



Statement of General Information relating to Town and Country Planning including Neighbourhood Planning and the Referendum

This statement has been prepared to meet Regulation 4(3)(b)(v) of the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and sets out information on town and country planning including information on local plans and neighbourhood plans

A referendum on the Chobham Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) will be held on Thursday 7th May 2026.

1 The Planning System

- 1.1 The planning system manages the use and development of land and buildings with the aim of creating sustainable places to live and work. Without a planning system in place, development would not be controlled and could take place anywhere, with considerable impact on people and the environment. Potential development activity is managed through planning applications, using local plans as a basis to make decisions.
- 1.2 The planning system has two parts which are usually the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority:
 - Plan making - setting out proposals for development and policies to guide development over a period of time.
 - Development management – where planning decisions are made through the assessment of planning applications.
- 1.3 Not all forms of development require planning permission as some proposed development, depending on the scale and type, is covered by permitted development rights. For development that requires planning permission, Surrey Heath Borough Council is responsible for deciding whether the development should go ahead. Decisions on planning applications in Chobham Parish are currently based on the local development plan and national planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

2 National Planning Policy

- 2.1 The [NPPF](#) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The framework gives guidance to local planning authorities in drawing up development plans and on making decisions on planning

applications. The NPPF includes a presumption in favour of sustainable development and sets out core planning principles to be followed which include environmental, social and economic aspects. The national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) supports the NPPF and provides further guidance on planning issues, including neighbourhood planning.

3 The Development Plan

3.1 A development plan is a set of documents that set out the policies for the development and use of land across the local authority area. It includes Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans and in Surrey Heath is currently made up of the following documents which can be viewed [on the current Local Plan webpage](#):

- the Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (CSDMP DPD) 2012
- the Camberley Town Centre Area Action Plan (2011 – 2018)
- Saved Policies in the Surrey Heath Local Plan 2000
- the Surrey Waste Local Plan 2008 and the Surrey Minerals Plan Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) 2011
- Windlesham Neighbourhood Plan 2018 - 2028

3.2 If 'made' (adopted) the Chobham Neighbourhood Development Plan 2024-2038 will then become part of the Development Plan and be used in decision making on planning applications within the designated Neighbourhood Area.

4 Local Plans

4.1 Local Plans are prepared by Local Planning Authorities and set out the strategic priorities and planning policies for the local authority area. The policies in a local plan set out to deliver key development including the homes and jobs required, the provision of retail and community facilities and infrastructure. Policies guiding development in relation to matters such as climate change, conservation and enhancement of the natural and historic environment may also be included. Local Plans must be positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national planning policy.

4.2 The current Local Plan for the borough is the adopted Surrey Heath Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2011-2028), the Camberley Town Centre Area Action Plan and saved Policies in the Local Plan 2000. Further information on the adopted Local Plan can be found [on the current Local Plan webpage](#).

4.3 The Borough Council is also preparing a new Local Plan covering the period 2019 – 2038. This Plan is currently subject to an independent examination process. Once adopted it will replace the saved policies in the Local Plan 2000, the Core Strategy and the Camberley Town Centre Area Action Plan. Further information on the new Local Plan can be found [on the new Local Plan webpage](#).

5 Neighbourhood Planning

- 5.1 Neighbourhood Planning was introduced under the 2011 Localism Act. It provides an opportunity for local communities to shape future development in their local area.
- 5.2 In parished areas, neighbourhood plans can be produced by parish councils which are referred to as the 'Qualifying Body'. In this case, the Qualifying Body is therefore Chobham Parish Council.
- 5.3 Neighbourhood plans have to meet a number of basic conditions in order to proceed to referendum stage. An independent examiner is appointed to check that a plan meets the basic conditions which are set out below:
- Have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
 - Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - Be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
 - Not breach and otherwise be compatible with the assimilated obligations of EU legislation (as consolidated in the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Act 2023 (Consequential Amendment) Regulations 2023; and
 - Not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

6 What is a Neighbourhood Plan Area?

- 6.1 A neighbourhood plan must apply to a specific designated area which can range from single streets or large rural or urban areas.
- 6.2 The boundary of the neighbourhood area for the Chobham Neighbourhood Plan was approved by the borough council on 12th November 2013 and follows the administrative boundary of the Chobham Parish. The referendum will be based on the Chobham Neighbourhood Area.

7 Neighbourhood Plan Referendum

- 7.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of two formal public consultation stages. The Plan was submitted to the borough council on 4th June 2025. An independent examiner (Andrew Ashcroft) examined the Neighbourhood Plan during the autumn of 2025. His report was received in November 2025 and recommended that, subject to modifications, the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum based on the Chobham Neighbourhood Area as approved by the borough council.
- 7.2 In February 2026 the borough council accepted and agreed all the modifications proposed and were subsequently satisfied that the neighbourhood plan met the basic conditions and all other legislative requirements. More information can be found in the [Executive Agenda and Minutes: Tuesday 10 February 2026](#).
- 7.3 The Chobham Neighbourhood Plan referendum will be held on 7th May 2026 from 7am to 10pm. Further information can be found on the [Chobham Neighbourhood Plan](#) webpage.

- 7.4 In order for the Neighbourhood Plan to become part of the Surrey Heath Development Plan, more than 50% of those who vote in the local referendum need to vote in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 7.5 If the Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' (adopted), it will be used in the determination of planning applications in Chobham Parish. If more people vote 'no' than 'yes', then the Neighbourhood Plan will not become part of the Development Plan for the local area.
- 7.6 Additional information on [neighbourhood planning guidance is available on the Government website](#).