

## INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE OAKLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Wendy Burden BA (Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Mrs Ann Paice  
Clerk to Oakley Parish Council

Sonia Gallaher  
Bedford Borough Council

Examination Ref: 01/WB/ONP

20 August 2019

Dear Mrs Paice and Ms Gallaher

### OAKLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Oakley Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters.

#### 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 it that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

#### 2. Site Visit

I will be carrying out a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area most probably in the week beginning 26 August 2019. The site visit will assist in my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The 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

Through the Regulation 16 Consultation there have been some requests to be heard. However, at this stage I consider the examination can be conducted solely by the written representations procedure, without the need for a hearing. Nevertheless, 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 may have a number of questions seeking clarification on various matters which I will wish to put to Oakley Parish Council and/or Bedford Borough Council. If this is necessary, I will set the questions out in a separate letter.

#### 5. Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to conduct the examination (including the site visit) with a view to providing a draft report (for 'fact checking') within 4-6 weeks of submission of the Plan.

However, if I have to request additional information I must provide sufficient opportunity for you to reply. Consequentially, the examination timetable would be extended. Please be assured that I will seek to mitigate 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 process questions related to the conduct of the examination which you would like me to address, 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 that a copy of this letter is placed on both the Parish Council and local authority websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

*Wendy Burden*

Examiner