

# CHARLTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2019-2029

## Final Decision Statement

Date of publication: 11 May 2021

### 1. Decision

- 1.1 Following an Independent Examination and a positive referendum result, Test Valley Borough Council has decided, pursuant to section 38A (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to 'make' the Charlton Neighbourhood Development Plan (the 'Plan').
- 1.2 The Charlton Neighbourhood Development Plan now forms part of the Development Plan and its policies will be given full weight when assessing planning applications that affect land covered by the Plan.

### 2. Reasons for Decision

- 2.1 With the Examiner's recommended modifications, and additional modifications made by the Council, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in paragraph 8(2) of the Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, is compatible with EU obligations and the Convention rights and complies with relevant provision made by or under Section 38A and Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).
- 2.2 The referendum held on 6 May 2021 met the requirements of the Localism Act 2011. It was held in the referendum area (consisting of the parish area of Charlton and posed the question "Do you want Test Valley Borough Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Charlton to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"
- 2.3 The count took place on 7 May 2021 and greater than 50% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan being used to help decide planning applications in the neighbourhood plan area. The results of the referendum were:

Response	Votes	Percentage
YES	557	89.4%
NO	66	10.6%
Turnout	37.84%	

- 2.4 Test Valley Borough Council has assessed that the Plan including its preparation does not breach, and would not otherwise be incompatible, with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention Rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 The Charlton Neighbourhood Plan Area, was designated in June 2014 as an area for the purpose of preparing a neighbourhood plan in accordance with section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). Due to a boundary review in 2018, Charlton Parish Council submitted an application for the designation of the Neighbourhood Area to cover the whole of the amended parish boundary. The Council considered the application and approved the designation on 3 February 2020.
- 3.2 Charlton Parish Council (the 'qualifying body'), submitted the draft Charlton Neighbourhood Development Plan, along with supporting documents, to Test Valley Borough Council for consultation, independent examination and remaining stages of the draft Plan's preparation in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 3.3 Following submission of the draft Charlton Neighbourhood Development Plan, Test Valley Borough Council publicised the Plan and supporting documents and invited representations during the consultation period from 6 February 2020 until March 2020. Representations received at the Regulation 16 stage raised concerns about the plans potential impacts on European Sites. The plan therefore had an additional Regulation 16 consultation along with a consultation on a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This consultation commenced on 17 November 2020 until 4 January 2021.
- 3.4 Test Valley Borough Council appointed an independent examiner, Peter Biggers BSc (Hons) MRTPI AIHBC to examine the Plan and consider whether it should proceed to referendum.
- 3.5 The examiner's report was received in February 2021 and concluded that, subject to making the modifications recommended in the report, the draft Plan met the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum. The examiner also recommended that the Charlton Neighbourhood Area (the parish area) would be an appropriate area within which to hold a referendum.
- 3.6 Following receipt of the examiner's report, Test Valley Borough Council published a Decision Statement on 12 March 2021 to confirm that the Council was satisfied that the Charlton Neighbourhood Development Plan, as modified, complies with the legal

requirements and could proceed to referendum. The Council also agreed with the examiner that the Charlton Neighbourhood Area would be an appropriate area within which to hold a referendum.

- 3.7 Due to the ongoing pandemic, the Government indicated that no referenda would take place until May 2021, but that once the decision statement had been published that the Neighbourhood Plan would be given significant weight in decision making, so far as the plan is material to a planning application.
- 3.8 A referendum was held on 6 May 2021 and 89.4% of those who voted were in favour of the Plan. Paragraph 38A (4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended requires that the Council must make the neighbourhood plan if more than half of those voting have voted in favour of the plan. The Council are not subject to this duty if the making of the Plan would breach, or would otherwise be incompatible with, any EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).
- 3.9 This Decision Statement and the Neighbourhood Plan have been published on Test Valley Borough Council's website along with details of where they can be inspected. This information has also been brought to the attention of people who live, work or carry out business in the neighbourhood area.

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