

**Public**  
**Key Decision - Yes**

## **HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Title/Subject Matter:** Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan

**Meeting/Date:** Council – 29th March 2023

**Executive Portfolio:** Executive Councillor for Planning

**Report by:** Chief Planning Officer

**Ward(s) affected:** Great Paxton Ward

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### **Executive Summary:**

The Referendum on the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan was held on 9th March 2023 and resulted in an 91.27% 'Yes' vote in support of making the Neighbourhood Plan as part of the statutory development plan. As this exceeds the required threshold of 50% of the votes cast the Council is required to formally 'make' the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan unless the Council considers that it would be incompatible with any EU or human rights obligations. As part of the statutory development plan the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan would be used to help decide planning applications within the neighbourhood area.

It is not considered that making the plan would be incompatible with an EU or human rights obligation and the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan must therefore be 'made'.

### **Recommendation(s):**

The Council is

### **RECOMMENDED**

To 'make' the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan in the form attached as Appendix 1 such that it becomes part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire with immediate effect.

## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider whether the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan should be officially 'made' such that it becomes part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire.

## **2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Area was formally designated on 30th July 2018. Following substantial local consultation to aid with preparation of the plan it was submitted for statutory consultation which took place between 25th August and 7th October 2022. The submission neighbourhood plan, its supporting evidence base and all responses to the statutory consultation were subject to an independent examination commencing on 14th October 2022 with the final report issued on 30th November 2022.
- 2.2 The examination confirmed that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan should move forward to referendum subject to modifications and confirmed that it complied with the specified basic conditions, was properly prepared by the qualifying body, covered the designated plan area, did not contain any excluded development and contained policies that related to the development and use of land. The examiner's report also confirmed that there was nothing in the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan that led them to conclude there would be any breach of the European Convention on Human Rights. They also confirmed that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with EU obligations arising from the Habitats Regulations Assessments and other directives (as retained in UK law).
- 2.3 The outcome of the examination and proposed changes were reported to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Performance and Growth) on 4th January and Cabinet on 24th January 2023. Arising from these it was agreed that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan as proposed to be modified should progress to referendum.

## **3. ANALYSIS**

- 3.1 The referendum was held on 9th March 2023 where the statutorily set question was posed asking residents of the designated neighbourhood area: 'Do you want Huntingdonshire District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Great Gransden to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?'
- 3.2 A total of 816 people were eligible to vote in the referendum; 229 ballot papers were issued representing a turnout of 28.06%. The number of votes cast in favour of 'Yes' was 209, the number of votes in favour of 'No' was 19 with 1 ballot papers rejected where the intended vote could not be clearly determined. This indicated a majority of 91.27% voting in favour of using the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan to help decide planning applications within the designated neighbourhood area.

- 3.3 As the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan was endorsed by more than the required threshold of 50% of those voting the Council must now 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan such that it becomes part of the statutory development plan for Huntingdonshire unless the Council considers that it would be incompatible with any EU or human rights obligations. It is not considered that making the plan would be incompatible with an EU or human rights obligation and the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan must therefore be 'made'.

#### **4. KEY IMPACTS / RISKS**

- 4.1 The key impacts of this are the reiteration of the importance of the planned system with town and parish councils and residents of the neighbourhood plan area having the opportunity to positively influence how their community grows in the future.
- 4.2 Successful 'making' of a Neighbourhood Plan entitles Great Gransden Parish Council to an increased proportion of CIL receipts from development within the neighbourhood area, up from 15% to 25%.

#### **5. TIMETABLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

- 5.1 Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the statutory development plan with immediate effect.

#### **6. LINK TO THE CORPORATE PLAN, STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND/OR CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

- 6.1 Making the neighbourhood plan links to the objective within the Corporate Plan (2022-2023) Strengthening our Communities: 'We will... Enable communities to develop and maintain Neighbourhood Plans that reflect the needs and aspirations of those living there' and the proposed key action 'Support community planning by providing advice to Towns and Parish Councils seeking to develop or update Neighbourhood Plans'.

#### **7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Section 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires the Council to 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum have voted in favour. The Council is content that the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan meets the specified basic conditions, does not breach the European Convention on Human Rights and is not incompatible with EU obligations arising from the Habitats Regulations Assessments and other directives (as retained in UK law).

#### **8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 An additional 10% of CIL receipts within the neighbourhood area will be passed over to Great Gransden Parish Council. This may have implications on resource availability for infrastructure projects provided by this Council. Additional support, both financial and partnership working,

may be sought to help deliver some of the projects identified in the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan.

## **9. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDED DECISIONS**

- 9.1 The Council has a statutory obligation to 'make' the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan now that it has successfully passed the referendum stage.

## **10. LIST OF APPENDICES INCLUDED**

Appendix 1 – Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

[Overview and Scrutiny Committee \(Performance and Growth\) – 4<sup>th</sup> January 2023](#)

[Cabinet – 24 January 2023](#)

[The Neighbourhood Planning \(Referendums\) Regulations 2012 \(as amended\)](#)

[National Planning Practice Guidance \(Neighbourhood Planning\)](#)

[Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Webpage](#)

[Neighbourhood Planning webpage](#)

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