

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF BURY VILLAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: David Hogger BA MSc MRTPI MCIHT

Councillor Michael Tew
Bury Parish Council

Frances Schulz
Huntingdonshire District Council

Examination Ref: 01/DH/BVNP

Via email:

14 November 2019

Dear Councillor Tew and Ms Schulz

BURY VILLAGE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Bury Village Neighbourhood Plan (BVNP) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of preliminary questions for Bury Parish Council as the Qualifying Body and a smaller number for Huntingdonshire District Council. These are attached as an Annex to this letter.

1. Examination Documentation

I can confirm that I am satisfied that I have received a complete submission of the draft Plan and accompanying documentation, including the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Statement, the Habitats Regulations Screening Request, the SEA Screening Request and the Regulation 16 representations, to enable me to undertake the examination.

Subject to my detailed assessment of the draft BVNP, I have not identified any very significant and obvious flaws that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

2. Site Visit

I intend to undertake a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area during the week commencing Monday 18th November. This will assist in my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The site visit will be undertaken unaccompanied. It is very important that I am not approached to discuss any aspects of the Plan or the neighbourhood area, as this may be perceived to prejudice my independence and risk compromising the fairness of the examination process.

3. Written Representations

At this stage, I consider the examination can be conducted solely by the written representations procedure, without the need for a hearing. However, I will reserve the option to convene a hearing should a matter(s) come to light where I consider that a hearing is necessary to ensure the adequate examination of an issue, or to ensure that a person has a fair chance to put a case.

4. Further Clarification

I have a number of initial questions seeking further clarification from both the District and Parish Councils. I have set these questions out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if a written response could be provided within **three weeks** of receipt of this letter.

5. Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to examine the BVNP (including conduct of the site visit) with a view to providing a draft report (for 'fact checking') within 4-6 weeks of submission of the draft Plan. However, as I have raised a number of questions, I must provide the opportunity for an appropriate response to be prepared. Consequently, the examination timetable will be extended but please be assured that I will aim to mitigate any delay as far as is practicable. The IPE office team will seek to keep you updated on the anticipated delivery date of the draft report.

If you have any questions related to the conduct of the examination, which you would like me to address, please do not hesitate to contact the office team in the first instance.

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure a copy of this letter and any subsequent response, are placed on the websites of the Parish Council and the District Council.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

David Hogger

Examiner

ANNEX

From my initial reading of the submission draft Bury Village Neighbourhood Plan (BVNP) and the supporting evidence, I have seven questions for Huntingdonshire District Council (the District Council) and nine questions for Bury Parish Council (the Parish Council). I have requested the submission of a response within **three weeks** of receipt of this letter.

Questions for Huntingdonshire District Council (7)

1. I note that the District Council supports the definition of the settlement boundary (policy G1). Can it confirm that the approach is not in conflict with the policies of the adopted Local Plan (2019)?
2. Similarly can the District Council confirm that policy G4 (local housing needs) is not in conflict with the policies of the adopted Local Plan (2019)?
3. Policy G3 refers to the 'encouragement' of pre-application community engagement. Does the District Council have a protocol or any published advice on this matter which could be referred to in the supporting text of policy G3?
4. Could the District Council confirm that policy ISF2 (Highway Impact) is in general conformity with the adopted strategic policies of the Development Plan?
5. Under the District Council comment reference BYNP:20, the Council suggests that 'sign-posting to this evidence would be a useful addition to this chapter' (i.e. the chapter entitled 'Infrastructure, Services and Facilities'). Could the District Council confer with the Parish Council to agree how this could best be achieved without the text becoming overly cumbersome – perhaps through the use of a footnote or an Appendix?
6. Can the District Council confirm that, in its opinion, the Ramsey Golf Course (south of High Street) proposed Local Green Space meets the criteria in paragraph 100 of the NPPF (in this regard, please also note my question 8 to the Parish Council below)?
7. The District Council objects to paragraph 38.2 on Monitoring (objection reference BYNP:35) but it is not clear to me on what specific concern that objection is based. Could the District Council clarify its position please?

Questions for Bury Parish Council (9)

1. Is the reference to the owner of the Airfield site, in paragraph 20.6, correct? Is such a reference necessary?
2. What is meant by 'personal safety' in paragraph 24.12. Could an appropriate definition be included in the Glossary?
3. I consider that the first sentence of policy ISF2 – Highway Impact, lacks clarity. There are three elements to the sentence, but their relationships are not clear. Could the Parish Council clarify what is meant?
4. Have the owners (or their representatives) of the community assets set out in policy ISF5 been advised of the proposed status of their properties/facilities and been made aware of any implications that the policy may have for them?
5. The District Council suggests that paragraph 31.1 (regarding local distinctiveness) could be strengthened by the inclusion of a policy (representation number BYNP:29). Is the Parish Council content that matters of design and appearance are satisfactorily addressed in the policies of the

adopted local plan and that they adequately reflect the advice in the recently published National Design Guide - October 2019 (perhaps this matter could be considered in collaboration with the District Council)?

6. There is a map on page 51 of the area subject to flood risk but there is no supporting text to explain the consequences of this zoning. Is there any reason why a brief paragraph could not be included, if only to explain where further advice and guidance on this matter can be found?

7. I have read the 'Local Green Spaces Evidence' (September 2019) but I can find no specific confirmation that the owners of the proposed 'Designated Local Green Spaces' have been directly engaged on the proposals¹. Could the Parish Council confirm that such consultation has occurred and that any consequent responses have been appropriately considered?

8. With regard to the designation of Ramsey Golf Course (south of High Street) as Local Green Space, could the Parish Council explain why this land is demonstrably special to the community and why it holds a particular local significance?² I understand the comments made by the Parish Council regarding the conclusion that any considerations regarding the 'extensiveness' of the land' are likely to be subjective. Nevertheless, how would the Parish Council define 'an extensive tract of land'?

9. Can the Parish Council summarise the mechanisms that it will use to 'carefully monitor' the BVNP (see paragraph 38.1)?

¹ See PPG Reference ID: 37-019-20140306

² See paragraph 100 (b) of the NPPF.