



# Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan

## Project definition

### Contents

1	Overview.....	1	10.3	Project organisation structure	6	13.2	Funding opportunities	9
2	Project objectives .....	1	10.4	Communication plan	6	13.3	Locality Grant applications	10
3	Scope and exclusions .....	2	10.5	Internal project communication	6	14	Project tolerance and exception process .....	10
4	Project deliverables .....	3	10.6	External project communication	7	15	Appendices .....	10
6	Interfaces and dependencies .....	4	10.7	Quality management	7	15.1	Terminology	10
7	Assumptions.....	4	10.8	Decommit criteria	7	15.2	Topics and working groups	10
8	Acceptance criteria.....	4	11	Project milestones .....	8	15.3	Detailed schedules	10
9	Monitoring and evaluation ...	4	12	Resource plan.....	8	15.4	Document change log	11
10	Project delivery .....	4	13	Finance Plan.....	9			
	10.1 Risk log	5		13.1 Costs by phase	9			

## 1 Overview

The project will deliver approved plans for the town of Droitwich Spa in support of Droitwich Spa Town Council (DSTC). It will also support the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) and inform its future development.

The project will engage local people so that the plans have support and credibility.

The project will produce an approved Neighbourhood Plan for Droitwich Spa.

The project will be phased: at the end of each phase the structure and content of future phases, defined in the project Initiation Document and expanded here, will be revised and reviewed to ensure on-going feasibility and enable authorisation to continue. A list of the phases will be found in [section 9](#) and deliverables in [section 4](#).

This document has been created to provide an overview of the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan project going forward and to seek approval for progression to the next phase.

## 2 Project objectives

The purpose of the project is to mobilise the Droitwich Spa community to contribute to the future of Droitwich Spa, the well-being of the town, its people and businesses through making planning inputs which will provide a reference point for local planning decisions, with force of law where appropriate.

The objectives are to:

- Create a vision for future development in Droitwich Spa, reflecting the views of the community.
- Support (and influence) the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) and provide policies on
  - How land within the Town boundaries should be used
  - Where new homes and offices should be built,
  - What they should look like;
  - How green spaces must be protected, created or enhanced and
  - How new infrastructure is handled
- Additionally, the plan may include statements reflecting additional planning aspirations that are not included in statutory Neighbourhood Planning but have been highlighted as key issues by residents of the town through consultation.

**Key benefits are:<sup>1</sup>**

- Increased health & wellbeing locally
- Increased local economic activity
- Increased support for the environment
- Compliance with the SWDP

**Vision**

The agreed vision is: To maintain and enhance the town character while allowing sustainable development that is in line with the needs and wishes of the community.

The following statements were agreed by almost all of the respondents to the resident’s survey:

- Droitwich Spa will continue to be vibrant, prosperous, safe and accessible
- Historic features, and open spaces are protected.
- Droitwich Spa will have a diverse range of services and facilities supporting its sporting, recreation and leisure interests
- Main retail centres offer pleasant and attractive places to work, visit and shop. (The High Street will be a historical asset and promoted as such.)
- Increased high quality employment premises including facilities for start-up and smaller businesses will be available.
- All future development will be sustainable and growth of the Town will be managed through appropriate allocation of land, improvements to infrastructure, services and utilities. The historical Spa look including buildings, heritage, nature conservation and green infrastructure will be retained.
- Droitwich Spa will be recognised for its green credentials and carbon neutral development
- By aspiring to fulfil the above vision the Neighbourhood Plan will play an important role in ensuring that Droitwich Spa continues to be an outstanding environment for its current and future residents, workers and visitors.

**Context**

A Project Initiation Document (PID) was reviewed and approved by Droitwich Spa Town Council (DSTC) on 27 January 2020. This built upon work that had been suspended in September 2018 which had included draft issues and options material for some of the subjects that the plan was expected to cover. The PID introduced a modular structure so that there would be greater control over progression and to ensure a cooperative approach which builds confidence going forward.

On 14 December 2020. DSTC reiterated its long-standing commitment to offering a Neighbourhood Plan to the residents of Droitwich Spa.

The Covid-19 pandemic has slowed progress considerably and means that forward plans still carry some uncertainty. The structured approach to planning will help deal with future uncertainties (see section 9 – Project Delivery)

**3 Scope and exclusions**

The project will produce a plan containing two sets of information:

- Statutory Plan      components that fall under the scope of Neighbourhood Plans and that have legal weight
- Aspirational plan    components of DSNP that are important to the Droitwich Spa Community but cannot be legally enforced, but will nonetheless have influence over future planning decisions.

Statutory parts that have legal status will be put through an approval process in order to the DSNP be “made” (i.e., assessed and given legal weight in future planning decisions).

Details of the current areas of focus will be found in [Appendix 14.2](#). The scope may be varied as the issues & options work progresses.

Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is limited to the designated boundary of Droitwich Spa, the impact of developments close to those boundaries will be considered. Organisations whose membership is primarily domiciled within the

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<sup>1</sup> These are the strategic objectives from the current Benefits Map created in 2018

town boundary but are physically based outside (e.g., Droitwich Rugby club) will be considered to be within the scope of the project.

## 4 Project deliverables

A Neighbourhood Plan contains:

- Introduction
- Statements of Planning *Issues*
- *Options* to address them
- Evidence to support the *issues and options*, including results of surveys and public consultations
- Planning *policy statements*

NB: The planning policy statements have force of law once “made”

The Neighbourhood Plan may additionally contain aspirational policies, which may also influence planning decisions at Town, District and County level.

Project deliverables will include:

- Statements of Planning Issues and Options to address them
- Evidence to support the *Issues & Options*, including results of surveys and public consultations
- Draft and final planning *Policy Statements*
- Public consultations to extend and refine the ideas being pursued
- *Draft Neighbourhood plan*
- Referendum results
- Neighbourhood plan approval and authorisation
- The Neighbourhood Plan document (drafts and “made versions”)

Deliverables of the next phase will be

- Further Stakeholder engagement to ensure that all relevant parties have the opportunity to contribute to the plan.
- Engagement of sufficient volunteers to draft and develop the Neighbourhood Plan and provide project management
- Continued close engagement of most DSTC members
- Analysis of the initial Residents survey
- Grant Funding Application made
- Primary funding obtained
- Materials (from past work) revised and survey results added to form a basis for Issues & options
- Initial *Issues & Options* documented
- Initial *Issues & Options* evidence obtained
- Initial public consultation conducted
- Public consultation - to include public meeting(s) held, a second, focussed residents survey conducted;
- *Draft Neighbourhood plan* documented
- Phase end review/ Phase next approved

A full list of the project phases appears in [section 9](#).

On-going project deliverables include:

- Project plans
- Progress reports
- Communications materials
- Funding Applications for external costs
- Authorisation documents
- Issues and Risks Analyses.

## 6 Interfaces and dependencies

The project depends upon the support and approval of Droitwich Spa Town Council (DSTC).

The project will be inclusive and is expected to interact with

- development of the SWDP
- the High Street development opportunities, including the Wychavon sponsored Town Centre
- the Westlands Project

### Others?

- and other initiatives (initiated from within and outwith DSTC) during the project life time.

## 7 Assumptions

Key assumptions are:

- That the defined objectives and benefits are achievable
- That DSTC councillors support and participate in the project
- That project costs are within approved funding levels and that these funds will be secured.
- Appropriate engagement of local people, businesses and town councillors will be achieved
- Acceptance that at end of each phase, if project is not viable, it will not proceed to the next phase.

## 8 Acceptance criteria

This Project Definition Document will be approved if:

- DSTC agrees with the overall objectives of the project
- DSTC accepts that the project organisation and approach is appropriate
- Resources required for the next phase will be available and the resource requirements of future phases (as far as they can be determined at this point) are realistic and reasonable.

## 9 Monitoring and evaluation

Regular reporting will inform DSTC Support Group meetings and on to full DSTC meetings.

At the end of each phase, an appropriate planning and approval documents (including revised plans) will be prepared for DSTC to approve initiation of the next phase.

## 10 Project delivery

The project has a phased approach. The phases are

- Phase 0 - Initiation & Organisation (Completed)
- Phase 1 – Mobilisation including funding applications (nearing completion)
- Phase 2 - *Issues & Options* development
- Phase 3 - *Issues & Options* refined; *Policy Statements* drafted
- Phase 4 - NP completion including second public consultation
- Phase 5 - Implementation including finalisation of evidence and policies, NP reviews and referendum, Neighbourhood Plan “made”
- On-going maintenance Revisions of the NP in the light of changes locally and alterations to the SWDP

At the end of each phase

- the structure and content of future phases will be revised and reviewed to ensure on-going feasibility and
- Stakeholder approval of expenditure of resources (including DSTC authorisation) will be obtained prior to progression to the next phase.

10.1 Risk log

	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
1	Lack of support	Medium	<b>High:</b> Could cause NP to be abandoned	Strong focus on recruitment Regular communications
2	Inadequate resources	High	<b>High:</b> Will delay or halt project progress	Volunteer Recruitment will be a key <b>ACTION?</b>
3	Inadequate financial support	Medium	<b>High:</b> Will delay or halt project progress	a. This Project Definition identifies financial requirements; DSTC will be asked a small advance to initiate work b. DSTC to provide cost free project meeting spaces c. Management Group members have contributed to the initial funding; they and other volunteers and continue to provide their time at no cost to the project
4	Conflicting/ duplicating initiatives	High	<b>Medium:</b> We need know of other initiatives. It is possible that may at worst conflict with NP outcomes or be missed from the assessments.	DSTC councillors to advise of projects that may conflict or duplicate some of the Neighbourhood Planning work. It would be productive for the Neighbourhood Plan to include these where appropriate
5	Progress hindered by Covid-19 pandemic	High	<b>Medium:</b> Will delay or halt project progress	Meetings will be held using internet-based conferencing facilities. Social media and website will be used as primary communications tools, supplemented by paper-based where the opportunity exists and is cost effective
6	Changes in Government Planning policy	Medium:	<b>Medium:</b> Could require significant changes to the content of the Neighbourhood Plan	Changes to the Government planning website are monitored; significant alterations will be considered by the Management Group
7	Lack of DSTC support	High	<b>High</b> Will delay or halt project progress	The project has already secured support from DSTC minuted in meetings of January 2020 and 14 December 2020. Formation of a DSTC Support Group including members of the Town Council and NP Working Group as decided by DSTC on 14 Dec 21. Regular progress reporting with go/ no go decisions at the end of each phase to reassure DSTC that adequate controls are in place.
8	<b>More?</b>			

### 10.3 Project organisation structure

The **stakeholders** for the project are the people living and working in Droitwich Spa, businesses and organisations based there. The stakeholders' primary representatives are the members of Droitwich Spa Town Council (DSTC),

Additional stakeholders include:

- Wychavon District Council

The project structure is shown in the following diagram:



The **Management Group** is responsible for the organisation and general management of the project, reporting to the DSTC. The Management Group includes Town Councillors and project volunteers. It has a chairman, secretary and treasurer, plus other officers.

**Topic areas** are being established as needed to create components of the project and handle specific pieces of work (e.g., organisation of public consultation). The Working Groups include Town Councillors and project volunteers.

**Topic Managers** manage one or more topic areas. They:

- contribute to planning and report any changes to agreed dates
- contribute to progress reporting

**Volunteers** will be drawn from many sources, including the stakeholder groups. An assessment of skills and abilities for the volunteers will be maintained, so that gaps can be identified and responsibilities assigned. It is essential that such volunteers are prepared to construct the agreed policies rather than just being observers.

**External resources** will be employed to undertake activities and produce deliverables that the volunteer resources are unable to supply. This may include specialist consultant work to ensure that the plan is legally watertight. External resources also include expenditure on materials and support needed for communications and public consultations.

A **DSTC Support Group** has been proposed and agreed (DSTC 14 Dec 2021) to strengthen councillor's engagement with the project.

### 10.4 Communication plan

Internal communication is about project organisation, approvals and progress reporting.

There are two primary external communication requirements:

- To increase awareness of the Neighbourhood Plan, what it is for and what it means for the town, ultimately to secure support at the public referendum and
- To encourage and engage people, organisations and businesses to participate in the work of creating and promoting the project.
- To share ideas already gathered for scrutiny and enhancement

### 10.5 Internal project communication

Internal project communication will be largely achieved through electronic means, primarily email. A contact register is kept by the secretary and is subject to Data Protection Regulation controls.

## 10.6 External project communication

### Target audiences

- residents of Droitwich Spa
- other stakeholders such as owners or senior managers of businesses within Droitwich Spa, and
- and voluntary groups and other organisations that operate within Droitwich Spa

### Communications approaches

<b>Control</b>	All external communications will be subject to careful checks and will be approved by the chairman and a designated Town Councillor.
<b>Press releases</b>	The project will issue press releases to the Droitwich Standard, the Droitwich Advertiser and the Worcester News, but recognising that the distribution of the printed papers is rather limited. The papers will probably place the articles on their websites and their social media platforms as well.
<b>Social media</b>	Social media is often viewed as a simple and free solution, however there are two essential ingredients: compelling content, and a large audience. On Facebook the project will use the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan Group page. The project can also contribute to <i>Spotted Droitwich</i> page (about 15,000 followers) <i>PDS Extra Bits Group</i> (about 1,000 followers). There are also other Facebook groups / pages.
<b>Web material</b>	The project has a website. This could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• general information about Neighbourhood Planning and the project</li> <li>• reference information, including local statistics (eventually)</li> <li>• work-in-progress issues and options (once approved)</li> </ul> Additional web-based material will include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• project documents archive</li> <li>• work-in-progress</li> </ul>
<b>Leaflets &amp; posters</b>	The project will design and print some A5 leaflets for distribution to key locations such as the library, pubs, coffee shops, town noticeboards, etc. However, Covid-19 considerations mean this form of communication will be limited whilst constraints on movement exist.
<b>Public Meetings</b>	Public meetings will provide focal opportunities for potential volunteers and increase awareness. Again, these are likely to be facilitated electronically for the time being. Public meetings will also form the core of public consultations. They will also enable one-to-one conversations to confirm volunteer commitments, their interests and roles within the project.

## 10.7 Quality management

Documentation produced by the project will be subject to reviews. The final Neighbourhood Plan will be formally assessed by Wychavon District Council before it is “made” and has the power of legal enforcement.

All communications will be subject to an approval process:

- DSTC will review sensitive and significant material
- DSTC have delegated approval to a DSTC councillor within the DSNP Management Group. This is to reduce delays and keep material fresh.

## 10.8 Decommit criteria

The project will stop

- If there are insufficient resources to proceed
- Funding is not available for the work outstanding

- Failure to secure approval for the next phase of work at the phase end review points (go/ no go decisions)
- A referendum rejects the proposed plan

## 11 Project milestones

### Phase 0 Initiation & Organisation

Management Group established	5 Aug 19
Constitution agreed	6 Aug 19
Project initiation Document agreed	20 Jan 20
Restart proposal sent to DSTC and agreed	27 Jan 20

### Phase 1 Mobilisation including funding applications

Volunteers engaged	On-going
Initial Residents Survey issued	30 Jul 20
Initial survey results analysed	5 Mar 21
External resources estimated & funded for phase 2	24 Mar 21
DNP components confirmed	8 Jan 21
Project Definition document approved	19 Apr 21
Stage end review/ Phase 2 approved	19 Apr 21

### Phase 2 - Issues & Options development

Grant funding application submitted	30 Apr 21
Initial issues and options outlined	28 Jun 21
Initial evidence for issues obtained	1 Jul 21
Initial public consultation initiated	22 Jul 21
Second survey completed	28 Aug 21
Stage end review/ Phase 3 approved	27 Sep 21

### Phase 3 - Issues & Options refined; Policy Statements drafted

Policies drafted by Work Groups	30 Nov 2
Initial evidence for policies obtained	31 Jan 22
Second public consultation conducted	7 Feb 22
Stage end review/ Phase 4 approved	11 Apr 22

### Phase 4 - NP completion

Policies finalised by Work Groups	1 Jun 22
Final evidence obtained	8 Jun 22
3 <sup>rd</sup> public consultation conducted	20 Jun 22
Neighbourhood Plan drafted	1 Aug 22
Stage end review/ Phase 5 approved	15 Aug 22

### Phase 5 - Implementation

Approval sought - DSTC/ WDC	15 Dec 22
Assessment/ plan made	28 Feb 23
Referendum held	5 May 23

### On-going maintenance

As required – by DSTC planning committee

For more detail of the plans, please refer to the integrated Gantt/ Costs chart supplied

## 12 Resource plan

Immediate resource requirements centre on the need to assess the existing plan documents for currency and validity.

The Management Group is already constituted and has a minimum of 6 members, including a chair person, treasurer and secretary. At least three members of DSTC will be members of the Management Group.

Work Completed  
(but some tasks  
have taken far  
longer than  
planned has due to  
the impact of  
Covid-19



Additional resources are also required as follows

Purpose	Phases	Requirement	Min #
Communications Team	1 - 5	Leader plus at least one other	1
Project Office	0 - 5	Leader plus at least one other	2
Neighbourhood Plan development	2 - 5	Leader plus at Topic manager plus at least two others	14
Subject matter / working groups	2 -5	Topic managers plus volunteers as required (see <a href="#">section 14.2</a> for a list of topics)	

## 13 Finance Plan

The project be funded by grants and other inputs, including the time and financial input of participants. A bank account has been established with NatWest bank.

### 13.1 Costs by phase

The costs of remaining work will be reviewed at the end of each phase as part of the go/no go decision process.

The integrated Gantt/ Costs chart supplied with this document provides a detailed list of costs, also showing the costs incurred over time.:

Phase	Estimate	Notes	Sources ref (see below)
0 - Initiation	0	The costs have been borne by members of the Management Group	1
1 - Mobilisation	0	The costs have been borne by members of the Management Group	1
2 - Issues & Options	3,323		
3 - Policies	1,852		
4 – NP Completion	750	The plans referendum is assumed to be part of a scheduled election	
5 - Implementation	3,515		
Contingency	560	Some contingency is built into phases 2 & 4	
<b>Overall cost</b>	<b>10,000</b>		<b>2</b>

\* The costs incurred in Phase 0 and Phase 1 have been borne by members of the Management Group

### 13.2 Funding opportunities

The following funds are potentially available

Ref	Amount	Source
1	£200	The costs have been borne by members of the Management Group -no advance funding from DTSC. It should also be noted that, volunteers time to end March 2021 contributed has a value of £5,127 when costed at the 2020-21 Minimum pay rate.
2	£10,000	Localism funding - additional grant monies are available for plans where the population exceeds 25,000

Notes:

- A Strategic Environmental assessment may no longer be required once the Government white paper proposals are enacted, however we will keep it in the provisional plans until the regulations are changed.
- Examiner costs – covered by Wychavon

- AECOM (Locality) will do housing needs assessment (value £3,000). The project will need to be careful to specify the requirements carefully to ensure this is fit for purpose, based on reports obtained
- ATC (Automated traffic counts) may be obtained via Worcestershire county at no cost

### **13.3 Locality Grant applications**

“Locality” is the government-initiated body responsible for promoting and supporting Neighbourhood Planning.

We will apply for grants each financial year as follows to a total of £10,000:

2020-21	£3500
2021-22	£2500
2022-23	£4000

Each application includes an element of contingency. Unused grant moneys will be refunded and included in the application for subsequent years.

## **14 Project tolerance and exception process**

The project will be run using standard project management techniques based upon the UK government Prince 2 methods, tailored appropriately to the demands of this type of project.

Decommit criteria are defined – see 10.8 above:

## **15 Appendices**

### **15.1 Terminology**

The following terminology will be used throughout the project to ensure clarity of communication.

Droitwich Spa Community Residents, businesses and others that have a direct interest in the future of Droitwich Spa. NB organisations with the majority of participants living in Droitwich but premises outside of the boundary are included (e.g., Droitwich Rugby Club).	
Statutory Plan	Components of DSNP that fall under the scope of Neighbourhood Plans that have legal weight
Aspirational plan	Components of DSNP that are important to the Droitwich Spa Community but cannot be legally enforced

### **15.2 Topics and working groups**

The **primary topics** covered by working groups are initially as follows \*

- Business
- Community Services (Medical, education)
- Heritage and Culture, including Waterways
- Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (could include Highways and Transport)
- Environment
- Sport, Leisure and Recreation
- Age Related (e.g., Youth)

\* It should be noted that the topic list may be adjusted as the project progresses to better reflect the areas of interest being addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan

Additionally, there will be a project office to handle

- Communications
- Project management
- Documentation management
- Secretary

### **15.3 Detailed schedules**

See separate integrated Gantt and costs chart and the detailed Gantt chart

**15.4 Document change log**

Version	Date	Content
0.1	20 Jul 20	Initial draft
0.2	28 Nov 20	Revised in readiness for Management Group meeting 30 November.
0.3	30 Nov 20	Updated during the Management Group meeting 30 November.
0.4	3 Dec 20	Updated from comments following Management Group meeting 30 November.
0.5	5 Dec 20	Discussion with Rhys Jones
0.6	29 Mar 21	Revision for Management Group review
0.7	7 Apr 21	<p>Section 2: Context, last line now reads: (see section 9 (Project Delivery))</p> <p>Section 4 Project deliverables            "Initial subject matter work based upon past work to" has been corrected to "Materials (from upon past work) and survey results added to form a basis for Issues &amp; options"</p> <p>Section 9.1 Risk Log - 3 A new entry has been created to specifically deal with the risk of lack of support by DSTC</p> <p>Section 9.1 Risk log (mitigation 3c) What is the initial funding contribution from Management Group Members about?  <b>Answer:</b> The entry has been changed to: "Management Group members have contributed to the initial funding; they and other volunteers and continue to provide their time at no cost to the project". (Earlier in 2021 Management Group gave some money to the project (typically £20 each) to fund initial communications - web site set up, Facebook Boosts, etc. Time recording continues and is translated into a monetary value at the current minimum wage rate).</p> <p>Section 9.1 Risk Log - 3 Changes in Government Planning policy – impact and mitigation added</p> <p>Section 9.2 Wording made less confusing</p> <p>Section 9.5 External Resources: spelling corrected.</p> <p>Section 9.2 Reference to the DSTC Support Group has been enhanced.</p> <p>Section 9.6 Quality Management – spelling correction</p> <p>Section 11 Milestones dates updated</p>
0.8	15 Apr 21	Page 3: Removal of typo
0.9	17 May 21	Section 11 Correction of phase reference numbers in error, minor corrections of some dates to match schedules.
0.10	21 May 21	Correction of typo in date in section 4 (Risks & Issues)

*Prepared on behalf of the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan Management Group*