



DARLINGTON
Borough Council

Statement of General Information relating to Town and Country Planning and the Referendum

Middleton St George Neighbourhood Development
Plan Referendum

11 August 2022

About this booklet

On **Thursday 11 August 2022**, there will be a referendum on a Neighbourhood Development Plan for your area. This booklet explains more about the referendum that is going to take place and how you can take part in it. In this booklet you can find out about:

- The referendum and how you can take part
- The neighbourhood area
- The neighbourhood plan
- The development plan [of which neighbourhood plans are part]

Referendum on the Neighbourhood Plan

A referendum asks you to vote 'yes' or 'no' to a question. The question which will be asked in the Referendum is:

“Do you want Darlington Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Middleton St George 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 Darlington Borough Council will use the Neighbourhood Development Plan to help it decide planning applications in the Middleton St George Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Development Plan once adopted will then become part of the Development Plan.

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 Neighbourhood Area.

Where, after the counting of votes (including any re-counts) is completed, an equality of votes is found to exist between the answers, the result is that there is no majority in favour of the making of the plan.

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 parish councils)

In Middleton St George, the boundary of the neighbourhood area was determined by Darlington Borough Council and covers the parish of Middleton St George but excludes land at Teesside International Airport.

Who can prepare a Neighbourhood Plan?

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by the community, led by town or parish councils, or neighbourhood forums. In this case, the Middleton St George Neighbourhood Development Plan was prepared by Middleton St George Parish 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. The local planning authority is Darlington Borough Council.

Neighbourhood Planning in Middleton St George

The Referendum area is identified on the enclosed map as the parish of Middleton St George, excluding the land at Teesside International Airport. The Referendum area has been designated as the Middleton St George Neighbourhood Development Plan Area.

Who is the Planning Authority?

Darlington Borough Council is the lead authority for Neighbourhood Planning matters in the area, including Neighbourhood Planning Referendums.

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 the Referendum is £2,592.16. The number of persons entitled to vote in the Referendum, by reference to which that limit has been calculated, is 3,901.

The Referendum will be conducted in accordance with procedures which are similar to those used at local government elections.

Specified documents

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

- The Hub, Dolphin Centre, Horsemarket, Darlington, DL1 5RP; and
- Londis Convenience Store, 5 The Square, Middleton St George, Darlington, DL2 1EG

The Dolphin Centre is open 6.30 am to 10.00 pm Monday to Friday; 8.00 am to 10.00 pm Saturday; and 8.00 am to 7.30 pm Sunday.

The Londis Convenience Store is open 6.00 am to 8:00 pm Monday to Sunday.

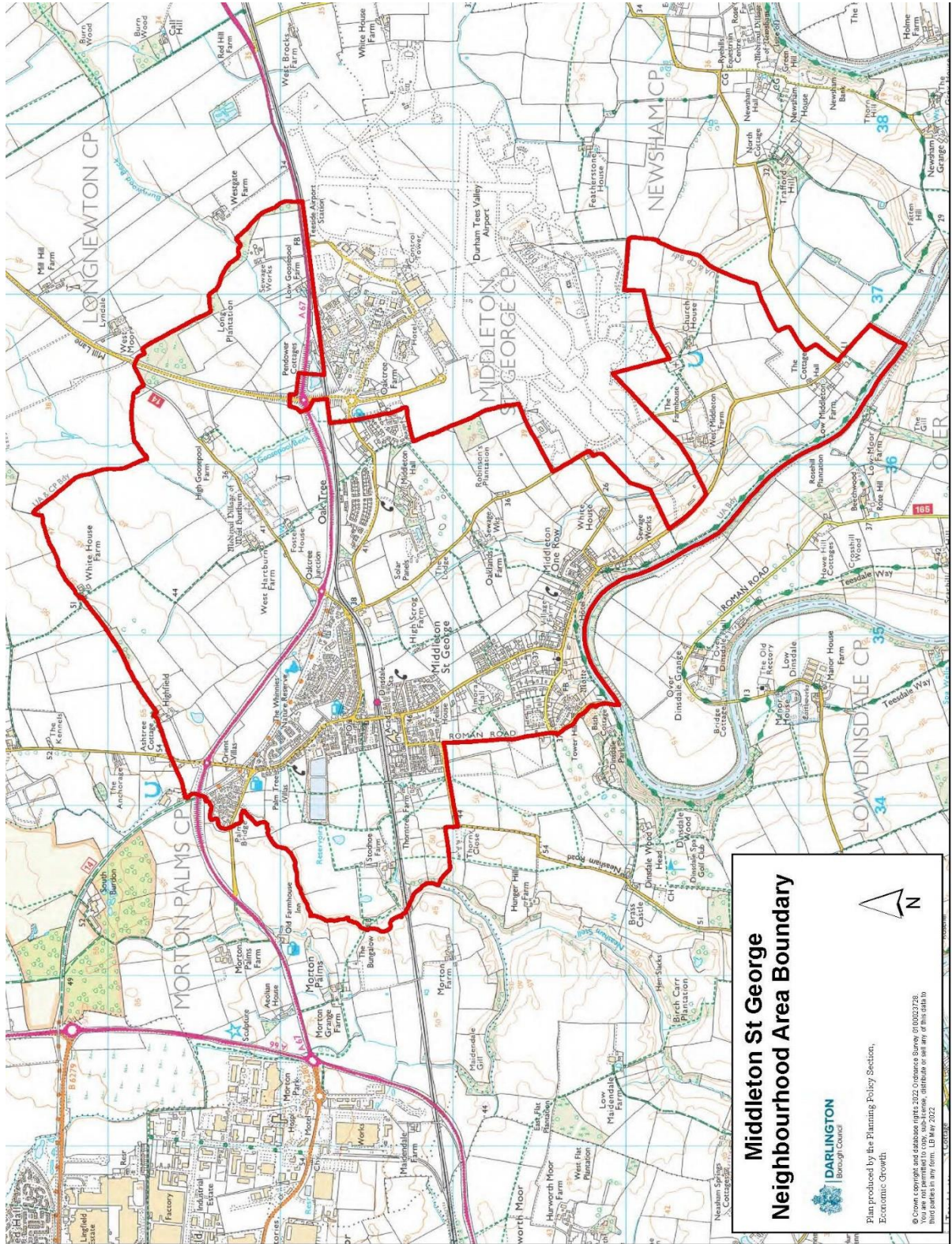
The documents are also available for public viewing on the Council's website at:

<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-and-environmental-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

The specified documents are:

- Middleton St George Neighbourhood Development Plan;
- Middleton St George Neighbourhood Development Plan Examiner's Report;
- A summary of written representations submitted to the independent examiner for consideration via the examination;
- A Decision Statement of the Local Planning Authority's satisfaction that the draft Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions specified by statute and complies with the provision made by or under Section 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004;
- Information Statement;
- This statement that sets out general information as to town and country planning including neighbourhood planning and the referendum.

Figure 1: Map of Middleton St George Neighbourhood Development Plan Area and Referendum Area



Can I vote?

You can vote in the referendum if you live in the Middleton St George Neighbourhood Development Plan Area and Referendum Area:

- you are registered to vote in local government elections; and
- you are 18 years of age or over on 11 August 2022.

You have to be registered to vote by **12.00 midnight** on **Tuesday 26 July 2022** to vote in the referendum. You can check if you are registered to vote by calling the Helpline on 01325 406444 or e-mailing elections@darlington.gov.uk.

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 11 August 2022:

- At your local polling station. It is easy and a member of staff will always help if you are not sure what to do. The Polling Station is located at Middleton St George Women's Institute Hall, Neasham Road, Middleton St George, DL2 1LD.
- You will receive a poll card confirming your polling station for this referendum.
- If you do not receive your poll card, you can contact the Helpline on 01325 406444 or email elections@darlington.gov.uk to find out where your polling station is.
- The polling station is open from 7.00 am to 10.00 pm.

By post:

- If you have a postal vote already, you will receive a postal poll card confirming this.
- To apply to vote by post, you will need to complete an application form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by **5.00 pm** on **Wednesday 27 July 2022** at the following address:

Elections Office
Darlington Borough Council
Feethams
Darlington
DL1 5QT

- 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 **10.00 pm** on **Thursday 11 August 2022**.
- You should receive your postal vote about a week before polling day. If it doesn't arrive in time, you can ask for a replacement up to **5.00 pm** on **Thursday 11 August 2022** by contacting the Helpline on 01325 406444 or e-mailing elections@darlington.gov.uk.

By proxy:

- If you have a proxy vote already, you will receive a proxy poll card confirming this.
- If you can't get to the polling station and don't wish to vote by post, you may be able to vote by proxy. This means allowing somebody that you trust 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 **5.00 pm on Wednesday 3 August 2022** at the following address:

Elections Office
Darlington Borough Council
Feethams
Darlington
DL1 5QT

- 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 the Helpline on 01325 406444 or by emailing elections@darlington.gov.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 the Helpline on 01325 406444 or by emailing elections@darlington.gov.uk .

If you are not registered to vote, you will need to apply by **12 midnight on Tuesday 26 July 2022**. You can apply online at www.gov.uk/register-to-vote.

Alternatively, you will need to complete a voter registration form and send it to the Electoral Registration Officer to arrive by **12 midnight on Tuesday 26 July 2022** at the following address:

Elections Office
Darlington Borough Council
Feethams
Darlington
DL1 5QT

Registration forms are available from the Helpline on 01325 406444 or by emailing elections@darlington.gov.uk.

The Count

The Count for the Referendum will take place, following the close of poll at **10.00 pm on Thursday 11 August 2022** in the Middleton St George Women's Institute Hall, Neasham Road, Middleton St George, DL2 1LD. The number of observers for the Count is limited and if you wish to attend please call the Helpline on 01325 406444 or e-mail elections@darlington.gov.uk for further information, and if you are eligible to attend, you will be sent the relevant paperwork. Please note that only those who have completed the necessary forms will be allowed access to the count.

After all the votes have been counted, the Counting Officer will declare the result and the formal result will be published on the Council's website www.darlington.gov.uk.

How to find out more:

- Further general information on neighbourhood planning is available at:
<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-and-environmental-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>
- You can find specific documents on the Middleton St George Neighbourhood Plan at:
<https://www.darlington.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-and-environmental-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>
- For queries about planning issues and neighbourhood planning in general, please contact Planning Policy on 01325 406724 or e-mail planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk
- For more information about voting and the arrangements for this referendum, please contact the Helpline on 01325 406444 or email: elections@darlington.gov.uk

Prepared by:

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and

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Counting Officer

Darlington Borough Council

Monday 4 July 2022

If you would like this information in another format or language please contact:

Darlington Borough Council

Town Hall

Darlington

DL1 5QT

Telephone: 01325 406724

Email: planning.policy@darlington.gov.uk

Web: www.darlington.gov.uk