

Woodstock 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 doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan has been prepared and presented in a very professional and effective manner. The very specific focus on a proposed package of Local Green Spaces is a refreshing approach to the way in which a community has prepared a neighbourhood plan. In addition, the Plan's relationship with the Woodstock Community Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2019) is both clear and helpful.

The photographs in the Plan are excellent in their own right and highlight the issues which it addresses.

The Plan is underpinned by a package of excellent supporting documents and appendices

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 with the District Council. The comments made on the points in this Note will assist in the preparation of my report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to ensure that the Plan meets the basic conditions.

Clarification points for the Town Council

Policy WNDP1 - General

The initial part of the policy appropriately lists the proposed local green spaces (LGSs).

However, the second to fifth paragraphs of the policy go well beyond the simple approach taken in paragraph 103 of the NPPF.

I am minded to recommend that the policy is modified so that it follows the approach taken in the NPPF. I am also minded to incorporate some elements of the second to fifth paragraphs of the policy in slightly expanded supporting text.

Does the Town Council have any comments on this proposition?

The sixth paragraph of the policy does not relate to the proposed designations of LGS. Please can the Town Council explain the way in which it developed this part of the policy? In any event, does this part of the policy bring any added value given that it comments that development proposals which would affect other (unidentified) green spaces will be determined in accordance with existing national and local planning policies?

Policy WNDP1 – Site specific

Section 4 of the Plan helpfully describe the proposed LGSs. The LGS Assessment provides further details.

The photographs for each proposed LGS are very effective.

In general, the proposed LGSs capture a range of formal and informal green spaces which contribute significantly to the attractiveness of the town.

LGS7 Marlborough School Playing Field

To what extent does the Town Council consider that the proposed LGS is:

- consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services (NPPF paragraph 101)?
- capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period (NPPF paragraph 101)?

Clarification matter for the District Council

The County Council comments about the potential need for parts of the Marlborough School Playing Field site to accommodate 'school facilities and other services of public interest' to cater for the new development in the town which will naturally arise from the implementation of the Local Plan.

How does the Local Plan anticipate that the future educational needs of the town will be addressed in general and delivered through planning permissions on the allocated sites in the Local Plan in particular?

Representations

Does the Town Council wish to make any comments on the representations made to the Plan?

In particular, does it want to comment on the representations made by:

- Oxfordshire County Council; and
- Blenheim Estate?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses by 12 August 2022. Please let me know if this timetable will 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 the District Council and make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Woodstock Neighbourhood Development Plan.

18 July 2022