



Tetsworth Parish Council

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TETSWORTH NDP – TETSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO EXAMINER'S CLARIFICATION QUESTIONS

Introduction

Tetsworth Parish Council (TPC) would like to thank Mr Ashcroft for his encouraging initial comments on the presentation of the submitted NDP and its supporting evidence base.

The examiner's Clarification Note dated 30 July 2020 requested TPC feedback on three issues related to Policies TET2, TET6 and TET7. The questions in italics and TPC responses are detailed below.

Policy TET2

I am minded to recommend a modification so that the criteria apply insofar as they are relevant to any development proposal. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

TPC fully supports your proposition to apply the policy's design criteria to any proposed development as suggested.

Policy TET6

Is the policy's focus on the character of the three buildings or their community value? The opening part of the policy implies that it is the latter. The second part of the policy implies that it is the former.

All three of the Landmark buildings in this policy are relatively modern but individually distinct structures and, in the main, derive their Landmark status through their functions as important community assets. However, TPC feels that the prominent locations of two within the village settlement and one on the countryside skyline also merit comment that any future development proposals should be sympathetic to their current appearance and surroundings as well as their functions.

Policy TET7

Has a detailed appraisal been undertaken for Tetsworth Common against the criteria for Local Green Space designation in the NPPF (paragraph 100)? In particular what is its size, and has the Parish Council any detailed commentary on the extent to which it is 'demonstrably special to the local community'?

No formal appraisal has been undertaken. However, TPC is able to provide you with responses to the criteria specified in NPPF para 100 which also address your specific queries.

NPPF Para 100. The Local Green Space designation should only be used where the green space is:

a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; Tetsworth Common lies immediately adjacent to the north western edge of the village settlement and shares a border with some of the dwellings at the end of Marsh End .

b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; Tetsworth Common has existed as such for many centuries. It is defined and named in Bryant's map of 1823 and is believed to feature in much earlier descriptions of the local area. It has maintained its agricultural nature through to today as an enclosed single field pasture with grazing rights currently let to a Tetsworth-based farmer. Public recreational access is well served by the abundant network of local public footpaths and the Common is crossed by a public bridleway from its southern boundary alongside the A40 to a junction with the Oxfordshire Way named footpath on its northern edge. Its naturally biodiverse character complements the role of Tetsworth Village Green which is actively managed for team sports usage and hosting a children's play area. As such Tetsworth Common is enjoyed as a quiet rural recreation amenity by both local residents and transiting visitors.

c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. Tetsworth Common is a single field of approximately 17Ha defined by surrounding mature hedgerows and includes a small natural pond and adjacent stand of trees. Its agricultural use as a grazing pasture is typical of the rural landscape surrounding the village settlement. Its recreational amenity value derives from this undeveloped rural character.

What is the purpose of the Judd's Lane paragraph in the policy? As submitted, it is a statement rather than a policy. Is it intended to be identified as a public open space?

TPC accepts that the statement about Judd's Lane does not properly cover the NDP's policy intention.

Judd's Lane has major historic significance for Tetsworth. As long ago as the 11th century, it formed part of a north-south roadway from Thame to Wallingford crossing the east-west London to Oxford highway at a location which defined the initial establishment of the Tetsworth village settlement. Its transport significance diminished over the centuries until it became designated as a public bridleway only suitable for horses, walkers and cyclists, and providing access for farmers and residents of the handful of dwellings on the route.

In its current status, it provides direct traffic-free recreational access from the village settlement to its rural hinterland. TPC is keen to preserve this much-appreciated amenity with both sides of the bridleway offering attractive open countryside views rich in biodiversity and wildlife habitats. TPC's policy aim is to ensure that the bridleway does not get upgraded to a through road attracting significant traffic and inviting ribbon domestic development along its route. If this requires its identification as a public open space, TPC would welcome such a designation.

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