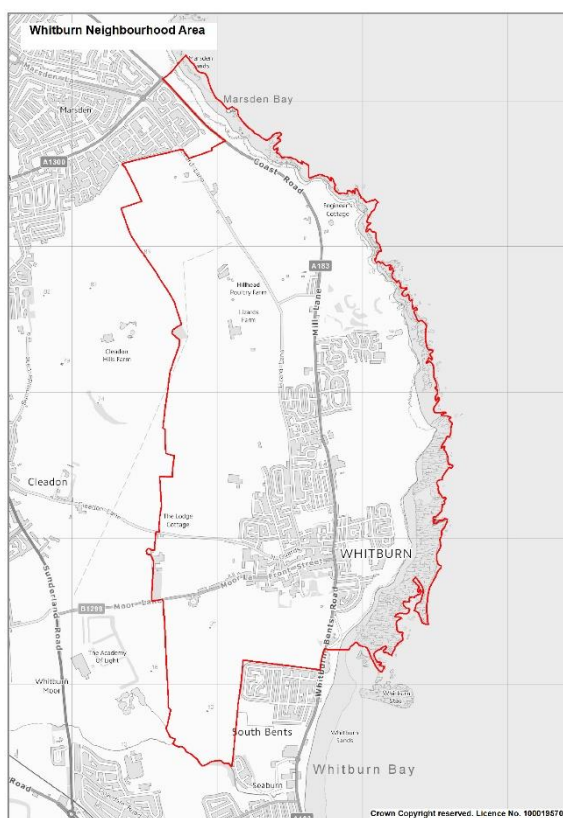
Neighbourhood areas are defined for the purpose of neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood Plans can only be created in formally designated neighbourhood areas. A neighbourhood area can cover single streets or large urban areas or rural areas.

The boundaries of a neighbourhood area are proposed by town or parish councils. This is done by formal application to South Tyneside Council who will make the decision about designating a neighbourhood area.

The boundary of the Whitburn Neighbourhood Area was formally designated at South Tyneside Council's Cabinet meeting on 15 June 2022 for the purposes of carrying out Neighbourhood Planning activities in the Whitburn area of the Borough.

## Neighbourhood Planning in Whitburn

The Referendum area is defined in this Information Statement. The Referendum Area is identical to the area designated as the Whitburn Neighbourhood Area and is shown below.



## Referendum expenses

Expenses can be incurred by an individual or body organising a campaign during the period of the referendum for the referendum purposes. There is a limit to the amount that campaigners can spend on their advertising for the referendum.

The Referendum expenses limit that will apply in relation to the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan Referendum is £2616.94 to each campaign organiser. The number of persons entitled to vote in the Referendum by reference to which the limit has been calculated is 4321 (as at 1 June 2022)

## Specified documents to be published before Referendum

South Tyneside Council is required to make available a number of documents relevant to holding the Referendum. These are called the Specified Documents. The specified documents are:

- Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan: Referendum Version;
- Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan: Referendum Version: Policies Map;
- Report of the Independent Examiner (23 February 2022)
- Summary of the representations submitted to the independent examiner;
- Statement by the local planning authority that the draft plan meets the basic conditions (*otherwise known as the Decision Statement*); and a
- Statement that sets out general information as to town and country planning including neighbourhood planning and the referendum (*Referendum Information Statement including Information for Voters*)

These documents can be viewed on the South Tyneside website at the following location:

[www.southtyneside.gov.uk/elections](http://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/elections)

Paper copies of the documents are also available to view, during normal opening, hours at:

- South Tyneside Council, Town Hall & Civic Offices, Westoe Road, South Shields, NE33 2RL
- Whitburn Library, Mill Lane, Whitburn, SR6 7EN

## Can I vote?

You can vote in the referendum if you live within the defined Whitburn neighbourhood forum area, and:

- You are registered to vote in the Council elections, and
- You are 18 years of age or over on 4 August 2022

The referendum will be conducted based on procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

## Am I registered to vote?

If you are not registered to vote, you won't be able to vote. You can check if you are registered by calling the Elections Office on 0191 424 7230.

If you are not registered to vote, you will need to submit an application to register by Tuesday 19 July 2022. The quickest way to apply is online at [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) up to midnight on the deadline date.

Alternatively, you can contact the Elections Office on the number above to apply by telephone, or to be sent a paper application form.

However you choose to submit your application, you will need to provide your date of birth and National Insurance Number.

## Ways of voting

There are three ways of voting:

### **In person on Thursday 4 August 2022:**

- At your local polling station. It is easy and a member of staff will help if you are not sure what to do.
- Polling stations are open from 7am to 10pm.
- The polling stations are:

**Portable Station, Mill Lane, Next to Souter View, Whitburn**

**Our Place, 19 Wellands Lane, Whitburn**

**Whitburn Library, Mill Lane, Whitburn**

- Those eligible to vote at a polling station will receive a poll card between 30 June and 6 July confirming their allocated polling station.
- If you do not receive a poll card, you can contact the Elections Office on 0191 424 7230, or email [elections@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:elections@southtyneside.gov.uk).

#### **By post:**

- Those eligible to vote, who already have a postal vote, will receive a postal poll card between 30 June and 6 July.
- To apply to vote by post, you will need to complete an application form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by 5pm on Wednesday 20 July 2022.
- Completed applications can be scanned and sent to [elections@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:elections@southtyneside.gov.uk), or posted to:  
Electoral Services, South Tyneside Council, Town Hall, Westoe Road, South Shields, NE33 2RL
- Postal votes can be sent overseas but you need to think about whether you will have time to receive and return your completed postal vote.
- You should receive your postal vote by Friday 29 July 2022. If it doesn't arrive by this date, you can ask for a replacement up to 5pm on Thursday 4 August 2022 by contacting the Elections Office on 0191 424 7230.

#### **By proxy:**

- If you can't get to the polling station and don't wish, or are too late, to vote by post, you may be able to vote by proxy. This means allowing somebody you trust to vote on your behalf.
- A proxy poll card will be sent to anyone currently appointed as a proxy for an eligible voter in the referendum area, between 30 June and 6 July.
- To apply to vote by proxy, you will need to complete an application form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by 5pm on Wednesday 27 July 2022.
- Completed applications can be scanned and sent to [elections@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:elections@southtyneside.gov.uk) or posted to:  
Electoral Services, South Tyneside Council, Town Hall, Westoe Road, South Shields, NE33 2RL
- When you apply for a proxy vote, you must say why you cannot vote in person.
- Anyone can be your proxy as long as they are eligible to vote and are willing to vote on your behalf. You will have to tell them how you want to vote.

Postal and proxy vote application forms are available at [www.southtyneside.gov.uk/elections](https://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/elections) or you can call the Elections Office on 0191 424 7230 or email [elections@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:elections@southtyneside.gov.uk) to request a form.

## **How to find out more**

Further general information on neighbourhood planning, including documents relating to the Whitburn Neighbourhood Plan can be found on the Council's website at

<https://www.southtyneside.gov.uk/article/57607/Whitburn-Neighbourhood-Planning>

For queries about planning issues and neighbourhood planning in general, please contact South Tyneside Council's Planning Policy Team by email at [local.plan@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:local.plan@southtyneside.gov.uk)

For more information about voting and the arrangements for this referendum, please contact the Elections Office on 0191 424 7230 or email [elections@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:elections@southtyneside.gov.uk)