

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF CARLTON & CHELLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

EXAMINER: Bob Yuille MSc DIP TP MRTPI

Mandy Wilson  
Clerk to Carlton and Chellington Parish Council

Sonia Gallaher  
Senior Planning and Transportation Officer  
Bedford Borough Council

Examination Ref: 01/RY/CCNP

20 August 2019

Dear Ms Wilson and Ms Gallaher

## CARLTON & CHELLINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Carlton & Chellington Neighbourhood Development Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of preliminary questions for Bedford Borough Council and the Parish Council.

### 1. Examination Documentation

I can 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 Regulation 16 representations - 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 the Plan that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

### 2. Site Visit

To assist in my examination of the Plan I intend, in due course, to undertake a site visit to the area. The IPe office team will notify you in advance of the week during which this will take place.

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 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 where I consider that a hearing is 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 **one month** 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. However, in this instance I have raised a number of questions and must allow time for these to be answered. Consequentially, the examination timetable will be extended. Please be assured that I will seek to reduce any delay as far as is practicable. The IPe office team will keep you updated on the anticipated delivery date of the draft report.

If you have any procedural questions related to the conduct of the examination, 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 respective responses to my questions are placed on the Parish Council and local authority's website

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

*RJ Yuille*

Examiner

## ANNEX

From my initial reading of the Carlton & Chellington Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting evidence, I have the following preliminary questions for Bedford Borough Council and the Parish Council.

### Questions to Bedford Borough Council

1. I note that the Borough Council has made no representations on the Plan at the Regulation 16 stage. I take it that this means that the Borough Council is satisfied that Plan meets the Basic Conditions and, in particular, is generally consistent with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area. Is that a correct assumption?
2. The development plan for the area, not including documents relating to waste and minerals, consists of the following documents; the saved policies of the Bedford Local Plan 2002 (the Local Plan); The Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan 2008 (the Core Strategy) and the Allocations and Designations Local Plan (the Allocations Plan). Is that correct?
3. The Borough Council is preparing Local Plan 2030 (the emerging Local Plan). This has been submitted for examination; the hearings have been held and consultations on the Main Modifications are now taking place. Is that correct?
4. It does not appear the Main Modifications have a particular bearing on the Neighbourhood Plan. Is that correct?

### Questions to Carlton & Chellington Parish Council

1. The Plan covers the period 2018 to 2030. Is that correct?
2. The supporting text to Policy CC1 states that "*Carlton and Chellington is defined within the emerging Local Plan as a 'Rural Service Centre'. A settlement boundary was defined by 2002 Adopted Local Plan. The same settlement boundary has been applied in the Neighbourhood Development Plan, except where it has been extended to include the three allocated development sites as covered by Policies CC4 to CC6.*" However, Fig 2 which identifies, amongst other things, the Current Settlement Policy Area and the Proposals Map, which shows the revised Settlement Policy Area, appear to show an identical boundary. Is that correct? If not, what are the differences between the two?
3. Were the owners of each of the proposed Local Green Spaces referred to in Policy CC2 contacted at an early stage as required by Planning Policy Guidance Ref ID: 37-019-20140306?
4. Policy CC3 refers to preserving or enhancing the character of the Conservation Area. Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 refers to preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of such areas. As character and appearance are different things should Policy CC3 adopt the statutory wording?
5. Policy CC3 refers to '*important character building and sites*'. Where are these buildings and sites? Policies in a neighbourhood plan are required to be clear and unambiguous.<sup>1</sup> Should these buildings and sites be identified on a map?

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<sup>1</sup> PPG Paragraph 41 Reference ID:41-041-20140306,

6. Policy CC4 only permits housing development in excess of the proposed site allocations on sites within the Settlement Policy Area. However, both the Core Strategy (Policy CP17) and the emerging Local Plan (Policy 6S) allow for housing outside this boundary in exceptional circumstances. Indeed, it appears that one of the proposed site allocations was granted planning permission under the terms of such an 'exceptions' policy. Should Policy CC4 make reference to such 'exception' sites?
7. The supporting text to policy CC4 refers to a Site Assessment report. Where will I find this?
8. Replacement community services under Policy CC9 have to be within the Settlement Protection Area but new community facilities do not. Is that correct? If so what is the justification for this?
9. Is Policy CC11 intended to apply outside the Settlement Protection Area? If so, is it in general conformity with development plan policies dealing with employment development in the rural area such as, for example, saved policy E18 of the Local Plan 2002 and Policy CP18 of the Core Strategy?