

# **WEALDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL**

## **Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2039**

### **Decision Statement**

**This Statement was published on 15 May 2024, pursuant to Section 38A(9) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)**

In accordance with Regulation 19 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended), this statement hereby gives notice that on the 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024, Wealden District Council made (adopted) the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan as a Development Plan Document. This means that the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan now forms part of the Development Plan for Wealden.

#### **Background**

The Council formally designated the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Area on 8 November 2017 in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). This formally established Wadhurst Parish Council as the qualifying body to produce a neighbourhood plan for the designated area.

The draft plan, which covers the period 2016 to 2039, was submitted to the council (Regulation 15) 22 May 2023. The Council published the draft plan for consultation in accordance with Regulation 16 on 5 June 2023 until 17 July 2023.

The Council appointed an independent examiner in 15 November 2023, in agreement with the WPC, in accordance with Regulation 17 and the examiner's final report was received on 18 January 2024.

The council published their decision in accordance with Regulation 17a and accepted the examiner's recommendations and proposed modifications to allow the referendum plan to progress towards becoming a 'made' plan and part of Wealden District's development plan, subject to a 'yes' vote in a referendum.

A local referendum was held on 2 May 2024 to decide whether the local community were in favour of the plan. Of the votes received, 954 (87.28%) voted 'yes' in response to the referendum question. The turnout of electors was 27.21%.

#### **Reason for the decision**

The Wadhurst Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions and is compliant with legal and procedural requirements. Paragraph 38A(4)(a) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that Wealden District Council must 'make' the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum vote in favour of the plan, unless (under paragraph 38A(6)) this would breach or would otherwise be incompatible with an retained EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998).

The results of the referendum held on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024 returned a vote in favour of the plan being used in the determination of planning applications. Further to the Referendum outcome and having considered whether 'making' the Neighbourhood Plan would breach or otherwise be incompatible with any retained EU obligation or any of the Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998), the Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan was formally 'made' at a meeting of Full Council on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

### **How to view the documents**

This Decision Statement (Regulation 19), the 'made' Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan and associated documents are available to view on the Council's website at:

<https://www.wealden.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/neighbourhood-planning/>

Copies of the Decision Statement and adopted Wadhurst Neighbourhood Plan are also available for public inspection, at the Council Offices, Vicarage Lane, Hailsham, BN27 2AX during normal office hours.

For any questions, please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01892 602008 or e-mail [nplans@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:nplans@wealden.gov.uk).