

East Herts Council Non-Key Decision Report

Date: 17 March 2023

Report by: Councillor Jan Goodeve – Executive Member
for Planning and Growth

Report title: Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets
Neighbourhood Plan 2017- 2033: Pre-
Submission Regulation 14 Consultation

Ward(s) affected: Stanstead Abbots, Great Amwell

Summary:

- This purpose of this report is to agree the Council's response to Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan Revision: Pre-Submission consultation (Regulation 14).

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION: That:

- (A) Stanstead Abbots Parish Council be advised that the District Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Version and that the response at 'Appendix A' be submitted to the Parish Council for their consideration.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to agree the Council's response to Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Draft Consultation (Regulation 14).

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Government under the Localism Act in 2011. The Town and Country Planning England Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) came into force on the 6 April 2012 and prescribe both the process, and role of the local planning authority in supporting neighbourhood planning. In East Herts, Parish or Town Councils are qualifying bodies able to produce a Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.2 The three Parish Councils of Stanstead Abbots, St Margarets and Great Amwell have worked together to prepare a neighbourhood plan. Stanstead Abbots Parish Council, as the lead Parish Council, is the qualifying body and submitted an application to East Herts Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area in June 2018. The Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Area was then designated on the 11th September 2018.

3.0 Reason

- 3.1 Before a plan is formally submitted to the local planning authority, Stanstead Abbots Parish Council must carry out a pre-submission consultation and publicity in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 3.2 A public consultation is currently being held, which runs from 6 February 2023 to 2 April 2023.
- 3.3 The consultation documents are available on the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan website at: [Stanstead Abbots Neighbourhood Plan | Documents](#)
- 3.4 The Neighbourhood Plan's vision has been translated into a

set of objectives that focus on particular areas such as:

- Promote sustainable development and ensure suitable sites are delivered in the plan period.
- Improve access to well-designed, mixed and affordable housing.
- Celebrate the rivers' unique contribution to the village.
- Identify specific designated and non-designated heritage assets and provide for their protection.
- Protect and enhance Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets countryside, landscape, and character.
- Deliver new areas local green space.
- Protect and encourage employment opportunities in the village.

3.5 The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 6 sites to meet the housing requirement of a minimum of 94 dwellings as set out in District Plan Policies DPS3 and VILL1.

3.6 The Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan presents a positive planning document that seeks to shape development and is responding to the strategic priorities in the development plan in a pragmatic way. It is recognised that the neighbourhood plan area has significant constraints, providing a challenging context for the Neighbourhood Plan Group. The Council consider the plan is generally very well-written, well-evidenced and the policies are locally specific. The Council particularly supports the proactive approach taken to analyse, protect and enhance local character. However, some further work is still necessary to ensure all the policies are effective and meet the basic conditions, particularly in the following areas:

- Clarity is needed around the housing strategy and how the Neighbourhood Plan will meet the housing need.
- Housing allocations need more clarity and evidence to

ensure they are both suitable for housing and deliverable during the plan period.

- More evidence/ explanation is needed to demonstrate compliance with national policy in relation to flood risk.
- The deliverability and effectiveness of some of the policies need to be reviewed, to ensure they meet the basic conditions and provide the decision-maker with a clear framework in which to operate.

3.7 East Herts District Council welcomes the opportunity to comment on the pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan. Whilst there are still a number of stages to complete before the Plan can potentially be adopted (including a further public consultation (Reg.16), examination and referendum), the Parish Council should be commended for their hard work to date.

3.8 **Appendix 'A'** contains the Council's response to the draft Neighbourhood Plan. **Appendix 'B'** contains a copy of the draft Neighbourhood Plan Revision.

4.0 Options

4.1 The Council could choose not to comment on the Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan.

5.0 Risks

5.1 If the Council does not comment on the Neighbourhood Plan Revision then the Council's view would not be taken into consideration during the re-draft of the Plan.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is currently subject to public consultation. A future consultation will also take place

(Regulation 16 consultation) in due course. East Herts Council will lead on the Regulation 16 consultation.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

The Plan contains policies that aim to protect the environment.

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

Stanstead Abbots and Great Amwell

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

Appendix A: Council's response: Schedule of Comments

Appendix B: Stanstead Abbots and St Margaret Neighbourhood
Area Plan: Pre-Submission Document

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