

**ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**CHARING NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2011-2030**  
**REGULATION 19 DECISION STATEMENT**

**21 JULY 2023**

**1. Summary**

1.1 Following a positive referendum result, Ashford Borough Council is publishing its decision to 'make' the Charing Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2030 as part of Ashford Borough Council's Development Plan in accordance with regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

**2. Background**

2.1 Charing Parish Council, as the qualifying body, successfully applied for the Charing Parish to be designated a Neighbourhood Area under Part 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Neighbourhood Area was designated on 31 May 2016.

2.2 Following the submission of the Charing Neighbourhood Plan to the Borough Council, it was publicised and comments invited from the public and stakeholders. The consultation period closed on 12 August 2022.

2.3 Ashford Borough Council appointed an independent examiner, Derek Stebbing BA(Hons), DIP EP, MRTPI, to review the whether the Neighbourhood Plan met the basic conditions required by legislation and whether it should proceed to referendum.

2.4 The examiner's report concluded that, subject to certain modifications proposed in his report dated December 2022, the Plan did meet the basic conditions and could therefore proceed to a local referendum.

2.5 The Neighbourhood Plan (amended in line with the examiner's proposed modifications) was the subject of a referendum held on Thursday 14 March 2023. 77% of those who voted were in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan. Paragraph 38(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires that the Borough Council must 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the Plan unless this would breach or would otherwise be incompatible with an EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

**3 Decision and Reasons**

3.1 With the examiner's proposed modifications, the Neighbourhood Plan is judged to have met the basic conditions laid down in paragraph 8 (2) of Schedule 4B of the

Town & Country Planning Act 1990, is compatible with EU obligations and the Convention rights and complies with the relevant provisions made by or under Section 38A and B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended.

3.2 The referendum held on Thursday 14 March 2023 met the requirements of the Localism Act 2011, it was held in the parish of Charing and posed the question “Do you want Ashford Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Charing Parish to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?”

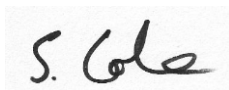
3.3 The result of the referendum was:

<b>Response</b>	<b>Votes Cast</b>	<b>Percentage of Total votes cast</b>
YES	479	77%
NO	141	23%

No ballot papers were rejected as being unmarked or wholly void for uncertainty.

3.4 The Borough Council has assessed that the Neighbourhood Plan, including its preparation, does not breach or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

3.5 Therefore, in accordance with the relevant Regulations, the Charing Neighbourhood Plan is ‘made’ and shall form part of the Development Plan for the Borough of Ashford.



Simon Cole

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Ashford Borough Council