

Report seeking approval to designate the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area

Report to: Gary Williams, Head of Housing and Planning Services
Councillor Bradley Thomas, Portfolio Holder for Planning,
Transport and Infrastructure

Report by: Reiss Sadler, Planning Officer (Policy)

1. Executive Summary

1.1. An application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area for Droitwich Spa was received on 24 October 2016. It was submitted by Droitwich Spa Town Council, follows the parish boundary, and there is not an existing designation. Approval is therefore sought from the Head of Housing and Planning Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to approve the application and designate Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area.

2. Recommendation

2.1. That the application is approved and the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area be designated for the purposes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Introduction and Background

3.1. The designation of a Neighbourhood Area is the first formal stage in the Neighbourhood Planning process, setting the boundary to which the eventual Neighbourhood Plan will apply to and impact upon.

3.2. Regulation 5A, a 2016 addition to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, removes the requirement for consultation on Neighbourhood Area applications made by Town and Parish Council's that follow the parish boundary where no such designation already exists, in whole or in part.

3.3. Delegated authority was given by Council on 14 December 2016 to the Head of Housing and Planning Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to approve Neighbourhood Area applications made by Town and Parish Council's that follow the parish boundaries where there is no existing Neighbourhood Area designation.

4. Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area Application

4.1. An application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area was received from Droitwich Spa Town Council on 24 October 2016. The application comprised of the following three elements:

- a map which identifies the area to which the Neighbourhood Area application relates, which follows the Droitwich Spa parish boundary;
- a statement explaining why the area is considered appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area; and
- a statement that the organisation making the Neighbourhood Area application is a relevant body for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Planning legislation.

4.2. The Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area application follows the parish boundary, and no designated Neighbourhood Area exists in any part of the proposed area.

5. Implications and Impact

5.1. How does it meet Council priorities?

Neighbourhood Planning is one of the central themes of Localism, and the preparation and adoption of Neighbourhood Plans supports the Council's three priorities for 2016-2020.

5.2. What are the financial / resource implications?

Funding totalling £20,000 is available for Wychavon to claim from DCLG for each Neighbourhood Plan following a successful examination and a referendum date being set. It is considered that providing support for the Neighbourhood Planning process can be met by existing staffing resources and budgets.

5.3. What are the risks?

As a statutory process, failure to determine a Neighbourhood Area application runs the risk of the Town or Parish Council being unable to process with the Neighbourhood Plan. It is possible for a Local Planning Authority not to approve a Neighbourhood Area application but it must show why the proposed area does not support the aim and objectives of the eventual Neighbourhood Plan.

5.4. Is a Diversity Impact Assessment required?

Diversity Impact Assessments are a way of examining whether different communities or groups are or will be adversely affected by a current or proposed service, policy or project. It helps identify ways of reducing or eradicating any

adverse impacts by developing an action plan for minimising the impact of the service, policy or project. A Diversity Impact Assessment screening has been undertaken which shows that the subject matter of this report does not require an assessment.

6. Conclusion

6.1. An application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area for Droitwich Spa was received on 24 October 2016. It was submitted by the Town Council and follows the parish boundary, and there is not an existing Neighbourhood Area designation. In line with Regulation 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the delegated authority obtained from Council on 14 December 2016, approval is sought from the Head of Housing and Planning Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to approve and designate the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area application.

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area Application Letter

Appendix 2 – Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area Application Map