

24 May 2023

Report of	Bethany Jones	☎ 282541
Title	Principal Planning Policy Officer Adoption of the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan	
Wards affected	Tiptree	

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan has successfully completed the process of examination, approval at referendum and has now come before the Council to be made (adopted) as part of the Colchester Local Plan.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 That the Council makes (adopts) the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan following its approval at referendum.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 To ensure the Council's planning policies provide a robust basis for decisions on future planning applications in the Borough.
- 3.2 The latest version of Planning Practice Guidance provides that if the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, then the Neighbourhood Plan must be 'made' by the Local Planning Authority within 8 weeks of the referendum.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There is no alternative option. Not adopting the Neighbourhood Plan would be contrary to the positive approach to Neighbourhood Plans found in National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practise Guidance. If the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, then the Neighbourhood Plan must be made by the Local Planning Authority.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 In February 2015, Colchester Borough Council designated the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan Area for the purpose of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan (in accordance with The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012). The plan area includes the whole of Tiptree Parish.
- 5.2 During the course of the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group carried out a significant number of meetings, consultation events and publicity. This included but were not limited to, the following:
- Regular public meetings
 - Five community exhibitions
 - Public consultation events
 - Community Questionnaire
 - Regular updating of the Parish Council Website (<https://www.tiptreeparishcouncil.gov.uk/the-neighbourhood-plan/>)
 - Regular postings on social media
 - Articles about the Neighbourhood Plan in various local publications
- 5.3 The Neighbourhood Plan allocates two sites for development, Highland Nursery and Elms Farm, providing a minimum of 400 dwellings. This is in accordance with the Colchester Local Plan Section 2 (adopted July 2022). The Plan contains a vision, 6 Objectives, and 16 Policies that cover a wide range of issues including design, traffic and sustainable travel, local economy, housing, community infrastructure, green infrastructure, Local Green Space Designations. In addition, a number of non-policy actions are proposed.
- 5.4 Colchester Borough Council appointed an independent examiner, Mr Andrew Seaman to examine the Neighbourhood Plan in October 2022. The Examiner's Report was issued on 15 December 2022 and concluded that subject to modifications recommended by the examiner being made to the document, the Neighbourhood Plan satisfied all the Basic Conditions set out in legislation and should proceed to Referendum.
- 5.5 The Referendum on the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan was held on 4th May 2023 with the following results: 2,087 votes recorded in favour of the plan and 382 against, or 84% in favour.
- 5.6 The latest version of Planning Practice Guidance provides that if the majority of those who vote in a referendum are in favour of the draft Neighbourhood Plan then the Neighbourhood Plan must be 'made' by the Local Planning Authority within 8 weeks of the referendum. A Neighbourhood Plan comes into force as part of the statutory Development Plan once it has been approved at referendum.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been prepared for the Local Plan and is available to view by clicking on this link: [Equality Impact Assessments - Colchester City Council](#)
- 6.2 There are no particular Human Rights implications.

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 Effective strategic planning support the Strategic Plan 2020-23, which includes a commitment to create great places to live through the provision of new homes with infrastructure and facilities that support sustainable living and promote health and wellbeing. The Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan will contribute towards achieving these objectives.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 The preparation of the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan was underpinned by extensive public consultation. The consultation process was documented in a Consultation Statement submitted along with the Neighbourhood Plan document as part of the examination process.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 Both Tiptree Parish Council and Colchester City Council have publicised the Neighbourhood Plan on their respective websites.
- 9.2 On adoption, the document will be made available on the Colchester City Council and Tiptree Parish Council websites, and stakeholders will be notified, in accordance with Regulations 19 and 20 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 9.3 Neighbourhood planning is generally seen as a positive activity and any publicity arising should be seen in this light.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 Colchester City Council is financially responsible for organising the examination and referendum for Neighbourhood Plans in their areas. The Council can however reclaim £20,000 from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities for all Neighbourhood Plans once a statement has been issued detailing their intention to send the plan to referendum following a successful examination. These payments have been made by Central Government to Local Authorities to reflect the additional financial burdens associated with supporting Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Plan Forums prepare Neighbourhood Plans. The grant will cover the cost of the examination and referendum.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 None identified.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 None identified.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 The adoption of the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan will help ensure that the Council's planning policies are robust and up-to-date and help to reduce the risk of inappropriate development being permitted.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 In order to support the achievement of sustainable development, the Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure that new development will be both sustainable and improve life for the community without prejudicing lives for future generations. The plan contains objectives that seek to deliver development prioritising local distinctiveness in keeping with the village feel, meet the housing, infrastructure and service requirements, improve movement through Tiptree, protect and enable the green environment, wildlife and biodiversity to thrive and protect local, national and international designated sites and habitats, enable the village centre to thrive and ensure Tiptree is an attractive location for businesses.
- 14.2 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), carried out under the Environmental Regulations 2004, was undertaken throughout the plan making process and last updated in August 2022. This concluded that the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan will have broadly neutral effects upon biodiversity and climate change, significant positive effects upon communities, positive effects upon the economy and transport, neutral effects upon the historic environment and a risk of negative effect upon land, soil and water resources due to the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land (BMV). The loss of BMV is found to be likely unavoidable given the parameters within which the Plan is prepared.

Appendices

A – Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan