

**EAST COKER NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
DECISION STATEMENT (PROCEEDING TO REFERENDUM)
07/09/2018**



1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The area for the East Coker Neighbourhood Plan comprises the whole of the parish of East Coker. In September 2013, South Somerset District Council formally agreed that the East Coker Neighbourhood Area be designated in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 1.2. East Coker Parish Council – the ‘qualifying body’, submitted the draft East Coker Neighbourhood Plan, along with supporting documents, to South Somerset District Council in March 2018 for consultation, independent examination and the remaining stages of the draft Plan’s preparation in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (As Amended).
- 1.3. Following submission of the draft East Coker Neighbourhood Plan, South Somerset District Council publicised the Plan and supporting documents and invited representations during the six week consultation period, between 19th April and 31st May 2018.
- 1.4. In June 2018, South Somerset District Council appointed an independent examiner, Mary O’Rourke to examine the Plan and consider whether it should proceed to referendum.
- 1.5. The Examiner’s report was received in August 2018 and concluded that subject to making the modifications recommended in the report, the draft Plan meets the Basic Conditions and should proceed to referendum. The Examiner also recommended that the East Coker Neighbourhood Area (the parish area) is an appropriate area within which to hold a referendum.
- 1.6. In accordance with legislation, South Somerset District Council must consider the recommendations made in the Examiner’s report, decide what action to take in response to each recommendation and what modifications should be made to the draft Plan in order to be satisfied that it meets the Basic Conditions and is compatible with Convention Rights. If the authority is satisfied then a referendum must be held. Consideration also needs to be given as to whether to extend the area to which the referendum is to take place.

2. DECISION

- 2.1. Having considered the Examiner’s recommendations and reasons for them, the Council concurs with the Examiner’s view and at the District Executive meeting on 6th September 2018, it was agreed that modifications to the draft East Coker Neighbourhood Plan should be made in accordance with Examiner’s recommendations, to ensure that it meets legal requirements including the Basic Conditions as set out in legislation.
- 2.2. The Council is satisfied that the Neighbourhood Plan, as modified, complies with the legal requirements and can proceed to referendum.
- 2.3. The Council also agrees with the Examiner that the referendum area should reflect the extent of the East Coker Neighbourhood Area.