

Sonning Common Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

Examiner's Note

This Note sets out further comments on the submitted Plan following the receipt of the Parish Council's responses to the clarification note

Little Sparrows

In its representation to the Plan, the District Council suggested that the Little Sparrows site should be allocated for residential development following the granting of planning permission for the site on appeal.

In its response to the clarification note, the Parish Council requested that I consider recommending the allocation of the site for housing purposes.

My role as the independent examiner is to examine the Plan as submitted. Notwithstanding the recent granting of planning permission for housing development on the site on appeal, it is beyond my remit to recommend that the site is allocated in the Plan.

However, given that both the District Council and the Parish Council consider that the site's allocation would be a practical way forward, I have considered the process that would be needed to secure that outcome. Plainly it would be a significant amendment to the Plan. As such, the Parish Council would need to revise the Plan to include the allocation of the site. This approach would require the publication of a revised Plan and a revised Basic Conditions Statement. Thereafter a six-week consultation would need to take place in an identical way to that on the Plan as initially submitted.

Paragraph 14 of the submitted screening statement has already considered the implications of the appeal decision on Little Sparrows. As such, it would not need to be updated if the Parish Council decided to propose its allocation in the Plan.

The Next Steps

I would be grateful if the Parish Council will advise how it wishes to proceed by 31 August 2022. 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 the Parish Council wishes to amend the submitted Plan to include a proposed allocation of the Little Sparrows site for housing purposes, I will await the outcome of the consultation process and then finalise my report on that basis.

In the event that the Parish Council decides not to amend the Plan to include the allocation of the Little Sparrows site for housing purposes, I will finalise my report on the basis of the existing submitted Plan.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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16 August 2022