



Chelmsford City Council

8 December 2021

Making of the South Woodham Ferrers and Writtle Neighbourhood Plans

Report by:

Director of Sustainable Communities

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Purpose

To report the successful outcome of Neighbourhood Plan referendums and formally make (adopt) the final plans.

Recommendations:

1. That the Council formally make the Neighbourhood Plan for South Woodham Ferrers, and the Neighbourhood Plan for Writtle, in accordance with Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
 2. That the necessary legal and procedural processes to make the Neighbourhood Plans are delegated to the Director of Sustainable Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Development.
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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Following independent examination, the Neighbourhood Plans for South Woodham Ferrers (Appendix 1) and Writtle (Appendix 2) have both successfully gained the required community support at their formal referendums.
- 1.2. Following the referendums, the Plans become part of the statutory Development Plan for the administrative area of Chelmsford. The two Plans are brought to this meeting to formally 'make' them as part of the Development Plan.

2. Referendum and results

- 2.1. The Council published a Decision Statement on 6 August 2021 for each Neighbourhood Plan to confirm that it accepted the Examiner's Report, that the Plans (as modified) would meet the basic conditions set out in regulations, and that they should proceed to referendum.

- 2.2. A referendum was held on 21 October 2021, for voters within the two Neighbourhood Areas.

- 2.3. The results were as follows:

South Woodham Ferrers

- 2.4. The referendum asked the question "Do you want Chelmsford City Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for South Woodham Ferrers to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

- 2.5. 73% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan.

- 2.6. Referendum Results:

YES	1,497
NO	558
Rejected ballots	4
Total votes cast	2,059

Writtle

- 2.7. The referendum asked the question "Do you want Chelmsford City Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Writtle to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

- 2.8. 93% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan.

2.9. Referendum Results

YES	868
NO	62
Rejected ballots	1
Total votes cast	931

3. Decision and reasons

3.1. The Council is required to 'make' a Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the Plan. This is in accordance with Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

3.2. Alongside other parts of the Statutory Development Plan such as Chelmsford Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Plans have full weight in planning decision-making.

4. Conclusion

4.1. The South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan and the Writtle Neighbourhood Plan have been developed by the relevant Town/Parish Council through ongoing and extensive consultation within their parishes. The majority of those who voted at each referendum on 21 October voted in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan.

4.2. The Council now needs to complete the process to formally 'make' the Neighbourhood Plans so they form part of the statutory development plan for Chelmsford.

List of appendices:

Appendix 1: South Woodham Ferrers Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 2: Writtle Neighbourhood Plan

Background papers:

Corporate Implications

Legal/Constitutional:

Following the referendums on 21 October, the Council must now formally 'make' the Plans in accordance with Section 38(A)(4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

Financial:

Costs of arranging a referendum are borne by the Council, but are expected to be reimbursed through the Government's Neighbourhood Planning grant system.

Potential impact on climate change and the environment:

As part of the Local Plan, the policies contained in the Neighbourhood Plans will help to reduce the impact on the environment from inappropriate development.

Contribution toward achieving a net zero carbon position by 2030:

As part of the Local Plan, the policies contained in the Neighbourhood Plans will help to reduce the impact on the environment from inappropriate development.

Personnel:

Costs of arranging a referendum are borne by the Council, but are expected to be reimbursed through the Government's Neighbourhood Planning grant system.

Risk Management:

No direct impacts are anticipated.

Equality and Diversity:

All Neighbourhood Development Plans are subject to an Equality Assessment which was part of the submission document package.

Health and Safety:

No direct impacts are anticipated.

Digital:

No direct impacts are anticipated.

Other:

Facilitating Neighbourhood Plans contributes to priorities in the Council's Our Chelmsford, Our Plan 2020: A Fairer and Inclusive Chelmsford, A Safer and Greener Place, Healthy, Enjoyable and Active Lives, and Connected Chelmsford

Consultees:

Legal and Democratic Services

Relevant Policies and Strategies:

This report takes into account the following policies and strategies of the City Council:

Local Plan 2013-2036

Our Chelmsford, Our Plan, January 2020.