

2. Application for Neighbourhood Area

Statement explaining why this area is appropriate to be designated as a neighbourhood area

The area to be designated as a neighbourhood area is derived from the character area 'Whitburn' in South Tyneside's Strategic Land Review (March 2016). The character area is described as 'the village of Whitburn and its surrounding Green Belt areas, including those areas south of Marsden, east of Cleadon and north of Sunderland'. The developing Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum considers this an appropriate area as it encompasses not only Whitburn village, but also its setting, which gives Whitburn its unique character in South Tyneside and separates it from South Shields, Cleadon and Sunderland.

To the north, the neighbourhood area boundary includes the South Shields Golf Club and coastal zone up to the roundabout between the A183 and A1300, but excludes the built-up area of Marsden in South Shields. It also shares this border with Lower Super Output Area 018C. To the west, the boundary runs along field boundaries halfway between Whitburn and Cleadon, which form the Green Belt separating these two villages. In the southwest, the boundary runs along Moor Lane and Sunderland Road and therefore includes the Green Belt up to Sunderland Road as well as the Academy of Light. To the south, the neighbourhood area follows the boundary with Sunderland. To the east, the boundary runs naturally along the coastline.

Statement that the organisation or body making the application is a 'relevant body' for carrying out neighbourhood planning

At the time of the application, the Forum has 35 members. Of these members, 34 are residents of Whitburn, 1 works in Whitburn and one is an elected member of South Tyneside Council for the Whitburn area.

Potential members have been engaged with and acquired via the following methods:

- The creation of a Facebook group (July 2016), initially aimed at consultation participation for residents of Whitburn in response to the South Tyneside Strategic Land Review, but which soon included discussions on creating a neighbourhood forum. There are now regular updates posted about forum meetings on this group. The group has 820+ members and its existence is advertised throughout the village and in various shops in Whitburn.
- A leaflet drop of approximately ?? leaflets throughout the whole village, explaining the purpose of the Forum and a call for more members.
- Forum members have approached shops in Whitburn directly to explain the purpose of the Forum and how people working there can join
- Discussions in the Whitburn residents' association
- Discussion in the Whitburn and Cleadon Junior Football Club
- Contact with all three local councillors, of whom one replied
- Word of mouth
- Advertising of Forum meetings in the Barnes Institute and the hairdresser's shop next door
- The creation of a Facebook Page (September 2016) for the Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum (WhitburnNF) with a growing membership number.

Membership is expected to grow as a result of the leaflet drop and word of mouth spreading. However, we feel that the Whitburn Neighbourhood Forum is already capable of being designated as a neighbourhood forum (complying with section 61G(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended), because we have more than 21 members and an acceptable mix of people from different locations in the area and different groups in the community.