

## **Fleet Neighbourhood Development Plan**

### **Independent Examiner's Clarification Note**

#### ***Context***

This note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of any doubt matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

#### ***Initial Comments***

The Plan is very well-presented. Its format is professional and well-considered. The quality of the photographs and maps is first-class. It results in a very readable and interesting document. The Plan provides a clear and distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area.

The Plan has a remarkable degree of detail on the future of Zones 1-6. In addition, the Character Areas Assessment work is exemplary.

#### ***Points for Clarification***

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now in a position to raise some initial issues for clarification. They are designed for the Town Council. The comments that are made on these points will be used to assist in the preparation of my report. They will also inform any modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

#### ***Policy 1***

I can see that paragraph 2.27 identifies a degree of flexibility in how this policy is applied.

However, is there potential tension between the second and third criteria of the policy?

What progress has been made in discussions with various landowners to secure the comprehensive redevelopment of the site?

Will it be deliverable within the Plan period?

#### ***Policies 2 and 3***

I understand the approach taken towards the relationship with Policy 1 in both policies. Plainly the various sites are geographically and functionally-related.

Nevertheless, how would either or both of the policies be applied in the event that the development anticipated by Policy 1 did not take place within the Plan period or that specific development proposals came forward for Zones 1b and/or 1c before any certainty on the development of Zone 1a had been achieved?

#### ***Policy 4***

As paragraph 2.41 comments the two parcels of land are occupied by large office buildings (Admiral House and Flagship House).

Given the scale and the relatively-recent construction of the two buildings is their redevelopment a realistic possibility within the Plan period?

#### ***Policy 7***

I looked at this area in detail. I fully agree with the approach taken.

However, as a policy it reads as one that may have been overtaken by the production of the Plan. The successful conversion of Principle House and the construction of King's Place have changed the character and the appearance of this part of Fleet Road.

In this context is a future redevelopment of these two buildings a realistic possibility within the Plan period?

Should the focus of the policy be shifted to the two vacant office buildings (and which now appear to be in the process of demolition) between Principle House and 151 Fleet Road?

#### *Policy 10*

This policy is very well-considered. Plainly it is outcome of much detailed research and investigation.

#### *Policy 13*

The policy expands considerably on the matter-of-fact approach taken in paragraphs 76 and 78 of the NPPF (2012).

Has that approach been taken to safeguard potential or planned development that would support the use of some of the proposed LGSs?

If this is the case could the sites/circumstances concerned be better addressed in the supporting text?

Appendix 4 is generally very thorough and well-presented. I can see that it addresses sites owned and managed by the Town Council (indicated by numbers) and by others (indicated by letters). In this context I cannot find any information on proposed LGS A (Land to the east of Fleet Pond) and LGS B (Bramshot SANG). Is this anomaly explained by paragraph 5.1 of the Appendix?

Please can you advise and/or provide the equivalent information for LGS A and B that is contained in the Appendix for the bulk of the proposed local green spaces.

#### *Policy 14*

I saw the importance of the Canal when I visited the neighbourhood area. The policy is well-developed in general terms.

In criterion iii. I am minded to recommend a modification that inserts 'as appropriate'. Plainly some developments may not have existing close boarded fences or where they exist their replacement with native hedges may not be appropriate/reasonable in relation to the development proposed.

I am also minded to recommend that criterion iv. is relocated into the supporting text. A planning policy cannot require a property owner to maintain planting. In any event 'regularly' is not defined.

I would be grateful for the Town Council's observations on these two points.

***Representations made to the Plan***

Does the Town Council wish to make observations on any of the representations made to the Plan?

In particular does it have any comments on the District Council's suggested changes to various policies in general, and to Policies 1-6, 11 and 16 in particular?

***Protocol for responses***

I would be grateful for comments by 12 April 2019. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It reflects the factual basis of the questions raised.

In the event that certain responses are available before others I am happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled please can all responses be sent to me by the District Council and make direct reference to the policy/issue concerned.

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Independent Examiner

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28 March 2019