

**Surrey Heath Borough Council**

**Chobham Neighbourhood Plan**

**POST EXAMINATION DECISION STATEMENT**

**The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)**

This document is the decision statement required to be prepared under Regulation 18(2) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). It sets out the Council's response to each of the recommendations contained within the report to Surrey Heath Borough Council of the Examination of the Chobham Neighbourhood Development Plan ("the Plan") by independent Examiner Andrew Ashcroft, which was received by the Council on 18th November 2025. It also sets out the decision to proceed to referendum.

These decisions were made at Executive on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

**BACKGROUND**

Chobham Parish Council, with the support of a Steering Group has prepared a neighbourhood Plan covering the period 2024 – 2028. The Chobham Neighbourhood Plan relates to the area that was designated by Surrey Heath Borough Council as a Neighbourhood Area on 12 November 2013. This area is coterminous with the Chobham Parish boundary and is entirely within the Local Planning Authority area.

Chobham Parish Council undertook pre-submission consultation on the draft Plan in accordance with Regulation 14 (6 May to 21 June 2024).

Following the submission of the Chobham Neighbourhood Plan to the Council in June 2025, the Council publicised the draft Plan for just over 7 weeks and representations were invited in accordance with Regulation 16. The publicity period ended on 5 September 2025.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION**

The Council appointed Mr Andrew Ashcroft, with the consent of Chobham Parish Council, to undertake the examination of the Chobham Neighbourhood Plan and to prepare a report of the independent examination.

The Examiner's report was received on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2025. The report concludes that subject to making the modifications recommended by the Examiner, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum based on the Neighbourhood Area that was designated by the Council in November 2013.

Having considered each of the recommendations made in the Examiner's report and the reasons for them, the Council has decided to make the modifications to the Chobham Neighbourhood Plan set out in Table 1 below. The Council is satisfied that subject to those changes/modifications which it considers should be made to the Plan as set out in Table 1 below, that the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation.

**DECISION AND REASONS**

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires in Regulation 18 for the local planning authority to outline what action to take in response to the

recommendations of an Examiner in relation to a neighbourhood plan. These are set out in Table 1 below.

Having considered each of the recommendations in the Examiner's report and the reasons for them, the Council, with the agreement of Chobham Parish Council, has decided to accept the modifications to the draft Plan. This decision was made at Executive on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2026.

The Council is also required to consider whether to extend the area to which the referendum is to take place under Regulation 18(1e). The Examiner recommended that the Neighbourhood Plan should proceed to a referendum based on the area that was designated by Surrey Heath Borough Council as a Neighbourhood Area. The Council has considered this recommendation and the reasons for it and has decided to accept it. The referendum on the Chobham Neighbourhood Plan will be based on the designated Chobham Parish Neighbourhood Area.

10<sup>th</sup> February 2026

**Table 1: Examiners Recommended Modifications and the Council's Decision**

<b>Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para</b>	<b>Examiners Report reference</b>	<b>Recommended Modification</b>	<b>Summary of Examiners Reason</b>	<b>SHBC Decision</b>
Community Engagement Page 10, para 1.19	Para 7.125	Update final sentence of paragraph 1.19 and Table 1 to reflect the current stage of the Neighbourhood Plan in the 'made' version.	To provide clarity required by the NPPF.	Accept recommendations.
Sustainability and Responding to the Climate Emergency Page 12, para 1.31	Para 7.125	Update the reference to the availability of the Screening Determination. `	To provide clarity required by the NPPF.	Accept recommendations.
About Chobham Page 13, para 2.7	Para 7.125	Update to reflect the current names of the employment areas and the designation of Fairoaks Airport as a Strategic Employment Site in the emerging Local Plan.	To provide clarity required by the NPPF.	Accept recommendations.
Opportunities and Challenges facing Chobham Parish Page 15, para 2.14	Para 7.125	Update reference to the emerging Local Plan in the 11 <sup>th</sup> bullet point.	To provide clarity required by the NPPF.	Accept recommendations.

<p>Policy CH1: Location of Development Page 18</p>	<p>Para 7.24</p>	<p>Modify Policy wording and supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>Revise the order of the policy so it follows the first, third, fourth and the second parts (of the submitted Plan).</b></p> <p><b>Replace the third part of the policy (as submitted) with: ‘Proposals for development of backland sites, including residential garden land, will only be supported where they would safeguard and where practicable contribute positively to the character and appearance of the local area.’</b></p> <p><b>Reposition part 2d of the policy so that it appears after part 2g (and reorganise the letters accordingly).</b></p> <p><b>In the first element of part 2 of the policy include ‘or’ at the end of a-c (as reordered) and ‘and’ at the end of e and f (as reordered).</b></p> <p><b>In part 2e of the policy (as submitted) replace ‘sites allocated for in’ with ‘sites allocated for development in’</b></p> <p><i>Update Figures 3, 4 and 5 (and use consistent symbology) to align to the proposed (Regulation 19) Local Plan settlement boundary for Chobham</i></p>	<p>To ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.</p>	<p>Accept recommendations.</p>
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<p>Policy CH2: Meeting local housing needs Page 24</p>	<p>Para 7.28</p>	<p>Modify Policy wording and supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>In 1a) add ‘subject to viability’ at the end.</b></p> <p><b>Replace 1b) with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Proposals that enable greater affordability uplift and prioritise local people (see Glossary) when it comes to allocating housing will be particularly supported. Proposals for First Homes that enable an uplift of up to 50% to the discounts provided to assist single occupants on median and lower quartile income, will be supported. Where such an uplift is demonstrated to be unviable, proposals should provide at least a 30% discount. Wherever practicable, proposals for First Homes should seek to prioritise those with a local connection to Chobham parish and key workers.’</b></p> <p><i>In 4.14 replace ‘Regulation 18’ with ‘Regulation 19’</i></p> <p><i>Ensure consistency between paragraphs 4.13, 4.22 and 4.23 by reference to Local Housing Needs Assessment (which is document HO2 in the Local Plan evidence base).</i></p> <p><i>Replace paragraph 4.25 with:</i></p> <p><b><i>‘The community in Chobham is ageing. The number of those aged 65+ in Chobham has risen by 31% since 2001. Policy H6 (Specialist Housing) of the emerging (Regulation 19) Local Plan makes provision for specialist</i></b></p>	<p>To provide clarity required by the NPPF and to ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.</p>	<p>Accept recommendations.</p>
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Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
		<p><i>housing, including care and extra care spaces, to serve those in the borough. Given the limited scope of available space in Chobham for development, it is unlikely that this provision will take place locally. Therefore, it will be important to ensure that any housing developed in the parish is accessible and adaptable to meet people's changing needs over their lives, so that they can stay at home for longer. Policy H5 (Range and Mix of Housing) proposes that all homes should meet Building Regulations Part M4(2) (or subsequent standards) and that on sites of 20 or more net new units, at least 5% of new homes and 10% of affordable homes should meet Building Regulation M4(3)(2)(a) unless site specific constraints can be demonstrated. The <a href="#">Building Regulations 2010 Access to and Use of Buildings</a> contains guidance on this matter. The Neighbourhood Plan supports this approach.'</i></p>		

Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
Policy CH3: Character and Design of Development Page 29	Para 7.36	<p>Modify Policy and supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>Replace part 2 of the policy with: ‘As appropriate to their scale, nature and location, development proposals should conserve and, where practicable, enhance the character of the Conservation Area and/or Character Area in which it is located (as shown on Figures 9 and 10, described in the Chobham Design Guidance and Codes, Appendix B).’</b></p> <p><b>Remove the second ‘and’ between Parts 4d and 4e of the policy.</b></p> <p><i>At the end of paragraph 5.11 add: ‘Part 2 of the policy seeks to ensure that development proposals should conserve and, where practicable, enhance the character of the Conservation Area and/or Character Area in which it is located. In circumstances where land that does not fully reflect those of a wider character area, or where the balance of the importance of the proposals outweighs its impact on the character area, the Borough Council will be able to make decisions based on the contents of the overall development plan and all material planning considerations.’</i></p>	To ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.	Accept recommendation.
Policy CH4: Energy Efficiency and Design Page 39	7.40	<p>Modify Policy as follows:</p> <p><b>In the second part of the policy replace ‘unviable’ with ‘viable’</b></p>	To correct an error.	Accept recommendation.

Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
Policy CH5: Minimising the risk of flooding Page 43	7.46	<p>Modify Policy as follows:</p> <p><b>In the first part of the policy relace ‘must’ with ‘should’</b></p> <p><b>Replace the second part of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Development proposals should demonstrate that there is sufficient capacity in the local sewerage system and that any new connections will not increase the risk of system back up/flooding or cause any adverse impact to the neighbourhood area environment. Where appropriate, development proposals should ensure that infrastructure can be delivered and phased through either a Grampian condition or a legal agreement.’</b></p> <p><b>Replace the first sentence of the third part of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Where it is practicable to do so, development proposals should incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), as set out in the Chobham Design Guidance and Codes, with run-off rates no greater than greenfield sites.’</b></p>	To ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.	Accept recommendation.

<p>Policy CH6: Conserving Heritage Assets Page 50</p>	<p>7.50</p>	<p>Modify Policy and supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>Delete parts 1, 2 and 3 of the policy</b></p> <p><b>Replace part 4 of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Development proposals in the Chobham Conservation Area should ensure that they contribute to the preservation or enhancement of the historic environment, in accordance with the guidance set out in the Chobham Conservation Area Appraisal and the Chobham Design Guidance and Codes.’</b></p> <p><i>At the end of paragraph 5.52 add: ‘Given the context provided by national and local planning policies, the policy focuses on the added value to decisions in the Chobham Conservation Area provided by the Chobham Conservation Area Appraisal and the Chobham Design Guidance and Codes.’</i></p> <p><i>Replace paragraph 5.62 with: ‘As part of the Plan preparation process, the community was invited to suggest any heritage assets that they considered should be recognised for their contribution to local character and history. As the Borough Council is in the process of amending their Local List, suggestions were forwarded to them for inclusion, including Benham’s Corner and Chobham Victorian Cemetery (Figure 15).’</i></p> <p><i>Remove the photograph of Emmetts Mill Bridge in Figure 15.</i></p>	<p>To ensure that the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.</p>	<p>Accept recommendations.</p>
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<p>Policy CH7: Chobham Village Centre Page 53</p>	<p>7.55</p>	<p>Modify Policy as follows:</p> <p><b>In part 2 delete ‘and/ or Chertsey Neighbourhood Parade’</b></p> <p><b>In part 2c replace ‘full viability report’ with ‘marketing report’ and ‘Appendix E’ with ‘Appendix D’</b></p> <p><b>Replace the second sentence of the fourth part of the policy with: ‘Any alterations to heritage assets should contribute to the enhancement of the historic environment.’</b></p> <p><b>Include an additional section to read:</b></p> <p><b>‘5. Chertsey Road Neighbourhood Parade: The permanent change of ground floor use of Classes E, F1 and F2 to other uses within the Chertsey Neighbourhood Parade will only be supported where the following can be demonstrated:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>the proposed use will maintain the vitality and viability of the Neighbourhood Parade;</b></li> <li>• <b>the premises in question has not been in continuous active use for at least 12 consecutive months; and</b></li> <li>• <b>the premises has no potential for reoccupation as demonstrated through the results both of a marketing report (as per Appendix D) and a marketing campaign lasting for a continuous period of at least 6 months.’</b></li> </ul>	<p>To provide clarity required by the NPPF and to ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.</p>	<p>Accept recommendations.</p>
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<b>Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para</b>	<b>Examiners Report reference</b>	<b>Recommended Modification</b>	<b>Summary of Examiners Reason</b>	<b>SHBC Decision</b>
Policy CH8: Strategic and locally important employment sites Page 57	Para 7.64	<p><b>Delete the Policy</b></p> <p>Delete paragraphs 6.15 to 6.20 and Figure 18.</p>	The Policy does not meet the Basic Conditions for reasons including it is strategic in nature and as such it is not for the neighbourhood plan to address.	Accept recommendation.

<p>Policy CH10: Green and blue infrastructure and delivering biodiversity net gain Para 62</p>	<p>Para 7.76</p>	<p>Modify Policy and supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>Replace the first part of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Development proposals should be designed to create, conserve, enhance and manage green and blue spaces. They should connect chains of green and blue infrastructure, as identified on Figure 20 and deliver the national minimum measurable biodiversity net gain of 10%, measured using the statutory Biodiversity metric.’</b></p> <p><b>Replace the second part of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Where Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) units cannot be delivered on-site, off-site delivery should be prioritised within the parish—focusing on areas identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). Measures should align with the ecological priorities of those areas. Where actions correlate with mapped measures in the LNRS, they will receive a strategic significance uplift in the unit calculations, as set out in the statutory guidance. If delivery within the parish is not possible, other suitable locations within, or as close as reasonably possible to, the local planning authority area should be considered. In all cases, applicants must clearly justify how their proposals follow the BNG hierarchy and demonstrate that all efforts to deliver habitat locally were fully explored before other options were sought. Statutory biodiversity credits should only be used as a last resort, in accordance with national policy.’</b></p> <p><b>Replace the third part of the policy with:</b></p>	<p>To provide clarity required by the NPPF and to ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.</p>	<p>Accept recommendations.</p>
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		<p><b>‘Development proposals that seek to improve the connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces will be supported to enhance the green infrastructure of the neighbourhood area. Development proposals which would damage such connectivity will not be supported.’</b></p> <p><b>Replace part 5a of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘There is no unacceptable loss of, or damage to, existing trees or woodlands during or because of development. Development proposals that would result in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) will not be supported unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists.’</b></p> <p><b>Replace part 5d of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Development that would result in the loss of, or the deterioration in the quality of, hedgerows of amenity or other value will not be supported other than where appropriate and proportionate mitigation is incorporated into the proposal. Where trees would be removed to secure vehicular access, the new access should include trees at either end of the retained hedgerow to assist the ongoing passage of wildlife along the line of the hedgerow.’</b></p> <p><i>Replace paragraph 7.5 with:</i></p>		
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Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
		<p><i>'A higher target of 20% biodiversity net gain is being addressed in Surrey Heath Borough. Evidence of 'need' is provided in the Surrey Nature Partnership's report 'The State of Surrey's Nature' (2017), comments that Surrey's rate of biodiversity loss is even more severe than the national average and it is therefore justified to require a higher target to halt and reverse these historic losses. The basis for looking to adopt a 20% net gain across Surrey is set out in a paper by the Surrey Nature Partnership. Furthermore, the Borough Council is developing a local habitat bank to provide offsite biodiversity units including on council-owned land, in support of demonstrating the feasibility of providing offsite gains. The Local Plan Viability Assessment (2024) has demonstrated that 20% biodiversity net gain requirement will not impact viability of delivery of housing sites. This evolving matter can be addressed in a review of the neighbourhood plan following the adoption of the (submitted) Surrey Heath Local Plan.'</i></p> <p><i>Delete paragraphs 7.11 -7.14 and 7.16- 17</i></p>		

Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
Policy CH11: Local Green Space Page 71	Para 7.95 and 7.99	<p>Modify Policy and Supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>At the end of the policy add: ‘Development proposals within the identified Local Green Spaces will not be supported except in very special circumstances.’</b></p> <p>Delete Local Green Space 5 – Broom Land Allotments, and Local Green Space 6 – Red Lion Allotments</p> <p><i>Delete LGSs 5/6 from Figure 21</i></p>	Is not satisfied that the two proposed LGSs meet the demonstrably special criteria in the NPPF for designation as LGSs, therefore amendment needed to ensure that the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.	Accept recommendation

<p>Policy CH12: Locally Significant Views Page 74</p>	<p>Para 7.105 and 7.106</p>	<p>Modify Policy and Supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>Delete reference to View 8.</b></p> <p><b>Replace the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘The Plan identifies seven locally significant views on Figure 22.</b></p> <p><b>As appropriate to their scale and nature, development proposals within the shaded arcs of the various views should be designed in a way that demonstrates how their layout, design and the wider masterplanning of the site have responded positively to the importance of the locally significant view or views and, where necessary, mitigate any adverse impact of the proposal on those views.’</b></p> <p><i>Replace paragraph 7.40 with:</i></p> <p><i>‘Located within a beautiful wooded and heathland landscape, there are a great number of viewpoints around the parish that are enjoyed by locals and visitors. In consultation with the community, and drawing on the Chobham Conservation Area Character Appraisal, seven specific views have been identified, which are felt to be locally significant and warrant safeguarding against the significant impacts that may incur as a result of development. Figure 22 map the views and further details about why they are important is contained in Appendix F. It should be noted that a majority of residents also mentioned the views in and across Chobham Common. As this area is significantly protected through national</i></p>	<p>To ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.</p>	<p>Accept recommendation</p>
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Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
		<p><i>designations, it was not considered necessary to include these within the list.'</i></p> <p><i>Delete Figure 23</i></p>		
Policy CH13: Dark Skies Page 77	Para 7.110	<p>Modify Policy and supporting text as follows;</p> <p><b>Replace the first part of the policy with: 'Development proposals should demonstrate that, if external lighting is required, it protects the night sky from light pollution, and:'</b></p> <p><b>Delete the second part of the policy.</b></p> <p><i>At the end of paragraph 7.47 add: 'Development proposals should demonstrate that, if external lighting is required, it protects the night sky from light pollution, and provide details of the light source and intensity being used; the luminaire design, height, and angle, adding baffles and cut-off shields where required; and control mechanisms to dim or switch off lighting schemes when not required.'</i></p>	To provide clarity required by the NPPF and to ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.	Accept recommendations.

Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
Policy CH14: Improving walking, cycling and equestrian opportunities Page 79	Para 7.113	<p>Modify Policy and supporting text as follows:</p> <p><b>In the second part of the policy delete ‘strongly’ and replace ‘Figure 26’ with ‘Figure 28’</b></p> <p><b>At the beginning of the second sentence of the second part of the policy insert ‘Where appropriate,’</b></p> <p><i>In paragraph 8.13 replace the first sentence with: ‘Surrey County Council has published a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan for Surrey Heath (insert link).’</i></p>	To provide clarity required by the NPPF and to ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.	Accept recommendation

Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para	Examiners Report reference	Recommended Modification	Summary of Examiners Reason	SHBC Decision
Policy CH15: New residential development parking space standards and design Page 86	Para 7.117	<p>Modify Policy as follows:</p> <p><b>In part 1a of the policy insert a gap between ‘bedroom’ and ‘dwellings’</b></p> <p><b>At the end of the first part of the policy add: ‘unless it can be demonstrated that this level of provision would render the scheme unviable or undeliverable, or detract unacceptably from the design, layout and appearance of a proposed development.’</b></p> <p><b>Replace the third part of the policy with:</b></p> <p><b>‘Vehicle parking facilities should be designed to match the character of the development. Where garages are included, they should have minimum internal dimensions of 3m wide by 7m long with an unobstructed entry width of 2.3 metres. (ref: Parking Standards design and good practice, Essex CC 2009). Other vehicle parking facilities should have a minimum dimension of 2.9m by 5.5m.’</b></p>	To ensure the Policy meets the Basic Conditions.	Accept recommendation.
Section 10: Implementation and Review Para 10.3	Para 7.122	<p>Modify supporting text as follows:</p> <p><i>At the end of the fourth bullet point of paragraph 10.3 add: ‘The Parish Council will assess the need for a review of the Plan within six months of the adoption of the Local Plan.’</i></p>	To provide greater clarity.	Accept recommendation.

<b>Neighbourhood Plan page/Policy/Para</b>	<b>Examiners Report reference</b>	<b>Recommended Modification</b>	<b>Summary of Examiners Reason</b>	<b>SHBC Decision</b>
Chapter 12 Policies Maps Page 95 – 97, Figures 31 - 32	Para 7.125	Amend the proposed settlement boundary to align with the Regulation 19 Local Plan version.	To provide the clarity required by the NPPF.	Accept recommendations.
Chapter 14 List of Evidence	Para 7.125	Update evidence references to the most up to date version.	To provide the clarity required by the NPPF.	Accept recommendations.
Whole Plan	Para 7.123	<p><i>Modification of general text (where necessary) to achieve consistency with the modified policies and to accommodate any administrative and technical changes.</i></p> <p>This will include:  Renumbering Policies CH9 to CH15 following deletion of Policy CH8.  Deletion of Policy CH8 from the Policies Maps  Updating Appendix 1 to remove deleted Local Green Spaces  Updating Appendix F to remove the View over Fair Oaks.</p>	To ensure consistency across the Plan.	Accept recommendations.