

Winslow Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

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 review of the Plan is an excellent local response to the need to ensure that neighbourhood plans are kept up to date and topical. The review has carefully assessed changes in both national and local planning policies since the Plan was made.

The Plan provides a clear and concise vision for the neighbourhood area. The relationship between the vision and objectives and the policies is very clear.

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 5 sets out a series of delivery principles and priorities. This demonstrates that the Town Council sees the Plan as an important local tool to deliver change and improvement in the neighbourhood area. 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 Town Council and Buckinghamshire 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.

Clarification points for the Town Council

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

Policy 1

Part A of the policy reads well

Parts B and C comment loosely on what will not be supported outside the settlement boundary rather than commenting on what type of development would be supported inside the boundary. As such it takes on a rather negative tone.

Was this approach intentional?

Policy 2

Part B of the policy reads as supporting text rather than as a policy. I am minded to recommend that it is deleted and repositioned into the supporting text.

Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy 3

In general terms it is clear that the Town Council has grappled with the changes in national and local planning policy since the Plan was made.

In Part A of the policy is there any detailed evidence and/or a viability assessment of the requirement for 35% affordable housing. In addition, please can the Town Council expand on the approach (both in principle and on the mathematics) as set out in paragraph 4.29 of the Plan?

Part C of the policy reads as supporting text rather than as a policy. I am minded to recommend that it is deleted and repositioned into the supporting text.

Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy 4

The supporting text helpfully explains the policy.

Is part B of the policy appropriate? As submitted, it appears to suggest that the design of new housing proposals outside the designated conservation area should be underpinned by the conservation area appraisal whilst such proposals are not in the designated area.

In any event, is Policy 4 of the policy intended to supplement the special (Part A) and general (Part B) guidance for the allocated sites in Policy 2?

Policy 5

Is the Town Council satisfied that the two sites identified in Part A of the policy are deliverable for employment purposes within the Plan period?

Policy 6

The overall proposal included in the policy is commendably ambitious.

Is there an agreed project plan and funding for the proposal?

Is it the intention that the new facilities are made available to overlap with the redevelopment of the existing Winslow Centre site? If so, should any such approach overlap with that proposed in Part B of Policy 9?

Policy 7

I understand the importance of the policy.

Nevertheless, as submitted it reads as a community ambition rather than a policy. In particular it neither identifies a specific site nor identifies the criteria against which any potential sites would be assessed.

In effect the policy reads as supporting text rather than as a policy. I am minded to recommend that it is deleted and repositioned into an expanded supporting text which highlight the general importance of the matter. Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy 9

Parts D and E of the policy read as supporting text rather than as part of the policy. As such I am minded to recommend that they are deleted and repositioned into the supporting text. Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy 10

This policy helpfully grapples with changes in national policy which have arisen since the Plan was made. Its proposed flexibility chimes with government policy.

Nevertheless, how does the Town Council anticipate that the first criterion would be applied with any consistency through the development management process?

Policy 11

This policy sets out a range of interesting transport related initiatives.

However, as submitted, they read as community actions/ambitions rather than as land use policies designed to provide a local interpretation of the various Transport policies in Section 7 of the adopted Local Plan. Does the Town Council have any observations on this statement?

In specific terms:

- In Part A how would the final sentence be applied through the development management process and are there emerging transportation proposals to which funding would be applied?
- Is it intended that part B of the policy be applied proportionately to the scale and nature of the development concerned?
- For the purposes of part C of the policy, has a footpath between Winslow and Great Horwood been designed and costed? If not, how and when will this be achieved?
- I can see the relationship between Part D of the policy and paragraph 4.67 of the Plan. For my clarity, does the paragraph mean that Network Rail will be delivering the cycle/footpath within the Plan period?

Policy 13

Paragraphs 4.72 to 4.74 of the Plan helpful explain the evolution of the policy and the way in which it seeks to complement relevant policies in the adopted Local Plan.

However, to what specific extent does the policy add distinctive local value to Policies NE8 and I1 (Part A) and to Policies BE1 to BE3 (Part B) of the adopted Local Plan?

In addition, as submitted, part A of the policy 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 Plan period. Does the Town Council have any observations on this comment?

Clarification points for the Buckinghamshire Council

Is there any update to the Aylesbury Vale Area part of the Council's five-year housing land availability position statement from that published on the Council's website (dated April 2022)?

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 following representations:

- Winslow Developments;
- Crevichon Properties;
- Land and Partners;
- Llew Monger; and
- Gladman Developments Limited?

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

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses by 12 October 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.

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Independent Examiner

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21 September 2022