Whitnash Neighbourhood Planning Referendum

Information Statement for Voters

On 26 November 2015, there will be a referendum on a neighbourhood plan in Whitnash. This statement explains more about the referendum and how you can take part in it.

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 Warwick District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Whitnash 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. Put a cross in only one box or your vote will not be counted.

If more people vote ‘yes’ than ‘no’ in this referendum, then Warwick District Council will use the Neighbourhood Development Plan to help it decide planning applications in this local area.

If more people vote ‘no’ than ‘yes’, then planning applications will be decided without using the Neighbourhood Development Plan as part of the Development Plan for the local area.

What is Neighbourhood Planning?
Neighbourhood planning aims to help local communities play a direct role in planning the areas in which they live and work.

A community can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. This plan can show how the community wants land to be used and developed in its area.

What is a Neighbourhood area?
A neighbourhood area can cover single streets or large urban or rural areas. The boundaries of a neighbourhood area are put forward by:

- Town or parish councils
- A neighbourhood forum (a group of at least 21 people in areas without town or parish councils)
The boundary of the neighbourhood area was determined by Warwick District Council.

**Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?**
Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils, or neighbourhood forums. In this case, the Whitnash Neighbourhood Plan was prepared by Whitnash Town Council.

**What is a Development Plan?**
In England, planning applications are determined by local planning authorities in accordance with the Development Plan. A Development Plan is a set of documents that set out the policies for the development and use of land across the entire local authority area. Within the Warwick District, the local planning authority is Warwick District Council.

**Neighbourhood Planning in Whitnash**
The Referendum area is identified on the map (appendix 1). Since the neighbourhood planning area was approved, the Boundary Commission has recommended changes to the parish boundary, which to date has resulted in a small additional portion of land being included in an amended parish boundary for Whitnash (Order made by Warwick District Council on 30 January 2015 which came into force on 1 April 2015). Other proposed changes are to be the subject of a further review that could result in some small areas of the existing parish being transferred to another parish. However this will not happen 26 November 2015 and so the provisions of the Plan still meet the Basic Conditions in that it deals only with land within the designated area that the Town Council is the qualifying body for.

**Referendum expenses**
Expenses can be incurred by an individual or body during the period of the referendum for referendum purposes. The Referendum expenses limit that will apply in relation to this Referendum is £2,759.72. The number of persons entitled to vote in the Referendum by reference to which the limit has been calculated is 6,741.

**Specified documents**
A copy of the specified consultation documents, that is the documents listed below, may be inspected at:

- Warwick District Council, Riverside House, Milverton Hill, Royal Leamington Spa, Warwickshire CV32 5HZ (Monday to Friday - 10am to 4pm)
- Whitnash Library and One Stop Shop, Franklin Road, Whitnash CV31 2JH

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<th>Day</th>
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<td>Monday</td>
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<td>Saturday</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
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The specified documents are:
- Whitnash Neighbourhood Development Plan
- Examiner’s Report

All the above consultation documents can be viewed on Warwick District Council’s website at www.warwickdc.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans

Can I vote?
You can vote in the referendum if you live in the Whitnash area as identified in the map and:
- you are registered to vote in local council elections, and
- you are 18 years of age or over on 10 November 2015

You have to be registered to vote by 10 November 2015 to vote in the referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by calling our helpline on (01926) 456107.

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

Ways of voting?
There are three ways of voting:

In person on 26 November 2015 at your local polling station. It is easy and a member of staff will always help if you are not sure what to do:

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<tr>
<th>Polling Station Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Acre Close Community Centre, Acre Close, Whitnash CV31 2ND</td>
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<tr>
<td>St. Margaret’s Centre, Egford Room, Whitnash Road, Whitnash CV31 2HB</td>
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<td>Sydenham Community Centre, Chesterton Drive, Royal Leamington Spa CV31 1YJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warwick Gates Community Centre, The Main Hall, Cressida Close, Warwick CV34 6DZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>Whitnash Methodist Church, Murcott Road East, Whitnash CV31 2JJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitnash Sports and Social Club, Heathcote Road, Whitnash CV31 2NF</td>
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You will receive a poll card confirming your polling station for this referendum. If you do not receive your poll card by 30 October 2015, you can contact our helpline on (01926) 456107 or email us on elections@warwickdc.gov.uk.

Polling stations will be open from 7am to 10pm.
By post:

- If you have a postal vote already, you will receive a poll card confirming this,

- 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 11 November 2015 at this address:

  Warwick District Council  
  Riverside House, Milverton Hill  
  Royal Leamington Spa  
  Warwickshire  
  CV32 5HZ

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 by close of poll on 26 November 2015.

You should receive your postal vote around 16 November 2015. If it does not arrive, you can ask for a replacement from Friday 20 November up to 5pm on 26 November 2015 by contacting our helpline on (01926) 456107.

By proxy:

- If you have a proxy vote already, you will receive a poll card confirming this,

- If you cannot get to the polling station and do not wish to vote by post, you may be able to vote by proxy. This means appointing someone to vote on your behalf.

- 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 18 November 2015 at this address:

  Warwick District Council  
  Riverside House, Milverton Hill  
  Royal Leamington Spa  
  Warwickshire  
  CV32 5HZ

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 from our helpline on (01926) 456107 or by emailing: elections@warwickdc.gov.uk or visit: www.aboutmyvote.co.uk.

Am I registered to vote?

If you’re not registered, you won’t be able to vote. You can check if you are registered by calling our helpline on (01926) 456107.
If you are not registered to vote, you can register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote or you will need to complete a voter registration form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by Tuesday 10 November 2015 at this address:

Warwick District Council
Riverside House, Milverton Hill
Royal Leamington Spa
Warwickshire
CV32 5HZ

Registration forms are available from our helpline on (01926) 456107 or by emailing elections@warwickdc.gov.uk or register online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

How to find out more:

- Further general information on neighbourhood planning is available at www.warwickdc.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans

- For queries about planning issues and neighbourhood planning in general, please contact the council’s development team on (01926) 410410.

- For more information about voting and the arrangements for this referendum, please contact our helpline on (01926) 456107 or email: elections@warwickdc.gov.uk

Dated 19 October 2015
Appendix 1

Whitnash Neighbourhood Area Map
