



Committee

Cabinet

Date and Time

14 October 2026
10.30 am
Public

Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan - Area Designation

Cabinet Member:	Councillor David Walker	
Lead Director:	Kassandra Polyzoides – Interim Service Director for Place Shaping	
Service Area:	Place Shaping	
Report Author	Rosie Corner – Policy & Neighbourhood Planning Officer	
Officer contact details	01743 256 422 Rosie.Corner@shropshire.gov.uk	
Electoral Divisions Affected	N/A	
Key Decision?	Not Key Decision	
Cabinet Forward Plan	Yes – 10 September 2026	
Report considered by	Cabinet – 14 October 2026	

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for the application by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council for the Parish area of Albrighton and Donington to be considered as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan.
- 1.2 It is Shropshire Council's role to decide if the proposed Neighbourhood Area, in this case, the area covered by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council, is an appropriate area for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Development Plan (referred to in this report as the 'Neighbourhood Plan'). The recommendation focuses solely on the extent of the area to be used in the preparation of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan. This recommendation does not deal with the proposed content of the Neighbourhood Plan, which are issues to be considered by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council in

cooperation with Shropshire Council in due course. The application and the proposed area map are attached as Appendix A. It is considered the identification of the Albrighton and Donington Parish area as a Neighbourhood Area responds positively to the Shropshire Plan's objectives, in particular meeting the ambition improve the health of Shropshire's economy and environment.

2. Recommendations

Cabinet is recommended to:

- 2.1 agree the designation of the proposed Neighbourhood Area identified on the map in Appendix A, covering the Parish of Albrighton and Donington as an appropriate basis for the development of a Neighbourhood Development Plan and notifies Albrighton and Donington Pariah Council accordingly.

3. Background

- 3.1 Shropshire Council fully supports the principle of areas seeking to develop their own Neighbourhood Plans to supplement and complement the wider policies of the Development Plan. The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the principle of Neighbourhood Plans and their status as part of the Development Plan. The NPPF states "Neighbourhood plans allow local communities to plan positively for their areas by identifying and addressing community priorities that can be met or supported through the planning system." It is also made clear that Neighbourhood Plans should not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area or undermine those strategic policies.
- 3.2 The development of a Neighbourhood Plan must be facilitated by the Town or Parish Council and will, in most cases, proceed with support and assistance from volunteers across the community. It is recommended that Albrighton and Donington Parish Council begin early consultation with their communities, including on how to finance the creation of the Neighbourhood Plan, including any supporting evidence which will be required.
- 3.3 In due course and as part of the Neighbourhood Plan preparation process, Shropshire Council will consider whether the Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan conforms to the adopted strategic policies of the wider Development Plan as part of ongoing cooperation between the Councils and as part of formal consultation responses. Ultimately, the Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to an independent assessment and will need to meet a number of mandatory 'basic conditions' set out in legislation. If the independent assessment agrees the plan is suitable, a neighbourhood planning referendum would then be required.

4. Summary of Main Proposals

- 4.1 Shropshire Council officers have had early discussions with representatives from Albrighton and Donington Parish Council, specifically to discuss the extent of the proposal and to further understand the rationale for the area proposed.
- 4.2 Having had these early discussions, it is considered the proposed area, which accords with the parish boundary, is appropriate for the purposes of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan can therefore offer

the opportunity to deliver some additional value through the preparation of locally relevant planning policies to support the delivery of appropriate development, whilst continuing to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan.

- 4.3 Albrighton and Donington Parish Council must seek to ensure the future sustainable development of the settlement by providing detailed planning policies for their area. Whilst the exact scope and remit of the Neighbourhood Plan is to be discussed, at this stage it is clear there is an understanding from the Parish Council as to the general role of the Neighbourhood Plan and the type of policies it is likely to introduce. Further discussions will help to clarify this. In addition, it should be recognised that in line with national regulations on Community Infrastructure levy (CIL), areas with adopted ('made') Neighbourhood Plans in place, receive 25% CIL Neighbourhood Funds (uncapped) from CIL liable development in its area after the Plan's adoption, compared with 15% (capped) in non-Neighbourhood Plan areas.

5. Alternative Options

- 5.1 At this stage Cabinet may refuse to designate this Neighbourhood Plan area, in which case Albrighton and Donington Parish Council would not be able to progress their Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.2 In the case that Cabinet wished to change the proposed neighbourhood area, Albrighton and Donington Parish Council, if in agreement, would have to resubmit their request for designation and Shropshire Council would be required to run a Regulation 6 consultation for 6 weeks, inviting representations on the proposed neighbourhood area.

6. Key risks and Opportunities

- 6.1 The power to designate a Neighbourhood Area is exercisable under Section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 ("the Act"). Under Regulation 5(1) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 an Area Application must include a map that identifies the area to which the application relates and a statement to explain why the area is considered appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area and that the body is in fact a "relevant body" for the purposes of Section 61 G(2) of the Act. Albrighton and Donington Parish Council is a relevant body for the purposes of the Act.
- 6.2 The relevant material (the application from Albrighton and Donington Parish Council for the designation of the proposed Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan area and the map of the proposed Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan area, included as Appendix A to this report) was submitted by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council and received by Shropshire Council on 11 August 2026. As stated under Regulation 5A (1b) and 5A (3) of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, it is not required that the area application be publicised or undergo public consultation where the area for designation relates to the full parish area i.e. regulations 6 and 6A do not apply.

- 6.3 In determining the application Shropshire Council must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the parish area as a Neighbourhood Area and the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas. In the event the designation is approved, the name of the neighbourhood area, identifying map and name of relevant body who applied for designation will be published on the Council's website in accordance with Regulation 7 (1) to bring the designation to the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the neighbourhood area. If the designation is refused under Section 61G (9) of the Act, reasons must be given and the decision publicised in accordance with Regulation 7 (2) of the Regulations. It is considered there is significant risk to the Council of not agreeing to the Albrighton and Donington Parish Area as a Neighbourhood Area without sound rationale.
- 6.4 The designation of an appropriate area for a Neighbourhood Plan is to confirm the geographic area the Plan will cover. This does not set policies to be contained in the Neighbourhood Plan, or the thematic scope of that Plan. Indeed, and importantly, the designation of a Neighbourhood Area does not commit the Parish or Town Council to producing or completing a Neighbourhood Plan. It is, however, a first important step in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan as required by regulations.
- 6.5 When approved, Neighbourhood Plans form part of the statutory development plan for the area. The statutory framework covering the production of neighbourhood plans is therefore quite prescriptive and there is little risk for either Shropshire Council or Albrighton and Donington Council in following this carefully. However, it is important that a high degree of trust and cooperation between the Councils is maintained in order to reduce any risk of inconsistency and conflict between the Neighbourhood Plan and those other parts of the Development Plan prepared by Shropshire Council.
- 6.6 Shropshire's statutory Development Plan will be an important and ongoing consideration in the context of any Neighbourhood Plan prepared for the Albrighton and Donington Parish Council area. At present the Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plans (2006-2026) represent the Countywide adopted Development Plan. In response to the Inspectors' soundness concerns, the Draft Local Plan Review (2016-2036) was withdrawn from examination, a decision approved by Full Council on 17th July 2025. Shropshire Council have now been required to set out a timeframe for a further Local Plan review, with work commencing in September 2026 on a 30-month timetable, with adoption scheduled in March 2029. The timeframe of the future Local Plan is likely to be 2026 to 2046.
- 6.7 A Neighbourhood Plan will, after passing through the relevant stages of consultation, submission, examination and the referendum, go on to become part of the statutory Development Plan for the area. By definition, the Neighbourhood Plan should be a product of the community and as such will contain policies that, whilst in general conformity with other elements of the Development Plan, should have their own distinct character. The degree of scrutiny to be applied to a Neighbourhood Plan through its examination process is dependent upon the scope of the plan, and it will continue to be particularly important for appropriate evidence to be produced to inform the Neighbourhood Plan. Statute provides that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the provisions of relevant Development Plan policies

unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The weight given to the Plan thus remains to be balanced with other considerations when taken in the round by decision makers.

Risk	Mitigation	Link to Strategic Risk
Risk of non compliance with Regulations 5, 6 and 7 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.	Complying with the regulations by: 1) including with the Area Application a map that identifies the area to which the application relates and a statement to explain why the area is considered appropriate to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area and that the body is in fact a “relevant body” for the purposes of Section 61 G(2) of the Act, and; 2) not carrying out a public consultation as this is not required as the area for designation relates to the full parish area; and having regard to the desirability of designating the whole of the parish area as a Neighbourhood Area and the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of areas already designated as neighbourhood areas.	None
Risk of inconsistency and conflict between the Neighbourhood Plan and those other parts of the Development Plan prepared by Shropshire Council.	Maintain a high degree of trust and cooperation between the Councils.	None

7. Council Priorities

7.1 The continued creation of new Neighbourhood Plans for Shropshire contributes to the following priorities from Shropshire Council's Corporate Plan 2026-2030:

- communities are connected by well-maintained roads, accessible transport and infrastructure;
- people live in safe, inclusive places with homes that meet their needs;
- everyone has the opportunity to be healthy and thrive at every stage of life;
- an environment that harnesses our natural assets and supports wellbeing; and

- a thriving economy that benefits everyone.

8. Financial Implications

8.1 Shropshire Council continues to manage unprecedented financial demands and a financial emergency was declared by Cabinet on 10 September 2025. The overall financial position of the Council is set out in the monitoring position presented to Cabinet on a monthly basis. Significant management action has been instigated at all levels of the Council reducing spend to ensure the Council's financial survival. While all reports to Members provide the financial implications of decisions being taken, this may change as officers and/or Portfolio Holders review the overall financial situation and make decisions aligned to financial survivability. All non-essential spend will be stopped and all essential spend challenged. These actions may involve (this is not exhaustive):

- scaling down initiatives,
- changing the scope of activities
- delaying implementation of agreed plans, or
- extending delivery timescales

8.2 Schedule 10, paras 3(1) and 7(3) of the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 read in their entirety provide that the following costs would fall to Shropshire Council: delivering a supporting role particularly in the latter stages of the Plan's development, appointing an Examiner for the Plan, conducting an Examination and holding a Referendum. Current provisions allow an application for these additional costs to be met, and a reimbursement of costs will therefore be sought from Central Government. It is considered likely the robustness of the Neighbourhood Plan policies will be tested over time by independent Planning Inspectors on planning appeals made under Section 78 of the Act. Members are advised that the liability for future appeal costs rests with Shropshire Council as Local Planning Authority and as such the usability of such plans and their impact on local decision making will need to be carefully monitored.

9. Legal and HR implications

9.1 The designation of a Neighbourhood Area is governed by section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Albrighton and Donington Parish Council is a qualifying body for the purposes of making an area application. As the proposed Neighbourhood Area corresponds to the full parish boundary, there is no requirement for the Council to undertake a public consultation on the area designation proposal.

9.2 In determining the application, the Council must have regard to the desirability of designating the whole parish area as a Neighbourhood Area and maintaining existing neighbourhood area boundaries. If approved, the designation must be publicised in accordance with the Regulations.

9.3 This decision relates solely to the designation of the Neighbourhood Area and does not approve or endorse the content of any future Neighbourhood Development Plan. Any subsequent Neighbourhood Plan would be required to satisfy the statutory basic conditions, undergo independent examination and, if successful, proceed to a local referendum before it can be made and form part of the statutory development plan.

10. Electoral Division Implications

10.1 Adopting a neighbourhood plan requires a local referendum. The voting area for this referendum uses the designated neighbourhood boundary, and polls are run by Shropshire Council's Democratic Services team using standard local government voting registers.

10.2 If a separate community governance review alters a parish or ward boundary, an existing neighbourhood plan area might need to be formally re-designated by the local planning authority to realign with the new administrative footprint.

11. Health, Social (including “Child Friendly Shropshire”) and Economic Implications

11.1 The designation of the Albrighton and Donington neighbourhood area allows the important first step in the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan for the parish of Albrighton and Donington. Whilst at this stage the contents of the Plan are not known and will be subject to the objectives led by Albrighton and Donington Parish Council in consultation with their communities, there is the potential for the policies and any site allocations therein to have health, social and economic implications. The emerging Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) whose purpose is to identify and mitigate any negative implications.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

12.1 At this stage the content of a Neighbourhood Plan for Albrighton and Donington is not known however there is very limited scope for these policies to have equality and diversity implications.

13. Climate Change, Biodiversity and Environmental Implications

13.1 At this stage the content of a Neighbourhood Plan for Albrighton and Donington is not known however there is an opportunity to explore additional development management policies for the local area which could respond to the ongoing need to reduce energy and fuel consumption, generate renewable energy, offset and mitigate carbon emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Any new development management policies would need to demonstrate they are deliverable and ensure development remains viable.

13.2 The emerging Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment whose purpose is to identify and mitigate any negative implications for biodiversity and the environment.

14. Background Papers

14.1 None.

15. Appendices

APPENDIX A - Application from Albrighton and Donington Parish Council for the designation of the proposed Albrighton and Donington Neighbourhood Plan area including a map of proposed Neighbourhood Plan area