

Proposed “confines” for Charing Heath – your views needed!

In future (in Ashford borough) the so-called “confines” of a settlement will be crucial in determining whether planning applications (other than for sites set out in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan) will be allowed. Confines will be shown as an outline on a map. In the case of Charing Heath new building could be allowed within the defined “confines” provided it is of an appropriate scale (and, of course, if it meets other normal planning requirements). Any applications outside the confines will be treated as in the countryside and allowed only in very specific circumstances (unless the site is allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan).

It is not easy to set confines for a settlement like Charing Heath where there are large gaps between houses in some areas. Including everything risks leaving scope for far too much building if land falls into the hands of a greedy developer. Defining them too narrowly risks leaving no scope at all even for small-scale developments delivering types of housing that are most needed (eg for young people or downsizers).

In the Neighbourhood Plan exhibitions in November option 1 overleaf was proposed and generally approved (31 in favour, one against). Under this the Heath and the Recreation Ground would be designated as green spaces so they would not be built on. In subsequent discussions, including with Ashford Borough Council, it was suggested that the confines should be less extensive. So option 2 is also on the table. Both options limit development opportunity but option 2 is more restrictive with very limited opportunities.

We now want to ask residents which option you would prefer or whether you would prefer something else. Options are shown below. (The “Crofters” site proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan and three current planning applications have all been included in both options.)

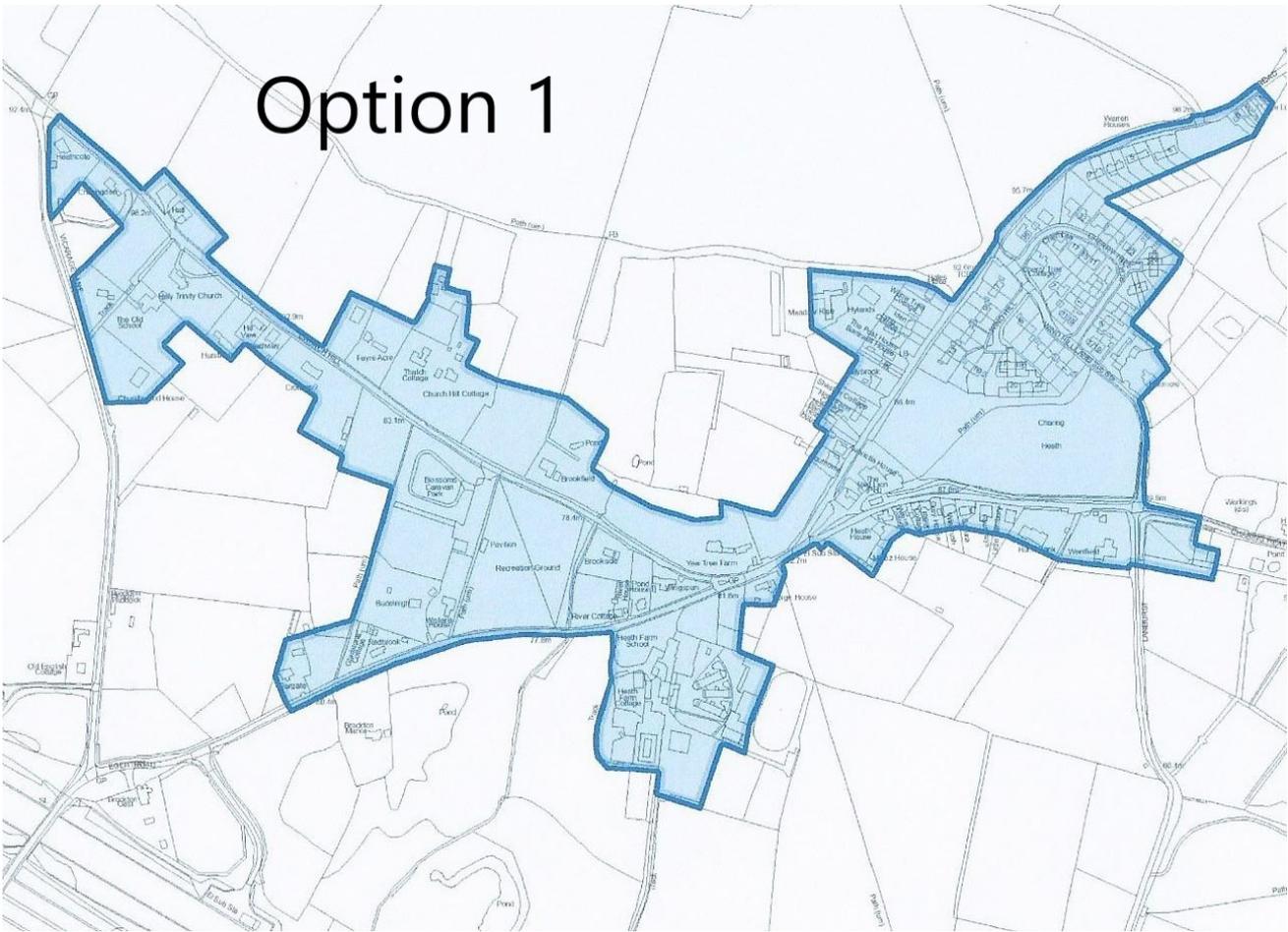
Note that confines do not depend on ward boundaries or road signs. Charing Heath confines do not have to be restricted to Charing Heath itself, and if you are outside the confines it does not mean that you are not in Charing Heath. This is purely for planning purposes to decide where building can or cannot be.

To make your views known please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/CHeathconfines> and answer the two questions by **February 7th**.

If you own a property in Charing Heath and are considering building any new dwellings please contact jill@charingkent.org or others on the Parish Council.

Thank you

Option 1



Option 2

