

Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan

Examiner's Clarification Note

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 distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area. In particular it addresses a series of important issues in a positive and effective fashion.

The layout and presentation of the Plan is good. The various maps add to its depth and interest. The differences between the policies and the supporting text is very clear.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan and have visited the neighbourhood area. I am now in a position to raise issues for clarification with the Parish Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of my report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary 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:

General policy wording

The various policies are well-written in general terms

Nevertheless, I am minded to recommend throughout the Plan two modifications to the wording used as follows:

Replacing 'permitted' with 'supported'. The former is very prescriptive and fails to take account of the Borough Council's need to balance all the material considerations that relate to individual applications. The latter is largely industry-standard for neighbourhood plans.

Replacing 'would not be harmful' with language which, as appropriate, draws the distinction between potential impact and its acceptability or unacceptability. The recognises that development is assessed not simply on harm but the acceptability of that harm.

Does the Parish Council have any comments on these propositions?

Policy H1

I can see the approach taken towards the number of houses. However, could the approach inadvertently lead to development that would conflict with the scale and nature of development to the north and south of the site?

Policy H2

I can see the approach in criterion d). However, it reads as a process issue rather than as a policy. I am minded to recommend a modification so that it becomes a policy. The modification would also include the requirement for an appropriate boundary treatment to the east of both sites, along the boundaries with the existing dwellings off Ringstead Road and to the north of Site 2 and to the south of Site 1

Does the Parish Council have any comments on these propositions?

In criterion g) is the approach reasonable given the anticipated yield of the two separate sites?

Policy H4

What is the purpose of the fourth bullet point? Is it possible to apply a site selection process to exception sites?

Is the final part of the policy supporting text rather than policy?

Policy H5

In the second sentence does 'this size' mean two and three-bedroom?

How would the restriction on large extensions for such houses work in practical terms?

Does it refer to the 40% plot coverage issue addressed in Policy H3?

Is the size of a 'large extension' defined?

Policy H6

Has any detailed work been carried out on the 40% increase figure?

In the second bullet point does 'cramped' mean too large for the plot size?

Is the policy designed to apply both within and outside the AONB?

Policy H7

I can see the contents of paragraph 8.1.19. However, has any detailed work been undertaken on the 40% extension ceiling?

Is it necessary within the context of the more general first bullet point?

Policy E3

With Appendix 11 this reads as a very effective policy.

On a matter of detail please can you provide detail to fill in the missing gaps on the size of LGS 1-3 (inclusive). This is necessary for an assessment on the 'local scale' criterion in the NPPF.

The proposed LGS1 (The Green) includes a finger of land to the south of its main area leading to Parkside. When I looked at this area as part of my visit this finger of land appeared to be distinct from the main area and in separate ownership. Your comments on this matter would be appreciated both in general terms and as it is not directly addressed in Appendix 11 in particular.

Policy E4

This reads more as a celebration of the importance of this parcel of land rather than as a policy.

Does the site have any statutory protection? If so, is the policy necessary?

Policy T1

I saw the significance of traffic first hand as part of my recent visit to the neighbourhood area. Nevertheless, it is not written as a land use policy. In any event it largely repeats the penultimate Parish aspiration.

In these circumstances I am minded to recommend the deletion of the policy. Does the Parish Council have any comment on this proposition?

Representations

Does the Parish Council have any comments on the various representations made to the Plan?

In particular does it have any comments on the representations made by:

- Norfolk County Council
- Ms Verity Danziger
- Mr Kevin Minns

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for comments from the Parish Council by 13 May 2019. 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 am happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled please could it all come to me directly from the Borough Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Sedgeford Neighbourhood Development Plan.

26 April 2019