

Granborough 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 concise vision for the neighbourhood area. The relationship between the vision and objectives of the Plan, and the policies is very clear. This matter is simply but effectively captured in the table in paragraph 5.2 of the Plan. It provides a robust structure for the Plan.

The presentation of the Plan is very good. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. The Plan makes good use of high-quality maps and photographs.

Section 14 sets out a clear series of non-land use aspirations. Section 15 deals with the implementation of the Plan to very good effect. In combination, these matters demonstrate that the Parish Council sees the Plan as an important local tool to deliver change and improvements to the parish. This is best practice.

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.

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 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:

Policies RC1/2

These policies make a good response to the landscape setting of the village.

Policy RC3

This policy makes a good response to the importance of good design as captured in the NPPF 2021. Nevertheless, as submitted it would apply in a universal way. In these circumstances, many of its elements would not apply to the minor and domestic applications which will continue to represent the majority of development proposals which come forward in the parish.

As such, I am minded to recommend that the policy would apply in a proportionate way to take account of the scale and nature of proposals. Does the Parish Council have any observations on this proposition?

Policy HE1

The local research on this matter is very impressive.

However, the resulting policy wording does not fully have regard to the relevant elements of Section 16 of the NPPF. As such I am minded to recommend modifications to address this matter.

Does the Parish Council have any observations on this proposition?

Policy B1

This policy takes a responsible approach to this matter.

I am minded to recommend two modifications. The first is that the policy would apply where it is practicable for the development to deliver the identified initiatives - in some cases they will be readily delivered and in other cases this may not be the case. The second would be to update the first part of the policy to take account of the enactment of the former Environment Bill.

Does the Parish Council have any observations on these propositions?

Policy H1

The overall policy approach is generally well-considered.

The proposed settlement boundary has generated a series of representations. In some cases, they propose that the boundary is drawn more tightly. In other cases, they propose that it is drawn more loosely.

Does the Parish Council have any general observations on the extent to which the proposed boundary corresponds with the criteria as set out in Appendix A of the Plan?

To what extent does the proposed settlement boundary facilitate the level of growth for the parish as anticipated in the Vale of Aylesbury Local Plan?

Would the anticipated mix of house sizes set out the third part of the policy be practicable for very small developments?

I appreciate that the proposed yield of smaller homes would be particularly attractive to younger people or to older people wishing to downsize. Nevertheless, smaller houses may also prove attractive to a wide range of other people. Would this part of the policy be better expressed simply in size terms and with potential occupiers addressed in the supporting text?

Policy HSAT1

This policy takes a very distinctive approach

In part 1 I am minded to recommend that the wording acknowledges that not all the projects anticipated by the policy would need planning permission.

Part 2 reads as a universal requirement for developers to make contributions for highway improvements. As submitted, this approach would conflict with the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations which requires that any such payments should be directly related to the proposal concerned and should be necessary to make the development acceptable.

As such I am minded to recommend that the policy would apply in a proportionate way which had regard to the CIL Regulations. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

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 following representations:

- JCPC;
- Derek and Catharine Welford;
- Janet Logsdail;
- Jean Cross;
- Mr and Mrs de Niese;
- Peter Evans; and
- Stephanie Reddington.

Buckinghamshire Council's representation suggests changes to certain policies. Does the Parish Council have any comments on its suggestions?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses by 8 April 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 Buckinghamshire Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Granborough Neighbourhood Development Plan.

15 March 2021