

## **VALE OF WHITE HORSE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **WOOTTON AND ST HELEN WITHOUT NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN: FINAL DECISION STATEMENT**

**DATE OF PUBLICATION – 16 May 2022**

#### **1. Decision**

- 1.1. Following an Independent Examination and a positive referendum result Vale of White Horse District Council decided at the Council meeting on 18 December 2019
1. To make the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council's development plan.
  2. To delegate to the Head of Planning, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and in agreement with the Qualifying Body, the correction of any spelling, grammatical, typographical or factual errors together with any improvements from a presentational perspective.

#### **2. Background**

- 2.1 The parishes of Wootton and St Helen Without were designated as a Neighbourhood Area on 19 July 2017.
- 2.2 Following the submission of the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan Examination Version ("the Plan") to the Council, the plan was publicised and comments were invited from the public and stakeholders. The consultation period closed on 16 November 2018.
- 2.3 Vale of White Horse District Council appointed an independent Examiner, Andrew Ashcroft, to review whether the plan met the basic conditions required by legislation and whether the plan should proceed to referendum.
- 2.4 The Examiner's Report concluded, subject to the modifications proposed in his report, that the plan meets the Basic Conditions. The council determined

on 5 September 2019 that the Plan, as modified by the Examiner's recommendations, should proceed to referendum.

- 2.5 A referendum was held on Thursday, 24 October 2019 and 89.3% of those who voted, voted in favour of the plan.

### **3. Reason for Decision**

- 3.1 Section 38A(4)(a) of the 2004 Act requires the Council to make the neighbourhood 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. Section 38A (6) of the 2004 Act states that the Local Planning Authority is not subject to the duty if it considers that the making of the Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights.
- 3.2 The council determined on 5 September 2019 that the Plan, as modified by the Examiner's recommendations, meets the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is compatible with EU obligations and the Convention rights and complies with relevant provision made by or under Section 38A and B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended.
- 3.3 Section 6 of the Basic Conditions Statement submitted in support of the Plan outlined the Qualifying Body's considerations to the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) (the 'Convention'), in particular their regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the ECHR and the Human Rights Act. The council is satisfied that the preparation of the Plan had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European ECHR and that it complies with the Human Rights Act. The Council is satisfied that there has been full and adequate opportunity for all interested parties to take part in the preparation of the Plan and to make their comments known.
- 3.4 Wootton and St Helen Without Parish Councils produced a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Determination in July 2018, which confirmed that a SEA and a full HRA were not required for the Plan. The screening determination has been subject to consultation with the relevant statutory consultees, who confirmed the decision. The screening assessment was re-visited prior to the Submission, in order to take into account the European Court of Justice ruling of April 2018 and The Council's Decision Statement issued on 12 September

2019 under Regulation 18(2) confirmed that the modifications accepted by the Council, both separately and combined, produce no likely significant environmental affects and are unlikely to have any significant effects on European Designated Sites. Therefore, the Council is satisfied that the making of the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Development Plan, incorporating the modifications recommended by the Examiner and accepted by the council, would not breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights.

3.5 A referendum relating to the adoption of the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Development Plan was held on Thursday 24 October 2019.

3.6 The question which was asked in the Referendum was: “*Do you want Vale of White Horse District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Wootton and St Helen Without to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?*”

3.7 The result was as follows:

Response	Votes	Per cent of total
Yes	544	89.3%
No	64	10.5%
Turnout	609	17.1%

3.8 The majority of local electors who voted, voted in favour of the plan; therefore, the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan has become part of the council’s development plan.

3.9 As the plan was approved at the local referendum and the council is satisfied it would not breach and be otherwise incompatible with EU obligations or human rights legislation, the council is required make the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Development Plan so that it continues to be part of the council’s development plan.

3.10 The Council decided at the Council meeting on 18 December 2019 to make the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan part of the Development Plan for Vale of White Horse.

#### 4. Other Information

4.1 In accordance with Regulations 19 and 20 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, this Decision Statement and the made Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed on the Council's website: <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/wootton-and-st-helen-without/>

4.2 This Decision Statement and the Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Plan can be inspected at:

Reception <b>Vale of White Horse District Council</b> 135 Eastern Avenue, Milton Park, Milton, OX14 4SB	If you would like to view these documents at the council offices, please contact us on 01235 422600 or email <a href="mailto:planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk">planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk</a> to book an appointment.
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4.3 In accordance with Regulation 19(b) and Regulation 30 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, a copy of this Decision Statement has been sent to:

- The qualifying bodies, namely Wootton and St Helen Without Parish Councils
- The persons who asked to be notified of the decision

Signed:



Date: 16 May 2022

**Ricardo Rios**

Planning Policy Team Leader (Neighbourhood)