

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE BALDONS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Andrew Freeman MSc BSc (Hons) DipTP DipEM FRTPI

Lisa Fermer
Clerk to Council

Sam Townley
South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils

Examination Ref: 01/AF/BNP

Via email: baldonsparishclerk@outlook.com

Cc: Sam.Townley@southandvale.gov.uk

17 April 2018

Dear Ms Fermer

THE BALDONS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of The Baldons Parish Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of preliminary questions for The Baldons Parish Council (the QB) which are set out in the **Annex** to this letter.

1. Examination Documentation

In the Annex, I raise the question of whether or not I have the latest version of the Baldons Design Guide. Subject to the answer to this question, I confirm that I am satisfied that I have received a complete submission of the Plan and accompanying documentation - including the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Statement and the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report - to enable me to undertake the examination.

Subject to my detailed assessment of the Plan, I have not at this initial stage identified any very significant and obvious flaws in it that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

2. Site Visit

I intend to undertake a site visit to the Plan area during week commencing 23 April 2018.

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 it is likely that 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 or matters come to light which make this 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, which I have set out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if you can seek to provide a written response within two weeks from the date of this letter.

5. Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to examine the plan (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, I have raised a number of questions which will require time to answer. Consequently, the examination timetable will be extended. Please be assured that I will seek 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 process 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 responses to it are placed on both the Local Planning Authority and QB websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

Andrew Freeman

Examiner

THE BALDONS NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Annex

From my initial reading of the Baldons Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and the supporting evidence, I have a number of questions for the Qualifying Body (QB). I have requested the submission of a response within two weeks of the receipt of this letter, but an earlier response would be welcome.

1. With regard to the SEA Sustainability Appraisal Submission Draft January 2018: Are comments on this document limited to those that are included, in passing, in the Regulation 16 responses or have specific comments on this piece of work been sought from the statutory consultees? If this is the case, could the QB please provide copies of any specific responses?
2. Have there been any changes to the Baldons Design Guide (August 2017 version as on the website)? As the version reviewed by me and to be included within the Plan needs to be the latest, could the QB either confirm that this is indeed the latest version or provide me with the updated version?
3. Could the QB please provide a statement to demonstrate that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention?
4. What is the response of the QB to the various recommendations of Natural England (Response 4)?
5. Does the QB have any comments on the suitability of 15-MB and 16-MB given the refusal of planning permission referred to in Response 5; and also 08-TB and 09-TB (referred to in response 6)?
6. Does the QB have any comments on the suitability of sites LB-23 and LB-24 given the comments of Oxfordshire County Council (Response 7)?
7. What is the response of the Qualifying Body (QB) to the various suggestions of Historic England (Response 8)?
8. Does the Plan need to be corrected to address apparent differences in the number of listed buildings (Response 8)?
9. What is the response of the QB to the suggested new policy and text on infrastructure (Thames Water – Response 10)?
10. What is the response of the Qualifying Body (QB) to the 11 matters raised by South Oxfordshire District Council (Response 11)?
11. Should the second bullet point of Policy 1 refer to Figure 4.1 and what is the correct reference in the third bullet point as there is no section 2.3 in the Plan?
12. Policy 5: Please provide a link or specific reference, for inclusion in the Plan, to the South Oxford Design Guide.
13. Should Policy 6 refer to Figure 6.3 (not 5.2)?

14. Policy 9: Could the QB please provide a link or specific reference, for inclusion in the Plan, to where “the most recently published standards of South Oxfordshire District Council” are to be found.