

Barlestone Neighbourhood Development 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 provides a well-considered vision for the neighbourhood area. It addresses an extensive range of issues which overlap with its character and appearance. The presentation and layout of the Plan is very good. It is supported by good maps.

The Plan is accompanied by a comprehensive range of appendices and background documents which, in the main, advise its detailed policies. The Character Assessment is particularly impressive.

Points for Clarification and observations

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now in a position to raise issues for clarification with both the Parish Council and the Borough 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 to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions. I set out specific clarification points and observations below in the order in which the policies concerned appear in the submitted Plan.

Points of Clarification for the Parish Council

Policy H1

The policy has generated a considerable degree of comment.

I am minded to recommend modifications both to the policy and to the supporting text to reflect the emerging overall housing need in the parish and the extent to which the three allocated sites in the Plan would complement existing commitments.

Does the Parish Council have any observations on this proposition?

Policy H2

I can see that the assessment of the various housing sites is considered in Appendix 3a/b.

However, in this context to what extent does the Parish Council have assurance on the eventual delivery of the three proposed allocated housing sites in the policy?

Policy H3

Would the policy itself, Figure 3 and the supporting text be clearer if their general overlap and relationship with existing strategic commitments was more explicit?

Similarly, are there specific reasons why specific parts of the settlement boundary are different to those in the Borough Council's planning documents (and as identified in the Borough Council's representation to the Plan)?

Policy H4

Please can the Parish Council comment about the potential inconsistency between the final sentence of the supporting text associated with this policy (which has a restrictive effect) and the contents of Policy H3 (which supports limited opportunities for new residential development outside the settlement boundary where it would comply with national and local planning policies)?

Policy H6

Does the policy add any distinctive parish value to national and local policies?

Please can the Parish Council explain its approach as set out in the first bullet point? As submitted, it appears to conflate affordable housing numbers with the percentage of a site occupied by affordable housing.

Policy ENV1

What are the sizes of the proposed local green spaces 1001, 1015 and 2001?

Policy ENV4

Given that Policies ENV1 and ENV4 are different in their form and effect, is it practicable for the same sites to be identified in both policies?

Policy ENV5

Are the various buildings identified in the schedule intended to be non-designated heritage assets (as described in the NPPF)?

Policies ENV6 and ENV7

In both cases the policies are well-considered and underpinned by evidence.

Policies CFA1/3/4

The three policies reflect the importance of the various community facilities in the village to its overall sustainability and well-being.

Policy BE3

I am minded to recommend modifications to the policy to acknowledge that many homeworking proposals may not need planning permission. Does the Parish Council have any observations on this proposition?

Points of Clarification for the Borough Council

What is the anticipated timetable for the submission and the adoption of the emerging Local Plan?

Does the Council have information about the anticipated timetable for the development of the Garden Farm and the Spinney Drive housing sites?

I saw from site notices during my visit that there are two major planning applications for the proposed construction of houses in and around the village (21/00096/OUT and 21/00460/OUT). They overlap with the comments in related representations to the Plan.

Please can the Borough Council provide me with information on indicative timetables for the determination of the two applications?

Representations

Does the Parish Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan?

In particular, does it wish to make any comments on the following representations beyond those raised elsewhere in this note on a policy-by-policy basis:

- Leicestershire County Council (as a landowner) (Response 11);
- Gladman (Response 13);
- Land Allocation Limited (Response 14);
- Maruti Developments (Response 15); and
- Lagan Homes (Response 18).

The representation from Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council raises several detailed refinements to the Plan and its policies. It would be helpful if the Parish Council would indicate the extent to which it would be content to incorporate the various comments into the Plan.

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses to the matters raised in this Note by 17 December 2021. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. 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 come to me directly from the Borough Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Barlestone Neighbourhood Development Plan.

23 November 2021