

Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan

Decision Statement

Following an independent examination Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet confirmed on the 17 June 2025 that the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan will proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning Referendum.

Background

The Great Staughton neighbourhood area was designated on 21 January 2021 under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012). The plan area covers the parish of Great Staughton and is contiguous with the Parish council's administrative boundary.

Great Staughton Parish Council, as the qualifying body, submitted the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan and its supporting evidence to Huntingdonshire District Council in November 2024. The statutory six week submission consultation was held from 11 December 2024 to 5 February 2025.

Huntingdonshire District Council, in discussion with Great Staughton Parish Council, appointed an independent examiner, Andrew S Freeman BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI, to review whether the submitted Neighbourhood Plan met the Basic Conditions as required by legislation. Mr Freeman issued his report on 3 April 2025 which recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan, subject to the modifications proposed in his report, met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum.

Following discussions with the qualifying body it was decided that the Examiner's recommendations would be accepted in full.

The Basic Conditions are:

- Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union (EU) obligations; and
- Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the neighbourhood plan and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

Regulations 32 and 33 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations (2012) (as amended) set out two basic conditions in addition to those set out in primary legislation and referred to above. These are:

- The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.
- Having regard to all material considerations, it is appropriate that the neighbourhood development order is made where the development described in an order proposal is Environmental Impact Assessment development (this is not applicable to this examination).

Decision and Reasons

Huntingdonshire District Council's Cabinet considered the recommendations on 17 June 2025 and agreed to accept the Examiner's proposed modifications and approve the Great Staughton Neighbourhood Plan to proceed to referendum.

The modifications to the Neighbourhood Plan, as needed to ensure it meets the Basic Conditions and in accordance with the Examiner's recommendations are listed in the following table.

Examiner's Recommended Modifications Received 3 April 2025

The statement below sets out the modifications considered by the examiner as necessary to enable the submission neighbourhood plan to meet the required basic conditions. Strike-through text indicates a deletion and bold indicates the insertion of additional text.

Proposed modification no. (PM)	Page no.	Modification
PM1	Page 15	<p>In Policy GSNP1, replace point iii with the following:</p> <p>“On land at Brook Farm, The Highway, such residential development as is demonstrably necessary to enable the delivery of a GP surgery / NHS healthcare facility in accordance with Policy GSNP 3; and”.</p> <p>At the end of the policy add, “v. “windfall” sites on land well related to the Built Up Area Boundary identified on Map 3 that come forward during the Plan period and are in accordance with local and national policy.”</p> <p>After new criterion v, add the following paragraph:</p> <p>“Development proposals will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that there is, or will be, sufficient infrastructure capacity to meet all the necessary requirements arising from a proposed development. Where appropriate, development may need to be phased spatially and chronologically to enable the provision of infrastructure in a timely manner with conditions or planning obligations to be used in securing any phasing arrangements.”</p>
PM2	Page 17	<p>In the second paragraph of Policy GSNP 2, replace “up to 2 dwellings” with “small scale development”. Make a similar change to Paragraph 5.12.</p> <p>After “Brook Farm”, insert “(and essential enabling housing)”.</p>
PM3	Page 21	<p>In Policy GSNP 3, replace all the text up to and including “The following criteria also apply” with the following:</p>

		<p>“POLICY GSNP 3 – Healthcare Facility and Enabling Housing at Brook Farm</p> <p>A site at Brook Farm, as defined on Map 4, is allocated for provision of a healthcare facility and enabling housing development.</p> <p>A comprehensive development of the whole of the allocated site for a healthcare facility (GP Surgery, dispensary and NHS healthcare facility) and enabling housing will be supported where, as appropriate, the proposal is designed and landscaped so as to enhance the character and appearance of the area, the Conservation Area and the setting of the nearby Listed Buildings.”</p> <p>At the end of criterion vi. delete “and to the satisfaction of the local highways authority”.</p> <p>At the end of criterion ix, delete “to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency, Local Lead Flood Authority and the District Council”. At the beginning of the criterion, insert: “In consultation with the Environment Agency, the Local Lead Flood Authority and the District Council, provide...”.</p> <p>Amend the end of criterion x. so that it reads “can be remediated satisfactorily”.</p> <p>Replace criterion xi. With the following: “Safeguard the living conditions of residents by ensuring that any residential curtilage is a minimum of 15m from the sewage pumping station.”</p> <p>Replace the penultimate paragraph of the policy with the following:</p> <p>“Residential development will be supported where an independent Viability Assessment demonstrates that such development is essential to enable the delivery of the healthcare facility.”</p> <p>In Paragraph 5.44 of the supporting text, delete “(0.2 hectares)”.</p>
PM4	Page 25	In Policy GSNP 4, criterion i, delete all the text after “affordable housing needs”.

		<p>At the beginning of Criterion ii, insert “Provide”.</p> <p>At the end of criterion iii, delete “to the satisfaction of the Environment Agency, Local Lead Flood Authority and the District Council”. At the beginning of the criterion, insert: “In consultation with the Environment Agency, the Local Lead Flood Authority and the District Council, provide...”.</p> <p>At the end of Criterion iv, delete “and to the satisfaction of the local highways authority”.</p> <p>In Criterion vi, replace “safeguard a” with “make provision for”.</p> <p>At the beginning of the paragraph relating to the B645 Pedestrian Crossing, insert “Subject to the tests set out in Paragraph 57 of the NPPF (December 2023),”.</p>
PM5	Page 29	<p>For the first three paragraphs of Policy GSNP 6, substitute the following:</p> <p>“In respect of all new affordable housing provision within the Parish, a minimum of 50% of the affordable homes for rent and 50% of Low Cost Home Ownership shall be occupied by households with a strong local connection.”</p>
PM6	Page 35	<p>In Policy GSNP 7, provide a link to the Great Staughton Landscape and Townscape Assessment.</p>
PM7	Pages 38 to 40	<p>In Policy GSNP10, add a new penultimate paragraph:</p> <p>“The assets listed below and shown on Maps 7 and 8 are designated as non-designated heritage assets:” [List the assets as set out in the response to my questions as received on 6 March 2025 and substitute Maps 7 and 8 as provided.]</p>
PM8	Pages 43 to 44	<p>In Policy GSNP 11, amend the list of sites shown under “Map 9A shows” by separately listing Perry and Agden Woods.</p> <p>Amend Map 9A to show numbering that corresponds with that in the policy.</p>

		<p>In the policy reference to Map 9B, substitute “path of the River Kym” for “whole river valley of the”. In the policy and the mapping, add reference to the Grafham-Brampton-River Kym Habitat Network.</p> <p>To Map 9C, add numbering that coincides with the numbering in the policy.</p> <p>In relation to Map 9D, provide added detail such that the location and geographical extent of the listed features can be identified.</p> <p>Delete the paragraph commencing “In addition to the mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain requirements”, and the following sub-paragraphs (a) and (b) and replace with:</p> <p>“When a biodiversity net gain proposal is being formulated, the following are encouraged:”.</p> <p>Delete the paragraph commencing “As appropriate to their scale”.</p>
PM9	Page 48	In Policy GSNP 12, delete criterion iv. At the end of the opening paragraph of the policy, add “including the use of low carbon heat sources”.
PM10	Page 52	At the commencement of Policy GSNP 13, change “A proposal for a Community Led Energy Project” to “Proposals for Community Led Energy Projects”.
PM11	Page 54	In the final paragraph of Policy GSNP 15, delete “and other relevant codes of practice”. After “technical guidance”, insert “including advice”.
PM12	Page 57	In the second paragraph of Policy GSNP 17, change “impact adversely” to “unacceptably impact adversely”.
PM13	Page 61	In relation to Policy GSNP 19, insert a map of the listed facilities [as included in the response to my questions received on 6 March 2025]. ¹

¹ <https://www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/planning/neighbourhood-planning/>