

Yateley, Darby Green and Frogmore Neighbourhood Development Plan

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 provides a clear and concise vision for the neighbourhood area. It is underpinned by a comprehensive range of background documents. It is clear that the Views Assessment, Biodiversity Assets Background Paper and the Evidence Base Background Document have directly informed the associated policies in the Plan.

The Plan is organised and structured in a very clear way. Its vision and objectives are distinctive to the neighbourhood area. The table in paragraph 42 very helpfully relates the policies to the Plan's objectives. This is a major achievement which contributes much to the legibility of the Plan.

The presentation of the Plan is excellent. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. The Plan makes good use of various high-quality maps and carefully-chosen photographs. In the event that the Plan is eventually 'made' by the District Council, it will sit comfortably as part of the development plan for the neighbourhood area.

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 issues for clarification both with the Town Council and the District Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of the examination report and in recommending any modifications to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan:

Questions for the Town Council

Policy YDFNP4

The approach taken in this policy is an excellent local response to the contents of Section 12 of the NPPF 2021. It will assist significantly in providing the clear design vision and expectations as set out in paragraph 127 of the NPPF.

Policy YDFNP5

I looked at the village centre carefully during my recent visit. The identified character areas were immediately obvious.

The policy continues the excellent approach taken in Policy YDFNP4.

Policy YDFNP6

This is another excellent policy.

In addition, it is underpinned by the very detailed supporting text and the associated maps.

Policy YDFNP7

I looked at the various views identified in the policy during my visit.

Plainly the importance and significance of views can be subjective. However how does the Town Council anticipate that the 'adverse impact on the characteristics of the important views' would be interpreted by the decision-maker?

Are the views identified in the policy the most important of the views listed in the Views Supplement?

In any event, to what extent were the views informed by an assessment of the wider landscape of the neighbourhood area and the significance of the identified views to that landscape?

To what extent did the work undertaken on the views restrict the individual assessments to land within the neighbourhood area?

Policy YDFNP8

This policy provides a very positive approach to this important matter.

It is underpinned by excellent supporting text.

Policy YDFNP10

I saw the importance of the various community buildings during the visit. The policy sets out a very robust approach to this matter.

For my clarity, does the first part of the policy apply to the list of community facilities set out in Appendix 6?

I can see that the policy provides a link (23) to the schedule of Hart District Assets of Community Value.

In relation to both of the points above, the policy is only fully appreciated by referring to other documents. Would it be practical to list the facilities in the respective parts of the policy (or make a clearer reference to the details of Appendix 6 in the policy) and/or show the various facilities on an additional map?

Policy YDFNP11

This is an excellent policy.

On the one hand, it takes account of the increasing importance of good communication networks. On the other hand, it acknowledges the importance of achieving such development in a way which respects the character and appearance of the neighbourhood area.

Policy YDFNP13

This is a very well-considered policy which takes account of the scale and significance of the Airport in the neighbourhood area.

As I read the third paragraph of the policy, it is supporting text rather than policy. As such I am minded to recommend that it is repositioned into the supporting text.

Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

I can see the community feedback as set out in paragraph 155 of the Plan. Nevertheless, is the final paragraph of the policy either realistic or practicable?

Policy *YDFNP14*

This is another excellent and timely policy.

I am minded to recommend that it is modified to acknowledge that not all proposals for home working will represent a material change of use and therefore will not need planning permission.

Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

Questions for the District Council

The representation from Obsidian Strategic comments about the details in paragraph 113 of the Plan and recent planning history relating to an additional SANG. I suggest that the reference should be to paragraph 112. I would appreciate any comments which the District Council may wish to make on this matter.

The representation from Belgrave Homes/Woolf Bond Planning (016) comments about the supply of housing land in Hart District. I would appreciate any comments which the District Council may wish to make on this matter in general and specific information on its most up-to-date assessment of the issue.

Representations

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

In particular, does it wish to comment on the representations made by:

- Obsidian Strategic (003);
- Landhold Capital/Claremont Planning Consultancy (013);
- Belgrave Homes (016);
- Gladman Developments Limited (017); and
- Hart District Council (020)?

The District Council specifically proposes a series of refinements to Policies YDFNP 2/4/5/6/8/9/12/13 and 15.

Does the Town Council have any comments on the suggested refinements?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses and the information requested by 8 February 2022. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

In the event that certain responses are available before others, I would be happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis.

Irrespective of how the information is assembled, please could it come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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24 January 2022