

East Herts Council Report

Executive

Date of meeting: Tuesday 8 July 2025

Report by: Councillor Vicky Glover-Ward– Executive Member for Planning and Growth

Report title: Stocking Pelham Neighbourhood Area designation

Ward(s) affected: Little Hadham and The Pelhams;

Summary – This report considers the application submitted by Stocking Pelham Parish Council for the designation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area. In accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (as amended) the application is for the whole Stocking Pelham Parish area and the Council is required to designate the specified area as a neighbourhood area.

RECOMMENDATION FOR Executive: that

- a) The application for the designation of Stocking Pelham Neighbourhood Area, submitted by Stocking Pelham Parish Council, be supported**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 The designation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan Area is the first formal stage in the plan making process. In accordance with the requirements of Section 5 -7 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), Stocking Pelham Parish Council must make a request to East Herts Council, as the local planning authority, to designate a Neighbourhood Area. East Herts Council must then determine the application.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced by the Government under the Localism Act in 2011. Neighbourhood planning provides an opportunity for local communities to produce a planning document that shapes and influences future development within their local area.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 On 27 May 2025, Stocking Pelham Parish Council, as the qualifying body, submitted an application for the designation of the whole of the Stocking Pelham Parish area as a Neighbourhood Area. The application was made in writing by Stocking Pelham Parish Council and includes a statement explaining why the area is considered appropriate for designation as a neighbourhood area, a statement confirming that the application has been made by a relevant body and a plan setting out the area to which the application relates. The letter and plan form **Appendix A** and **Appendix B** to this report.
- 2.4 The Parish Council has stated that the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan Area comprises the whole of Stocking Pelham Parish Area and therefore no consultation is required as per regulation 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment Regulations 2016).

3.0 Reason(s)

- 3.1 The two main areas of consideration to be taken into account when determining an application for the designation of a Neighbourhood Area are set out in Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011. One of these is that the authority determining the application must have regard to the desirability of maintaining the existing boundaries of neighbourhood plan areas already designated. The other area of consideration is that a specified area must be one

that consists of, or includes the whole or any part of, the area of the (Parish) Council.

- 3.2 The Stocking Pelham Neighbourhood Area designation complies with these requirements as it covers the whole of the parish area and does not overlap with existing neighbourhood area designations. As the application is for the entirety of the parish council area, with no part falling outside the parish boundary, the Council is obliged to approve the proposed "neighbourhood area" for the purposes of a neighbourhood plan (Reg 5A (1), Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012).
- 3.3 At this stage no ideas have been developed about the policies in the Plan. However, this will be led by Stocking Pelham Parish Council in due course, with community engagement. The Neighbourhood Development Plan will need to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the District Plan and have regard to national policy. East Herts Council will advise and support the neighbourhood plan as it progresses.

Conclusion

- 3.4 In light of the above considerations, designation of Stocking Pelham Neighbourhood Area, for neighbourhood planning purposes is supported.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 The Local Planning Authority must determine whether the area should be designated as a Neighbourhood Area in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The proposed application meets the requirements of the legislation so refusing the application would be contrary to the legal requirements.

5.0 Risks

- 5.1 Designated Neighbourhood Areas allow for the development of Neighbourhood Plans. Neighbourhood planning enables residents and businesses/organisations to set out proposals for their local area, which will inform future planning decisions. The process

encourages the local community to shape their locality. If the neighbourhood area is not designated, then there is a risk that the community in Stocking Pelham may feel less engaged in the plan making process.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 No consultation is required as per regulation 5A of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) and Development Management Procedure (Amendment Regulations 2016).

Community Safety

There are no direct community safety implications as a result of this report.

Data Protection

There are no direct data protection implications as a result of this report.

Equalities

There are no direct equality, diversity, or inclusion implications in this report. The Neighbourhood Plan process is an opportunity to reach out to those whose voices sometimes go unheard.

Environmental Sustainability

There are no direct sustainability implications in this report. A future neighbourhood plan will be screened for its environmental impacts in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). The Neighbourhood Plan process is an opportunity to include policies on climate change mitigation and adaptation contributing to meeting wider environmental and sustainability objectives.

Financial

There are no additional financial implications beyond officer time as a result of this report. The Local Planning Authority is required to take decisions at key stages in the neighbourhood planning process. Government grants will be available to the Council if a neighbourhood plan progresses to Examination and Referendum.

Health and Safety

There are no direct health and safety implications as a result of this report.

Human Resources

There are no direct human resources implications as a result of this report.

Human Rights

There are no direct human rights implications as a result of this report.

Legal

The Local Planning Authority must determine whether the area should be designated as a Neighbourhood Area in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

Specific Wards

Yes – Little Hadham and the Pelhams

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 Appendix A – Stocking Pelham Neighbourhood Area Designation Request Letter

7.2 Appendix B – Stocking Pelham Neighbourhood Area Designation Map

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