

Adoption Decision Statement

Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan

Decision

Following an Independent Examination and a positive referendum result, East Herts District Council decided on 4 March 2026, in accordance with section 38A (4) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to 'make' the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan.

Reasons

With the Examiner's recommended modifications, the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets 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 the Council to make the Neighbourhood Plan if more than half of those voting in the referendum upon the plan have voted in favour of the plan being used to inform planning applications in the area.

The Referendum took place on 29th January 2026 and the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Area residents voted on the following question: "Do you want East Herts District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?" There was an 18% turnout at the referendum, with an overall 'yes' vote of 500 (79.7%), against 127 (20.3%) who voted 'no'.

The Council considers that the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan meets the 'basic conditions' (set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended), its promotion process was compliant with legal and procedural requirements and it does not breach the legislation (set out in Section 38A(6)) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

Therefore, Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan now forms part of the development plan. In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the determination of planning applications will need to be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The [Council report and meeting](#) can be viewed on the website.

Background

Stanstead Abbots Parish Council, as the lead body for the preparation of the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan, submitted a request for the designation of Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Area in June 2018 which was subsequently agreed on 11 September 2018.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan was submitted to East Herts Council in December 2024. Following this, a six-week consultation took place between January and March 2025. The Neighbourhood Plan was then assessed by an Independent Examiner between May and October 2025. The Examiner recommended that the plan proceed, subject to recommended modifications, to referendum. On 10 November 2025, the Council made the decision, via the non-key decision process to proceed to a referendum.

This decision statement and the Stanstead Abbots and St Margarets Neighbourhood Plan can be viewed online at www.eastherts.gov.uk/sasmnp. Paper copies are available for public inspection at East Herts District Council (Hertford Office), Wallfields, Pegs Lane, Hertford, SG13 8EQ. The office is open 10am – 2pm every Tuesday and Thursday. Please contact the planning policy team 01279 655261 if you would like further assistance.