🌿 Stretton on Dunsmore Neighbourhood Plan Group

What a Neighbourhood Plan *can* define (and often does)

1. Land use & development principles

A neighbourhood plan can set policies about:

- Where new housing should go (site allocations)
- Where development should *not* go (local green spaces, protected gaps, settlement boundaries)
- The mix of housing types (e.g., smaller homes, accessible homes, affordable-led schemes)
- Support for local employment sites or small business space

It **cannot** block strategic allocations in the Local Plan, but it *can* shape how they come forward.

🏘️ 2. Design, character & heritage

Neighbourhood plans can define:

- Local design codes
- Building materials, height, massing, rooflines
- Protection of important views
- Conservation of heritage assets (including non-designated ones)
- Village character areas and what makes them distinctive

These policies are often the most powerful because they directly influence planning decisions.

🚶 3. Transport, movement & connectivity

A neighbourhood plan can set policies on:

- Walking and cycling routes
- Traffic calming priorities
- Junction improvements
- Parking standards
- Protecting or enhancing bus routes
- Ensuring development is located where sustainable transport is realistic

It cannot require the highway authority to deliver schemes, but it can **set expectations for developers**.

🌳 4. Green infrastructure & environment

Neighbourhood plans can define:

- Local Green Spaces (LGS)
- Wildlife corridors

- Biodiversity net gain priorities
- Tree planting and hedgerow protection
- Flood risk mitigation requirements
- Landscape character areas

LGS designation is one of the strongest tools available to communities.

🏪 5. Community facilities & local economy

A neighbourhood plan can:

- Protect valued community assets (pubs, shops, halls, playing fields)
- Identify sites for new facilities
- Support local retail and small businesses
- Encourage rural diversification

📐 6. Settlement boundaries

Many neighbourhood plans redraw or reinforce:

- Village envelopes
- Infill boundaries
- Protected gaps between settlements

These boundaries then carry statutory weight in planning decisions.

🗺️ 7. Site-specific policies

Neighbourhood plans can include:

- Development briefs
- Design requirements for specific sites
- Conditions for access, landscaping, or layout

These are often used to shape small or medium sites that the Local Plan doesn't detail.

❌ What a neighbourhood plan cannot do

Just so expectations are clear:

- It cannot block strategic housing allocations already in the Local Plan
- It cannot reduce national policy requirements
- It cannot set policies on minerals or waste
- It cannot conflict with the NPPF or Local Plan
- It cannot impose financial obligations beyond what is lawful (e.g., demanding specific S106 sums)