

A General Information Guide to the Planning System, Neighbourhood Planning & the Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan Referendum



City of Westminster

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On Thursday 22 September, residents of the Pimlico Neighbourhood Area will have the opportunity to vote to decide whether the council should use the proposed Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan to help decide planning applications within the Pimlico Neighbourhood Area.

WHAT IS THE PLANNING SYSTEM AND PLANNING PERMISSION?

The planning system manages how land and buildings are used, considering the detailed design of buildings, through the provision of open space, housing and commercial development and transport.

It “ensures that the right development happens in the right place at the right time, benefitting communities and the economy. It plays a critical role in identifying what development is needed and where, what areas need to be protected or enhanced and in assessing whether proposed development is suitable”¹

There are two main parts to the planning system:

- **Plan making** – which sets out policies to guide development and planning decisions over time;



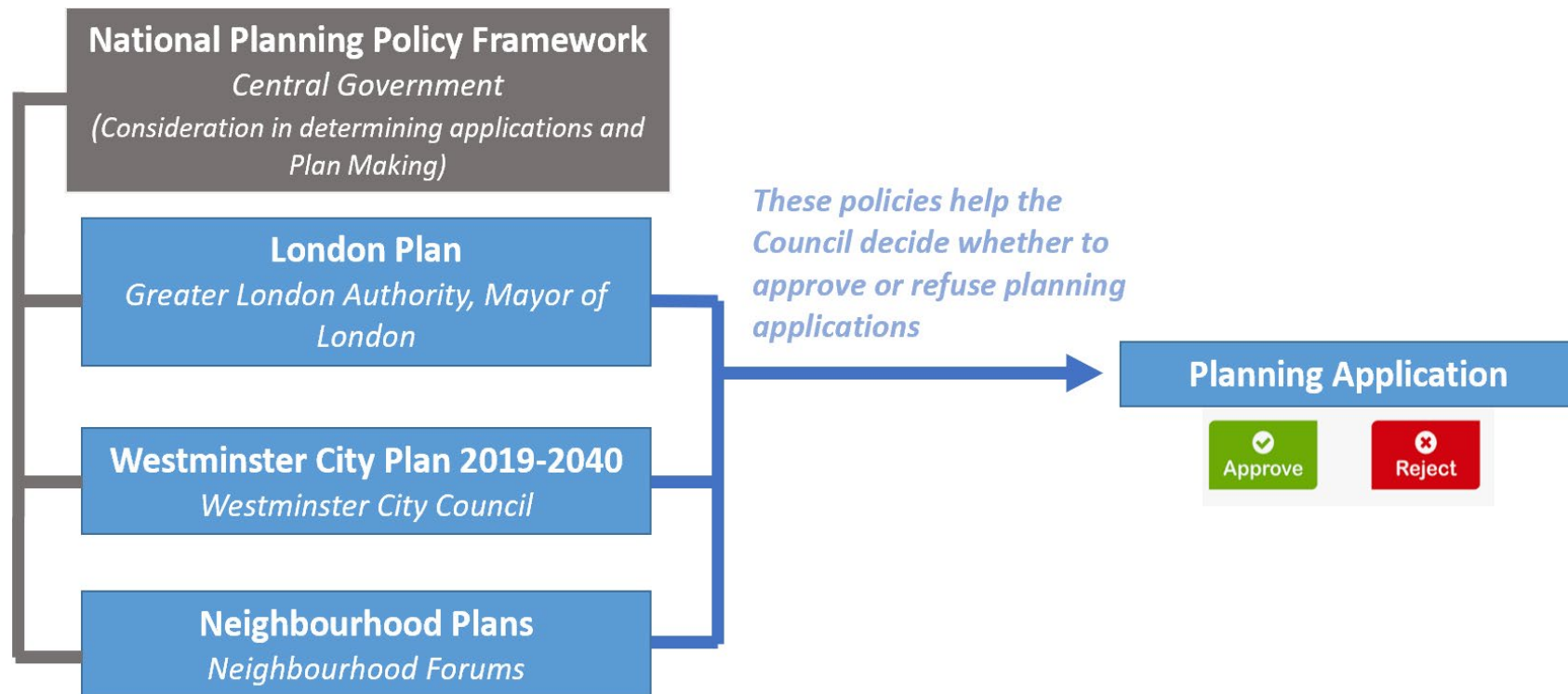
- **Determining planning applications** – decisions on whether or not a proposed development should receive planning permission, based on adopted planning policies and other considerations.

Not all forms of development require planning permission from the council as some building construction, such as small extensions to the rear of some residential properties, or some changes of use, are covered by permitted development rights. For development proposals in Westminster that do require planning permission, the council is responsible for consulting with the community and deciding whether the development should go ahead.

In Westminster, decisions on planning applications are based on national planning policy and the council’s statutory [Development Plan](#) which includes the London Plan, Westminster’s City Plan 2019-2040, and any ‘made’ Neighbourhood Plans.

¹ Plain English Guide to the Planning System, DCLG, Jan 2015.

Planning applications should generally be in accordance with the requirements of the policies in these plan documents:



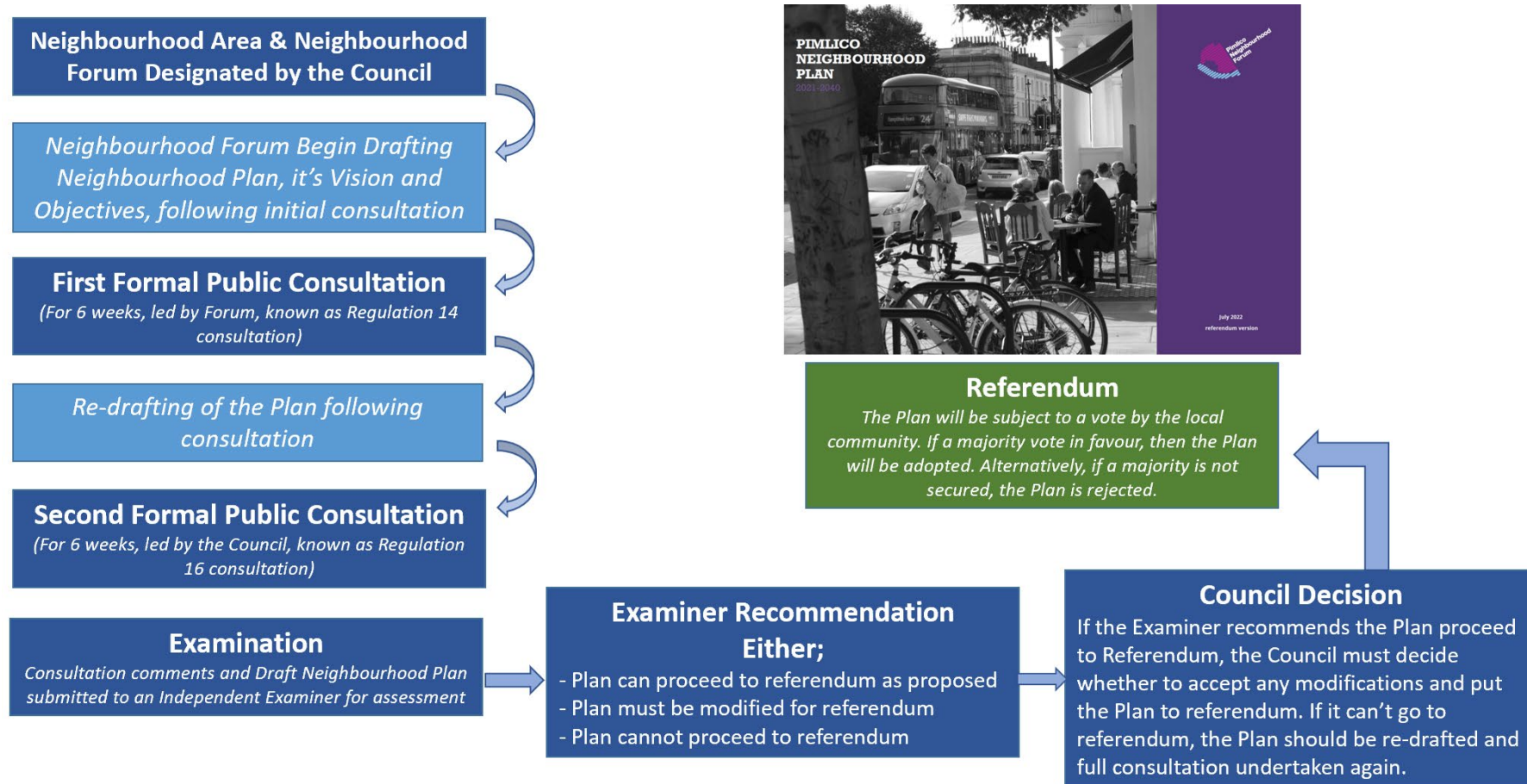
WHAT IS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING AND PIMLICO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN?

What is a neighbourhood plan?

Neighbourhood Planning was introduced under the Localism Act 2011 and gives new rights and powers for local communities to apply to the council to form Neighbourhood Forums and to influence new development in their local area through the production of a Neighbourhood Plan. Unlike national planning policies, Westminster's City Plan and the London Plan which are led by public organisations, through Neighbourhood Forums (or Parish Councils) local communities lead on the production of Neighbourhood Plans.

Neighbourhood Plans, including the [Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan](#), must go through several stages of consultation during the drafting process of the Plan and must then undergo independent Examination to consider whether the Plan meets 'Basic Conditions' which includes meeting national planning guidance, being in conformity with existing strategic policies (including Westminster's City Plan and the London Plan), contributes to 'sustainable development' and is compatible with European and Human Rights obligations. If the Examiner considers the Plan to meet these requirements, the council must then decide whether to put the Plan to a referendum to enable the local community to vote to decide whether to adopt the Neighbourhood Plan.

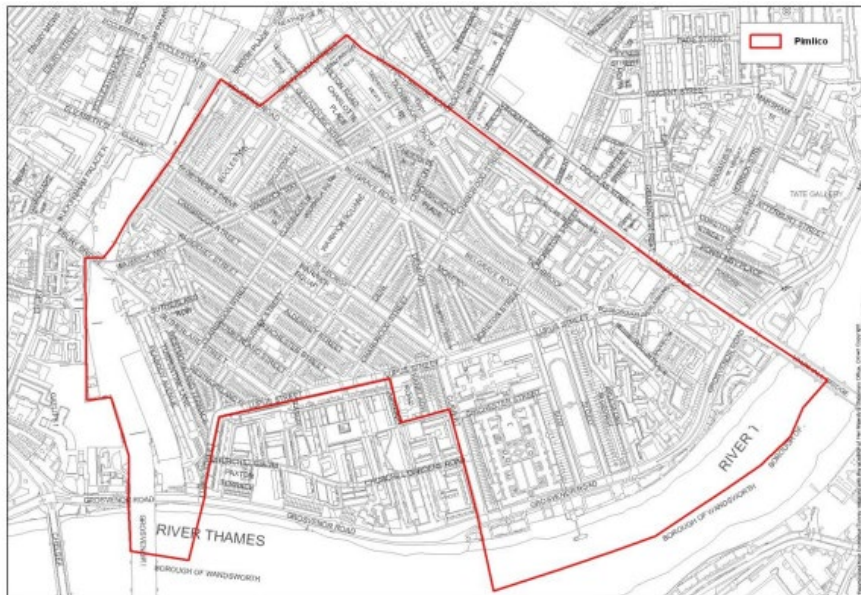
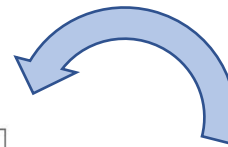
Process for Producing a Neighbourhood Plan



What is the Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan?

The [Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan](#) contains policies which seek to support and manage commercial and retail uses, protect amenity, improve public realm, design and heritage, housing and hotels, open spaces and influence major development projects.

The Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by the [Pimlico Neighbourhood Forum](#) and has gone through independent examination, and if approved by a majority vote in favour at referendum, will be used to help determine planning applications within the Pimlico Neighbourhood Area:



THE PIMLICO NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REFERENDUM

Referendum

Following Examination of a Neighbourhood Plan, the council then decides, having regard to statutory criteria, whether to accept the Examiner's recommendations and proceed to referendum. If the Neighbourhood Plan proceeds to referendum, the council is responsible for organising the referendum. The referendum will determine whether the council should use the Neighbourhood Plan for the area concerned to help it decide planning applications.

Who can vote?

All those registered to vote in the local elections within the Pimlico Neighbourhood Area are entitled to vote in the neighbourhood planning referendum. More information can be found on the council's website.

How can I vote?

As in any local elections, it is both possible to vote by post or proxy (where an eligible person votes for the voter) or at the polling station. More information, and a map showing the location of the polling stations, can be found on the council's website.

Results

If more than half of those voting in the referendum vote in favour of the Plan, the council must adopt the Neighbourhood Plan, which means it will then be used for determining future planning applications.

The Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan has now reached the referendum stage. The referendum will be held on Thursday 22nd September 2022 and, if you live within the Pimlico Neighbourhood Area, you can register to vote and help decide whether or not the council should adopt the Pimlico Neighbourhood

Further Information

Referendum Information & Register to Vote:

[https://www.westminster.gov.uk/about-council/democracy/elections-referendums-and-how-vote/planning-referendums/pimlico-neighbourhood-plan-referendum#:~:text=A%20residential%20referendum%2C%20in%20respect,the%20referendum%20\(%2022%20September%202022\)](https://www.westminster.gov.uk/about-council/democracy/elections-referendums-and-how-vote/planning-referendums/pimlico-neighbourhood-plan-referendum#:~:text=A%20residential%20referendum%2C%20in%20respect,the%20referendum%20(%2022%20September%202022))

Further Information on Neighbourhood Planning:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2>

Further Information on the Pimlico Neighbourhood Plan:

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/planning-building-and-environmental-regulations/planning-policy/neighbourhood-areas-forums-and-plans/pimlico-neighbourhood-plan>

<https://pimlicoforum.org/>

Contact Us:

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City of Westminster