

# VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL

## MAKING FARINGDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN DECISION STATEMENT

14 December 2016

### Summary

1. The Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan was made at Full Council on 14 December 2016. The plan now forms part of the statutory development plan for the Vale of White Horse district and will be used in determining applications in the defined neighbourhood area, which covers all of Great Faringdon Parish.

### Background

2. Faringdon Town Council, as the qualifying body, successfully applied for Faringdon to be designated as a Neighbourhood Area, under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations, which came into force on 6 April 2012.
3. Following the submission of the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan for Examination to the district council, the plan was publicised and comments were invited from the public and stakeholders.
4. Following discussion with Faringdon Town Council, Vale of White Horse District Council appointed independent examiner, Andrew Ashcroft, to review whether the plan met the basic conditions and if the plan should proceed to referendum, as required by legislation.
5. The Examiner's Report recommended a number of modifications and advised that following these changes the plan will meet the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum. Following discussion with Faringdon Town Council, the district council accepted all of the modifications as recommended. The district council considered that the plan meets the basic conditions following those modifications and the plan proceeded to a referendum.
6. The referendum area was not extended beyond the neighbourhood area.

### Decision and Reasons

7. The District Council is required to formally make the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan part of the development plan, if more than half of those voting in the referendum have voted in favour of the Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area.

8. The council, as the Local Planning Authority, is not subject to that duty if it considers that the plan would breach, or otherwise be incompatible with any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights.
9. Following changes recommended by the independent examiner, a successful referendum took place on the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan on 24 November 2016. There were 944 yes votes and 94 no votes in favour of the neighbourhood plan becoming part of the statutory development plan for the district.
10. To comply with the European obligations required of neighbourhood plans, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) was carried out because it was determined the neighbourhood plan was likely to have significant environmental effects. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) accompanies the neighbourhood plan to comply with all SEA legislation requirements and also widens the scope to consider social and economic issues. The SA satisfies all requirements.
11. The closest European designated site to the plan area is the Hackpen Hill Special Area of Conservation (SAC), which is 11km away. Within the context of local plan preparation, the neighbourhood plan is unlikely to lead to additional pressures on the Hackpen Hill SAC. There is no evidence that suggests the neighbourhood plan will have a significant effect on a European offshore marine site.
12. The matters outlined in paragraphs 10 and 11 above have been addressed in full consultation with the relevant specialist bodies and get to the heart of ensuring that full and proper consideration has been given to environmental matters.
13. Furthermore, the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). There has been full and adequate opportunity for all interested parties to take part in the preparation of the Plan and make their comments known. The neighbourhood plan does not breach nor is in any way incompatible with the ECHR. The plan meets all legislative requirements.
14. Therefore following a successful vote in favour, the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan complies with all of the statutory and legal requirements and basic conditions set out in the Localism Act 2011. Following the Full Council on 14 December 2016 the Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan is made.

Councillor Roger Cox

Vale of White Horse District Council  
Cabinet Member for Planning Policy  
14 December 2016