

13 June 2022

Report of	Assistant Director of Place and Client Services	Author	Bethany Jones ☎ 282541
Title	Great Horkesley Neighbourhood Plan – Area Designation		
Wards affected	Rural North		

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Great Horkesley Parish Council wishes to develop a Neighbourhood Plan and requested the parish boundary be designated as a Neighbourhood Area. One of the first stages of developing a neighbourhood plan is to agree the area that this will cover.
- 1.2 Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to plan for the types of development to meet their community's needs and align this with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.
- 1.3 A copy of the area application and map of the proposed designated area is attached to this report at Appendix A.

2. Recommended Decision

- 2.1 To formally designate the Great Horkesley Neighbourhood Plan Area, in accordance with Section 61(G) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

3. Reason for Recommended Decision

- 3.1 Approval of the Neighbourhood Plan Area will enable Great Horkesley Parish Council to progress their Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.2 The latest version of Planning Practice Guidance and the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations state that Local Planning Authorities must designate a neighbourhood plan area application where a Parish Council applies for the whole of the area of the parish to be designated.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 There is no alternative option. Not designating the Great Horkesley Neighbourhood Plan Area would be contrary to the positive approach to Neighbourhood Plans found in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Guidance.

5. Background Information

- 5.1 The concept of Neighbourhood Planning was introduced through the Localism Act in 2011 and embedded in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) first published in March 2012, and updated on 24 July 2018, 19 February 2019 and 20 July 2021. The new Levelling up and Regeneration Bill confirms that Neighbourhood Planning remains high on the government's agenda and something that will be encouraged in local communities.
- 5.2 Neighbourhood Plans were introduced to give local communities greater planning influence over how the areas where they live and/or work, develop over time. Neighbourhood Plans are subject to examination and referendum, and if both processes are completed successfully, Neighbourhood Plans become part of the statutory Development Plan.
- 5.3 The Neighbourhood Planning regulations were updated in 2016. Regulation 5a now states in the event a Parish Council applies for the entire parish area to be designated as a Neighbourhood Plan area, the Local Planning Authority must designate the area. Where Regulation 5a applies, regulations 6 and 6a do not apply. As a result, there is no requirement for a public consultation to be undertaken to seek views on the neighbourhood plan area.
- 5.4 Great Horkesley Parish Council submitted an application on 10 May 2022 to designate a neighbourhood plan area. This proposal covered the whole parish area, and in accordance with Regulation 5a of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Regulations) 2012 (as amended), the area therefore must be designated by the Council.
- 5.5 Once the Neighbourhood Plan area has been approved, Great Horkesley Parish Council (as the Qualifying Body) will begin to prepare their Neighbourhood Plan. This will include developing an evidence base and consulting the local community. A Planning Policy Officer will be assigned to help guide and support the Parish Council through the plan making process.
- 5.6 Progress on the Neighbourhood Plan will be published as part of the Authority Monitoring Report and via the Council's website.

6. Equality, Diversity and Human Rights implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has also been prepared for the Local Development Framework and is available to view by clicking on this link:- [Equality Impact Assessment June 2017.pdf \(windows.net\)](#)

7. Strategic Plan References

- 7.1 This decision sits well with a number of the themes for Colchester Borough Council's Strategic Vision. [Strategic Plan 2020-23](#).
- 7.2 ["Creating safe, healthy and active communities"](#) – Commitment to regenerate the Borough through buildings, employment, leisure and infrastructure. Build on community strengths and assets, encourage belonging, involvement and responsibility. Neighbourhood plan allows just this. They allow local community groups to, in consultation with local residents and businesses, produce plans which will help to shape development and investment within their local area. These plans are recognised within the planning system and carry material weight.

- 7.3 “Delivering homes for people who need them” - Providing more affordable homes, and enable local communities to help themselves. Neighbourhood planning places control over the design, location, and nature of housing and affordable housing that will be created within a locality firmly with the remit of the neighbourhood plan.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 There are no particular consultation implications, as explained, under the Regulations consultation on the area designation is not required when it is for the whole Parish area.

9. Publicity Considerations

- 9.1 There are no particular publicity implications at this stage.

10. Financial implications

- 10.1 There are no particular financial implications at this stage.

11. Health, Wellbeing and Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 There are no particular health, wellbeing and community safety implications.

12. Health and Safety Implications

- 12.1 There are no particular health and safety implications.

13. Risk Management Implications

- 13.1 The process will need to be managed carefully alongside the production of the new Local Plan to avoid conflicts between the two plan production processes.

14. Environmental and Sustainability Implications

- 14.1 Neighbourhood Plans are not required to carry out the type of sustainability appraisal necessary for a Development Plan Document as required by the Town and Country Planning Act 2004. There may be the need to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) depending on the content of the Neighbourhood Plan. Local Planning Authorities are advised to undertake an early SEA screening of the plan to determine whether it is required. However, it is not required for the consideration of an area application.

Appendices

Appendix A – Great Horkesley Parish Council Application with a map of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan Area.