

General Information Statement on the planning system (including Neighbourhood Planning) and the Referendum

About this leaflet

On Thursday 20 February 2025 there will be a referendum on a neighbourhood plan for your area, the Edenfield Neighbourhood Plan. This leaflet contains information about the planning system and neighbourhood planning. It also explains how you can take part in the referendum.

The Planning System

The planning system helps decide what gets built, where and when. It is essential for supporting economic growth, providing new homes and protecting the natural environment. Most new buildings, major changes to existing buildings or to the local environment need planning permission. Without a planning system everyone could construct buildings or use land in any way they wanted, no matter what effect this would have on other people who live and work in their area. Rossendale Borough Council is responsible for deciding whether most forms of development should go ahead within the borough. Decisions are based on national planning policy and the development plan.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework [National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK](#) provides guidance to local councils in drawing up Local Plans and on making decisions on planning applications.

The Development Plan

For Rossendale this comprises the Local Plan (2019 to 2026), which was adopted in December 2021. This sets out policies for the development and use of land across the local authority area. [Rossendale Local Plan 2019 to 2036 | Rossendale Borough Council](#)

The Minerals and Waste Local Plan is prepared by Lancashire County Council.

The Edenfield Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Borough's development plan if it achieves over a 50% 'Yes' vote at Referendum



Neighbourhood Plans

They are intended to give local communities greater influence on future development in their local area by establishing a set of policies which will be used in making decisions on planning applications.

Neighbourhood plans are required by law to meet certain “Basic Conditions”. They must take account of national planning policy and the Local Plan. They must contribute to achieving sustainable development and be compatible with EU obligations and human rights requirements. They are not to be used to prevent development which is allowed for in the Local Plan.

Who makes them?

Neighbourhood plans are prepared by town or parish councils or specially established neighbourhood forums. There is a statutory set process that must be followed to make a plan. The Edenfield Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Edenfield Community Neighbourhood Forum (ECNF).

How are they made?

The neighbourhood plan must be prepared through a process of consultation with local residents and businesses. An independent examiner then reviews the plan and checks whether it meets the basic conditions and other legal requirements. The examiner reports on whether any changes should be made to the plan and whether it should proceed to the referendum stage. They can also comment on the referendum area too.

At the referendum, local residents can vote on whether the neighbourhood plan should be used to help decide planning applications in the area. All those registered to vote within the neighbourhood area are entitled to vote in the referendum.

What status do Neighbourhood Plans have?

If more than 50% of those voting choose to vote in favour of the neighbourhood plan, the local planning authority must make it part of the development plan for the area. This means that the plan will be used as a basis for making decisions on planning applications. Additional information in relation to neighbourhood planning is available on the following website:

[Neighbourhood planning - GOV.UK](#)

The Edenfield Neighbourhood Plan

The Edenfield Neighbourhood Plan has been produced by Edenfield Community Neighbourhood Forum, which was designated by Rossendale Borough Council as a Neighbourhood Forum initially in 2018. Preparation of the plan has followed the legal requirements and it has recently been subject to an independent examination.

The examiner produced a report on the plan which concluded that, with some minor changes, the plan meets the necessary basic conditions. Rossendale Borough Council has agreed with the examiner’s conclusions. The plan can now proceed to referendum.



The Referendum

The referendum will take place on **Thursday 20 February 2025**.

A referendum asks you to vote “yes” or “no” to a question.

You will be asked:

“Do you want Rossendale Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for the Edenfield Neighbourhood Area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

You show your choice 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.

More detailed information on the Referendum is available in the Referendum Information Statement and [Edenfield Neighbourhood Plan Referendum | Elections | Rossendale Borough Council](#)

Further information

The following documents are available to help you to decide how to vote:

- The Edenfield Neighbourhood Plan;
- The report of the independent examiner;
- A summary of the representations submitted to the independent examiner;
- A statement by the local planning authority that the draft plan meets the basic conditions and complies with the relevant legislation (Reg 18 Decision Notice);
- This note for information.

You can view these documents online on the Council’s website [Edenfield Community Neighbourhood Forum | Neighbourhood Plans | Rossendale Borough Council](#) or in hard copy at The Business Centre, Futures Park, Bacup, OL13 0BB.

If you have any problems accessing these documents please contact the Forward Planning team at forwardplanning@rossendalebc.gov.uk or by phone on 01706 252412/ 252415 or 252418.

