

Shrivenham 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 distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area.

The presentation of the Plan is very good. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. The Community Aspirations are also distinct from the land use policies. The Plan makes good use of photographs.

The various appendices are very comprehensive.

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 with the Parish Council. There are also specific questions 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.

Questions for the Parish Council

Policy DS1

I can see that the policy is underpinned by objective SDS1.

What specific evidence exists to suggest that there is a real risk of coalescence between Shrivenham and Watchfied, Shrivenham and Bourton and Shrivenham and Longcot?

The Landscape Character Assessment is an excellent piece of work in its own right. Nevertheless, is Policy DS1 primarily a landscape protection policy or a settlement gap policy? Its title would suggest the latter.

Policy H1

Does criterion 5 refer to the views identified in policy LC4 or is it more general in its approach?

I understand the intended purpose of criterion 7. However how would this approach work in practice? How would a developer understand the deliverability or otherwise of brownfield sites elsewhere in the neighbourhood area?

Policy H3

Are 'important gaps' identified anywhere in the Plan?

I am minded to reposition the second sentence of the submitted policy into the supporting text and to include reference to Design Guide in retained first part of policy. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policies D1a/D1b

Am I correct to conclude that the former policy applies specifically to new dwellings in the village and that the latter is a more general policy?

Policy D1a

I can see the close association between the policy and local/national policies. However, is there an inherent tension between v. and vi?

Policy D2

The policy suggests that opportunities exist for the development of buildings in the High Street. However, paragraph 4.3.5 comments that most development will be extensions and alterations. Which is the correct approach? From my observations of the High Street paragraph 4.3.5 more appropriately summarises the opportunities that exist.

In any event should the policy make reference to the designated conservation area?

Policies P1a/b

In effect the two policies appear to be addressing the same issue. Could they be combined?

Does the Parish Council have any specific evidence for the imposition of the higher parking standards in Table 8 beyond that incorporated in the supporting text?

Are parking issues confined to specific parts of the village?

In any event would the higher standards proposed in Table 8 prevent the issues identified in the support text taking place in the future?

Policy EE2

Did the plan-making process identify specific support for particular type of businesses?

Is there any reason why the policy refers only to 'new businesses'?

Could diversification arise from alterations/extensions/adaptations of existing businesses? Would such developments also be supported?

Policy LC3a

Most of the policy is supporting text.

Does the final part add anything to Part 1 of the Local Plan?

Policy LC3b

Please could the Parish Council provide clarity on the remit of this policy? In particular what is meant by 'outside the built-up area of Listed Buildings'?

Policies LC4a-c

I can see that the views have originated from the Village Character Assessment.

However, the various elements of the policy read in a negative fashion. Would the policy work if it took a more positive that supported development that would safeguard/respect/enhance the identified views?

Is there any specific reason why Policy LC4c makes reference to tall structures when the other two components of the policy are more general in their format and effect?

Policy LC5

I looked at the various local green spaces as part of my visit. They have been carefully-chosen.

Appendix 24 is an excellent assessment of the various spaces against the NPPF criteria for such designations. However please could the Parish Council comment on two other matters included in the NPPF (paragraph 99):

- the extent to which they are consistent with the local planning of sustainable development; and
- the extent to which each proposed local green space would be capable of enduring beyond the end of the Plan period.

The final paragraph of the policy goes well beyond the matter of fact approach included in the NPPF on this matter. I am minded to recommend a modification on this matter which would reposition the suggested exceptional circumstances into the supporting text.

Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy HE2c

This is a process matter and not a policy

I am minded to recommend that it becomes a Community Aspiration. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy PROW1

The final part of the policy reads as a Community Aspiration. I am intending to recommend accordingly. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy CSH1b

This policy is understandable. However, it will be impracticable to deliver through the development management process

I am minded to recommend that it becomes a Community Aspiration. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy CSH3

This policy is understandable. However, it will be impracticable to deliver through the development management process

I am minded to recommend that it becomes a Community Aspiration. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy CSH4

This is a statement of the waste hierarchy rather than a policy. In addition, it raises national/international rather than local issues.

Is there anything local that would be suitable to be incorporated as a Community Aspiration?

General comments

Several policies are either a repetition of local policies or include elements of local policies. Was this a deliberate approach?

In this context I would find it helpful to receive the Parish Council's comments on the detailed suggested changes to certain policies in the representation from the District Council.

Questions for the District Council

Please could the District Council produce a composite map showing the proposed Settlement Gap between Shrivenham and Watchfield and the sites where housing development is taking place to the south and west of Pennyhooks Lane.

Are there any other current planning applications which may affect the Plan's proposed designation of Settlement Gaps (Policy DS1) or local green spaces (Policy LC5)?

Representations

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

In particular does it wish to comment on the various representations from the development industry and the District Council on Policy DS1 (Settlement Gap)?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses and the information requested by 29 October 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 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

Shrivenham Neighbourhood Development Plan.

11 October 2019