



North
Northamptonshire
Council

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Record of Delegated Decision

Decision made by	George Candler, Executive Director of Place & Economy (Deputy Chief Executive)
Decision Title	Grafton Underwood NDP Statement of Decision on the Examiner's Report
Date of decision (same as date form signed)	22/04/2026
Key Decision	No
Decision	That North Northamptonshire Council should act upon the conclusions of the Examiner's Report on the Grafton Underwood Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and that the Plan should proceed to referendum.
Reason/s for Decision	<p>The role of North Northamptonshire Council at this stage is to decide what action to take in response to the Examiner's Report and any other prescribed matters. It is guided by Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Plan (general) Regulations 2012 (as amended). This states that before publishing its decision statement the Council must consider the following:</p> <p>Whether to decline to consider a plan proposal under Paragraph 5 of Schedule 4b to the 1990 Act.</p> <p>There are no grounds to decline to consider the plan under paragraph 5. There are no previous plan proposal submissions or repeat proposals for this neighbourhood area.</p> <p>Whether there are reasons to refuse a plan proposal under Paragraph 6 of Schedule 4b for the 1990 Act.</p> <p>Paragraph 6 says the Authority must consider:</p>

- whether the qualifying body is authorised to act in relation to the neighbourhood area concerned as a result of section 61f of the 1990 Act.

The qualifying body is Grafton Underwood Parish Council. They have made the correct application for the designation of their neighbourhood area and are authorised to act. Preparation of the Plan was supported by parish councillors and other volunteers from the local community, which reported to a Steering Group. The examiner is also satisfied that Grafton Underwood Parish Council is the qualifying body for this neighbourhood area, see Examiner's Report paragraph 1.2.

- Whether the proposal by Grafton Underwood Parish Council complies with provision made by or under that section, in this case the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Section 38b (1), which says:
 - o A neighbourhood development plan must specify the period for which it is to have effect.

This is set out on the front cover of the Plan and confirms the plan period runs until 2041. This is confirmed in paragraph 1.12 of the Submission Plan and paragraph 8.1 of the Examiner's Report.

- o A neighbourhood development plan may not include provision about development that is excluded development.

The Plan does not contain any policies relating to excluded development.

- o A neighbourhood development plan may not relate to more than one neighbourhood area.

The Plan does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and there is no other neighbourhood development plan in place within this neighbourhood area. The Examiner agrees, see Examiner's Report paragraph 8.4.

What action to take in response to the recommendation of an examiner made in a report under Paragraph 10 of Schedule 4b to the 1990 Act

	<p>(considered above), and what modifications, if any, they are to make to the draft plan under paragraph 12(6) of Schedule 4b to the 1990 Act.</p> <p>Paragraph 12(6) sets out the modifications that the examiner can recommend be made to a neighbourhood plan proposal.</p> <p>It also states that if the Authority can make modifications to a neighbourhood plan to enable the plan to meet the 'Basic Conditions' or for the purposes of correcting errors, then it must make these modifications rather than refuse a plan proposal.</p> <p>The Authority must consider, under part (d), whether there are any other modifications which are required to ensure the Basic Conditions are met, to ensure the plan is compatible with convention rights, to ensure the requirements of legislation are met, or to correct errors.</p> <p><i>No other modifications, further to those recommended by the examiner, are necessary.</i></p> <p>Whether to extend the area to which the referendum take place</p> <p><i>The neighbourhood plan designated area is conterminous with the Grafton Underwood Parish Council boundary. The Examiner is satisfied that the Plan should proceed to a referendum based on the area formally designated by the former Kettering Borough Council as set out in para 8.4 of his report. There are no reasons to oppose this recommendation.</i></p>
<p>Alternative options considered and rejected</p>	<p>North Northamptonshire Council is responsible for deciding what action to take in response to the Examiner's recommendations.</p> <p>The Council could make a decision which differs from that recommended, provided it sets out the reasons, notifies prescribed persons and invites representations on the alternative proposal.</p> <p>However, having considered, and agreed, with the Parish Council, the recommendations made by the Examiner, the Council believes that the recommended modifications are suitable to improve the clarity of the Plan and ensure that it meets the Basic Conditions.</p> <p>Grafton Underwood Parish Council could also withdraw the Plan at this stage, if it was not content</p>

	<p>with the recommendations of the examiner or North Northamptonshire Council's intention to proceed based on the Examiner's recommendations. However, the Parish Council have agreed to the proposal to proceed to referendum.</p> <p>No other reasonable alternative options are available.</p> <p>In light of the Examiner's Report, it is considered that not taking the Plan forward to referendum would be a failure of the Council's duty to support neighbourhood plans.</p>
Legal implications	<p>The role of North Northamptonshire Council at this stage is to decide what action to take in response to the Examiner's Report and any other prescribed matters. It is guided by Regulation 18 of the Neighbourhood Plan (general) Regulations 2012 (as amended).</p> <p>Once the decision statement is published, consideration of the plan can progress to referendum.</p>
Financial implications	<p>The arrangements for claiming financial support for neighbourhood planning were confirmed by the Government on 29 June 2021.</p> <p>Payment of £20,000 is available, and a claim will be submitted, in the next appropriate window, once the decision statement has been issued confirming that the Plan will proceed to referendum.</p>
Other implications	None identified
Background papers considered	None
Declarations/conflict of interest?	None
Consultation	<p>The Plan is the product of extensive local consultation and has been recommended to proceed to referendum by the Examiner subject to proposed modifications which are accepted by the Parish Council. Paragraph 5 of the Executive Summary in the Examiner's Report confirms this.</p>
Exempt Decision?	No
Officer/ Executive member	<p>Richard Palmer, Planning Policy Manager</p> 

	<p>George Candler Executive Director of Place & Economy (Deputy Chief Executive)</p> <p>Cllr Jan O'Hara, Executive Member for Planning and Economic Growth</p>
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