

Section 1: Introduction

A neighbourhood plan for Highgate

Why does Highgate need a neighbourhood plan?

Highgate is an area, in planning terms, which is split between a number of London Boroughs and has never benefitted from a cohesive and singular set of development guidelines that recognise and seek to preserve the unique character and needs of the neighbourhood area. The people of Highgate therefore felt that they should seize the opportunity presented by neighbourhood planning through the Localism Act to define their boundaries and provide a set of statutory policies that can genuinely influence the quality and quantity of development within Highgate.

This Plan has set out to identify the issues and opportunities that exist in Highgate and create clear policies that seek to overcome them or embrace them. This process began with the characterisation of Highgate and the identification of a clear vision and list of objectives that can be found in Part 3 of this Plan. It culminated in the production of a suite of clear and targeted planning policies that have been developed by the community for the community.



What is the Highgate Neighbourhood Plan?

The Highgate Neighbourhood Plan ('the Plan') has been produced by the Highgate Neighbourhood Forum ('the Forum'), which was formed by a number of amenity groups, residents' organisations and individuals (including all of the local Councillors) and formally designated as the legal body able to deliver a neighbourhood plan by Camden and Haringey Councils in December 2012. The Forum was set up with one simple aim – to deliver a plan that benefits the local community and Highgate as a whole.

It is one of the first of a new type of planning document, introduced as part of the Localism Act in 2011, that gives communities the opportunity to develop planning policies that will help shape development in their area. Neighbourhood plans are statutory planning documents that carry legal weight. This Plan, when adopted, will comprise part of both the London Boroughs of Haringey and Camden's development plan covering the Highgate area. The policies included in this Plan will be the starting point in the determination of planning applications in Highgate until 2029 (or until the Plan is reviewed).

The Plan will cover the 15-year period 2015-2030 ('the Plan period'). Over this period it will be subject of monitoring to ensure the policies it contains successfully deliver against its stated objectives. Depending on the effectiveness of the Plan, the Forum will likely review and update the document prior to the end of the Plan period to ensure it continues to provide an effective strategy for Highgate well into the future.

The Plan has been developed through wide consultation with a number of groups and bodies, including the residents of Highgate, landowners, local interest groups, as well as officers from the London Boroughs of Camden and Haringey, to guarantee it represents a strategy that is both appropriate and deliverable. Details of the consultation programme, and how it has helped shape the final objectives and policies, are contained in the Consultation Statement that accompanies the Plan.

As the Plan carries a significant level of legal weight, it has been prepared in strict accordance with all relevant primary and secondary legislation – principally Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ('the Act') and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 ('the Regulations'). Reference to these documents will ensure that the Plan comprises a set of policies that are procedurally sound in their preparation. The most important legal requirement of the Plan is that it must pass the 'basic conditions' test. The basic conditions require the plan to:

- Have regard to all national level policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), as well as accompanying guidance published by the Secretary of State;
- Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan (comprising the London Plan and the local development frameworks, or 'local plans' of both Camden and Haringey);
- Contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development; and
- Demonstrate compliance with all relevant EU obligations.

The compliance of the Plan with the tests set out above is demonstrated within the accompanying Basic Conditions Statement.

Preparing the Plan

Defining Highgate

One of the first steps that needed to be taken when delivering a neighbourhood plan for Highgate was to identify and designate the 'Plan area'. The Plan area broadly covers the postcode of N6, which has been a common definition of "Highgate" since the postcode was introduced nearly 100 years ago. The area lies within the boroughs of Camden and Haringey. In a practical sense, however, and in the minds of residents and businesses, the limits of Highgate are fuzzy around the edges. Some such streets are even in the adjoining boroughs of Islington and Barnet but working with this many boroughs would be impractical.

Where the Forum was initially unsure if particular streets or residential areas regarded themselves as being within 'Highgate', those residing in them were contacted directly for their views. As a result of this consultation, the Forum also had close regard to the proposed neighbouring Plan areas of Archway, Crouch End, Dartmouth Park and Hampstead when defining the extent of Highgate's boundaries. The result is that the Plan covers the area widely regarded as 'Highgate' by those who live and work in what is a distinctive part of North London. It is also the area that is covered by the amenity societies affiliated with the Forum.

The final Plan area was approved by the London Borough of Camden and the London Borough of Haringey on 17 December 2012. The extent of the Plan area is set out in Figure 2, on page 9.



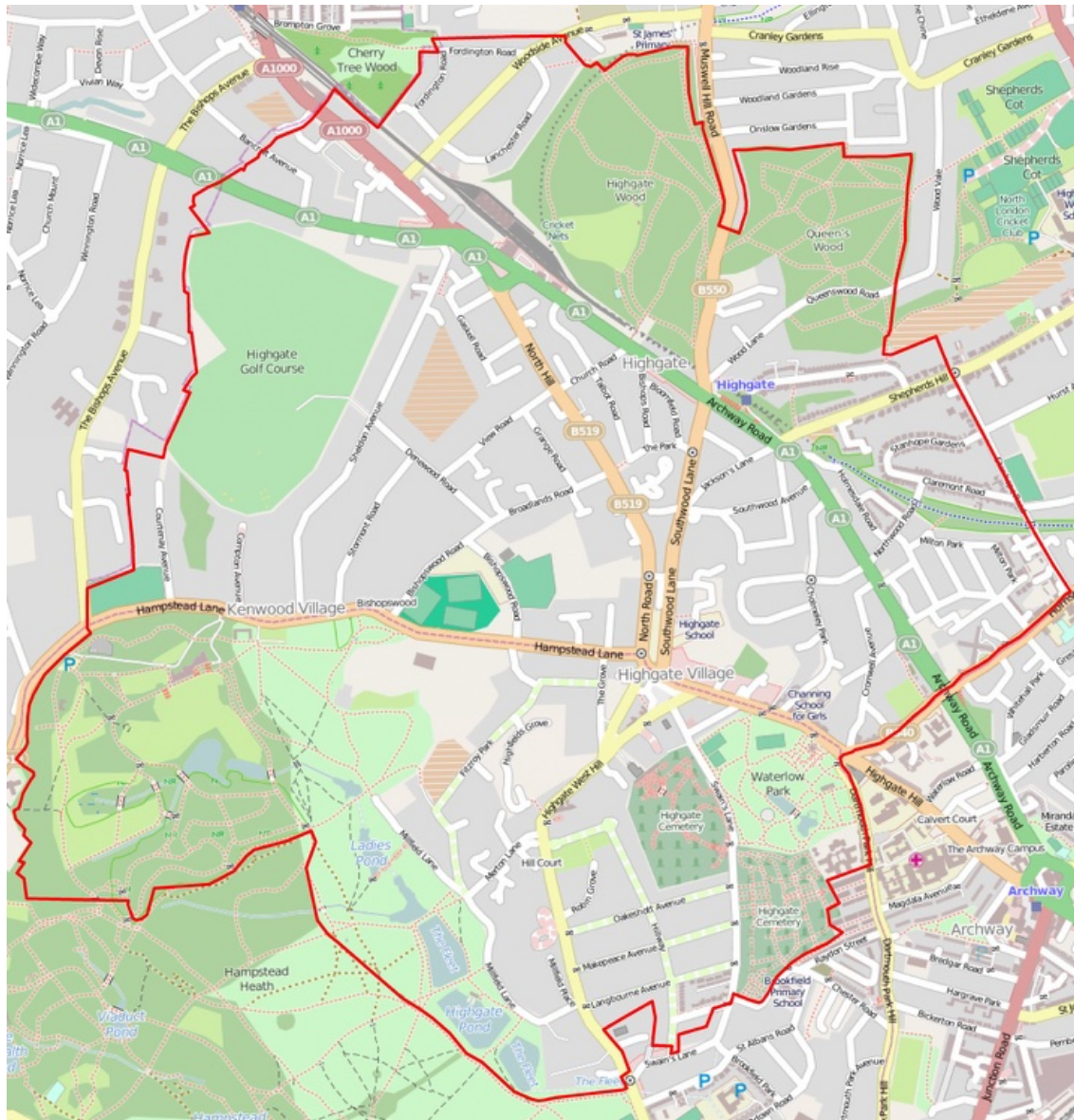


Fig 2 Highgate Neighbourhood Forum Map

Consultation

In preparing the Plan, one of the golden threads that have run through the process from its inception is the importance placed on consultation and the engagement of Highgate’s residents, businesses and stakeholders. The Forum endeavoured to exceed the minimum statutory requirements to consult set out in the Regulations and instead instigated a comprehensive programme of community engagement that included:

- A community survey delivered to all 8,000 households in the Plan area;
- Open membership of the Forum, which has facilitated the substantial and material direct input of over 50 members during the production of the Plan;
- A PlaceCheck walkabout, covering the Plan area street by street;

- A community planning workshop (undertaken in three well attended meetings and after considerable street engagement work);
- Several open meetings, including two AGMs;
- Close working with local Councillors; and
- Continual liaison with the Forum's affiliates (current list on website: <http://www.ForHighgate.org/reference/affiliates/>)

Full details of all of the means of engagement, along with their outcomes are described in the Consultation Statement. The latter section of the Statement will include the responses received following the statutory six week consultation exercise on the Plan itself (meeting the requirements of Regulation 14 of the Regulations), as well as including an indication as to where the Plan has been altered in response to consultation comments.



Sustainability

Another of the golden threads that ran through the Plan preparation process was the recognised importance of ensuring that all decisions and policies helped achieve sustainable development.

One of the earliest public workshops sought to ensure that those with a say on how Highgate is to develop in future truly understood what is meant when development is described as 'sustainable'. Starting with the Brundtland Commission's definition of sustainability, first summarised in 2001, the community helped develop a 'Sustainability Tree', (pictured on website: [Sustainability Tree](#)). This exercise began to draw out the key themes that the Plan should seek to address.

The initial ideas presented to the Forum at this workshop and the detailed definition of 'sustainability' set out in the NPPF (and included below) were then identified and fully informed the identification of both the Plan's vision and objectives. Every policy in the plan will set out to meet at least one of the Plan's objectives. Taken together, they will in turn ensure that the Plan contributes towards the achievement of sustainable development in every respect.

The NPPF definition of sustainability reads as follows:

6. *The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development...*

7. *There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:*

An economic role – *contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;*

A social role – *supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of the present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being;*

An environmental role – *contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.*



Plan structure

Section 2.0: A summary of Highgate describes the background to the Plan and sets out what makes Highgate special, as well as characterising the challenges that this Plan seeks to meet. This section explicitly draws on the Plan's evidence base and the responses to consultation.

Section 3.0: A vision for Highgate sets out the Plan's vision and the key objectives from which all of the statutory policies cascade.

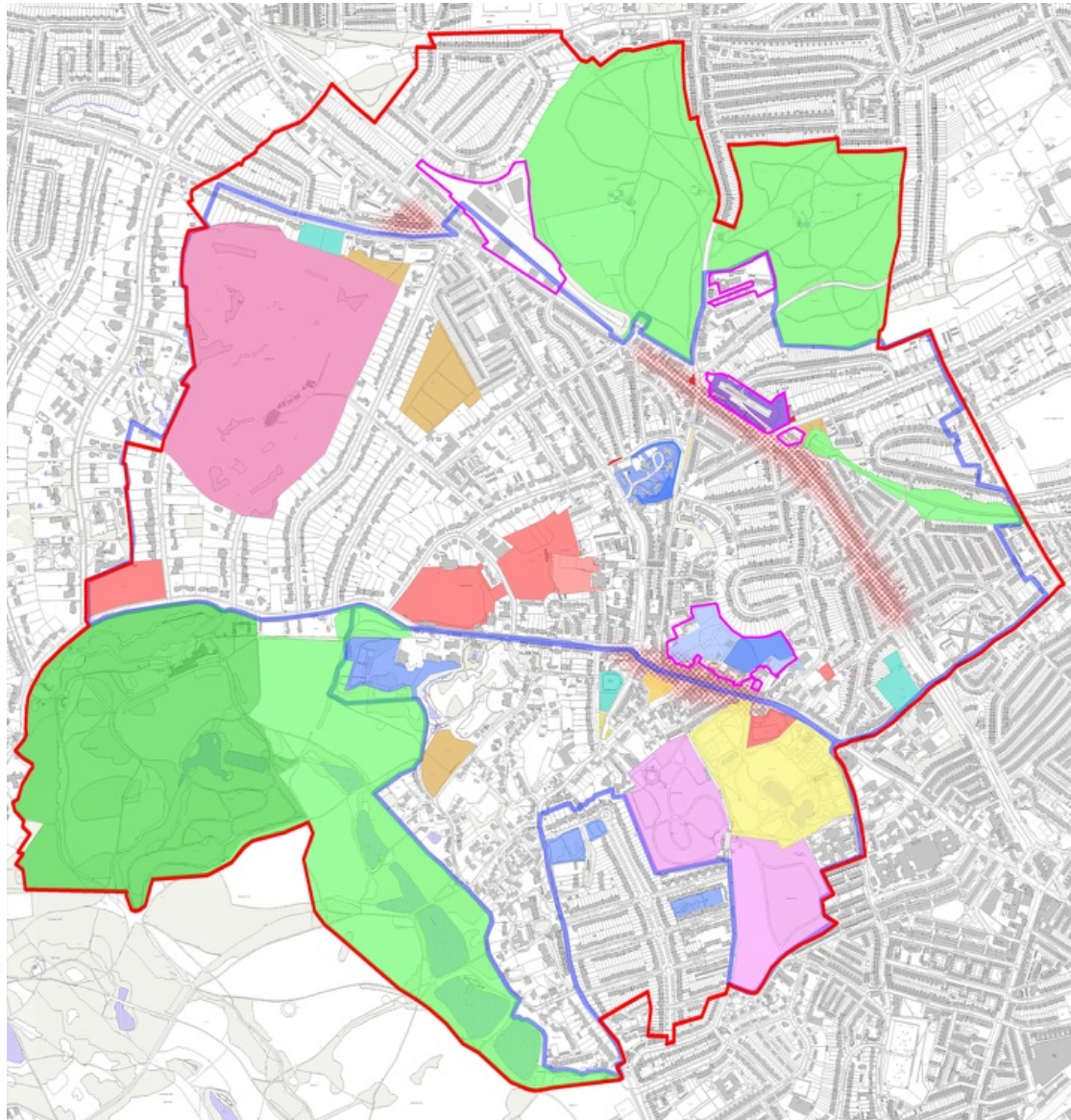
Section 4.0: General Plan-wide policies sets out the overarching policies covering either the whole or part of the Plan area.

Section 5.0: Key Area Policies sets out the vision for four of the key development areas in Highgate. It presents the criteria which seek to guide the future mix of uses and forms of development in each area.

Section 6.0: Non-statutory 'Community Action Plan' sets out all the issues that were identified during the course of consultation as action points, but are not covered by the statutory policies of the Plan. The implementation of the action points in this section – through community-led initiatives – will be no less vital in ensuring that the aspirations of the neighbourhood are met.

Section 7.0: Delivery and Monitoring identifies the timescales, partnerships with stakeholders and potential sources of funding which will be involved in delivering the objectives and policies of the Plan.





-  Economic Activity Areas
-  Key Areas
-  Major Public Open Spaces
-  Waterlow Park
-  Highgate Cemetery
-  School Grounds
-  Significant private / Council open land
-  Allotments
-  Reservoirs
-  Pond Square
-  Highgate Overground
-  Pocket Parks
-  Conservation Area Boundaries

HIGHGATE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN KEY DIAGRAM