

Dorchester-on-Thames Neighbourhood 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 is very well-presented and written. It provides a clear and distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area. In particular it addresses precisely the type of issues that would be expected to be considered in a neighbourhood area with such an important heritage.

The quality of the Plan's layout and presentation is first-class. The various photographs add its depth and interest. It inspires confidence that it has been professionally prepared and can eventually become a part of the development plan in South Oxfordshire.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I visited the Plan area yesterday. I am now in a position to raise initial 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 my 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:

Policy DOT3

On what basis were the important views in Appendix 1 and 2 identified?

How do they contribute towards the setting of heritage assets (as identified in the second part of the policy)?

Policy DOT4

On what basis is the 20 metres distance threshold included in the second criterion of the policy?

Policy DOT7

In the context of this policy what is meant by:

- 'Alternative land uses'
- the 'policies map'
- 'agricultural employment opportunities'

In reading this policy I am not absolutely clear on its purpose. Is its primary purpose to retain and safeguard agricultural land as shown in Map 6?

Policies DOT8/9

Do the policies have regard to national policy on Green Belts in general, and paragraph 89 of the NPPF in particular? As submitted policy DOT8 in particular reads that built development

will be acceptable where it does not offend Green belt policy rather than to adopt a restrictive Green Belt approach and then identify potential exceptions.

Is the allocation of affordable housing a land use matter?

Policy DOT11

Are there specific reasons why this policy is specific to the conservation area?

Is its purpose to ensure that the delivery of the required number of parking spaces to development plan standards is appropriate and sensitive to the character and appearance of the conservation area?

Policy DOT15

How does this policy have regard to national policy on Green Belts?

Are its first and second sentences potentially in conflict?

Does the second sentence need a degree of clarification so that its intentions can be applied consistently by the District Council throughout the Plan period?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for comments from the Parish Council by 15 November 2017. 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 am happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled please could it all come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft,

Independent Examiner

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7 November 2017