

## Wootton and St Helen Without 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 distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area. In particular it addresses a series of challenging issues in a positive fashion. The layout and presentation of the Plan is excellent. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear.

The key issue for the examination is the relationship between the Spatial Strategy in the submitted Plan and the approach adopted for the neighbourhood area in the emerging Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 2.

#### ***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. Some are for the parish councils. Others are for the District 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.

#### *Points for the Parish Councils*

##### *General*

I can see that the submitted Plan is dated July 2018. To what extent did it set out to supplement the detail in the submitted Local Plan Part 2 on the Dalton Barracks site (Core Policy 8b)?

##### *Policy SS2*

To what extent were the strategic green gaps designed to provide a context for the emerging proposals on the Dalton Barracks site?

##### *Policy SS3*

Insofar as any of the proposed Local Green Spaces overlap with the site identified in Figure 2.3 (Core Policy 8b) of the Local Plan Part 2 would the approach taken in the neighbourhood plan policy conflict with the emerging proposals in the Local Plan policy?

Have the parish councils separately assessed the additional local benefit of the proposed local green space designations that are within the Green Belt (see Planning Practice Guidance 37-010-20140306).

##### *Policy SS5-1*

Would the approach taken in this policy restrict the emerging proposals for Dalton Barracks as proposed in the emerging Local Plan Part 2?

*Policy SS5-3*

On what basis was criterion a) developed and proposed?

Has it been tested for deliverability/viability?

*Strategic Environmental Assessment/Screening*

I can see the approach that has been taken to this matter on page 5 of the Screening Opinion. However please can the parish councils comment on the following points:

- how they reached the view that the formal assessment frameworks are not necessary for the neighbourhood plan (as there are no likely significant effects arising from the policies in the Plan)?
- in any event, how they come to the conclusion that there would be no likely significant effects arising from the policies in the Plan without the usual assessment of its policies and the environmental characteristics of the neighbourhood area? and
- how they took account of the comments received from the statutory consultees in preparing the screening opinion?

*Points for the District Council*

Policy SS4.1 – Your representation suggested that additional work would be undertaken. Has the Landscape Officer reviewed the policy and provided any comments?

Policies DG2.1/2.2- Your representation suggested that additional work would be undertaken. Has the Conservation Officer reviewed the policies and provided any comments?

In both cases please can any comments formulated be sent both to me and directly to the parish councils.

I have seen the exchange of letters between the District Council and the Local Plan Inspector on the Dalton Barracks proposal on the Local Plan examination website.

Are the Main Modifications 8a/8b/12a/13a available for me to view?

In any event when will the Main Modifications be published?

***Request for information***

The neighbourhood area presents a series of challenging issues.

The specific details and maps in the submitted Plan are good in their own right. However, they do not have a wider geographic context that would be provided by an overall policies map.

It would be helpful if the District Council/parish councils were able to prepare a map incorporating the following matters:

- the boundary of the neighbourhood area;
- the existing green belt boundary;
- the proposed Strategic Green Gaps (SS2);
- the proposed Local Green Spaces (SS3);
- the proposed extent of the Dalton Barracks development in the submitted Local Plan Part 2; and
- the proposed extent of the Daltons Barracks development in the emerging Main Modifications (as shown in the second map in the letter from VOWHDC to the Planning Inspector of 20 November 2018).

***Representations***

Do the parish councils have any comments on the representations made to the Plan by:

- the Secretary of State for Defence;
- the Vale of White Horse District Council; and
- Pye Homes?

Do the parish councils have any comments on any of the other representations?

***Protocol for responses***

I would be grateful for responses and the information requested by 18 February 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 District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Wootton and St Helen Without Neighbourhood Development Plan.

28 January 2019