

Playford Neighbourhood Development Plan

Independent Examiner's Clarification Note

Context

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 is very well-presented. The distinction between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. Photographs produced to a high quality reinforce the issues included in the Plan. The various Appraisals/Assessments are informative supporting documents and directly inform the relevant policies.

The Plan provides a clear and distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area and has focused on appropriate and distinctive matters.

Points for Clarification and other comments on the policies

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now able to raise some initial issues for clarification for the Parish Council.

The comments that are made on these points will be used to assist in the preparation of my report. They will also inform any potential modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

Policy PFD1

Paragraphs 5.1 to 5.6 of the Plan helpfully set out the broader context to the proposed definition of a Cluster. However, in the context of the adopted Local Plan can a neighbourhood plan define a cluster?

In most cases the proposed boundary of the Cluster follows property and curtilage boundaries. In other cases, the boundaries are more artificial. In those cases, how did the Parish Council define the boundary concerned?

Policy PFD2

This is a good policy which reflects the character and attractiveness of this part of the neighbourhood area. It is helpfully underpinned by the Fynn Valley Landscape Value Appraisal.

Policy PFD3

This is another good policy. In this case, it is underpinned by the Assessment of Important Views.

Policy PFD5

The proposed non-designated assets have been carefully-selected. They are described to good effect in Appendix 1.

Policy PFD6

This is an excellent policy which is underpinned by the Design Guidelines and Codes. In the round it is a first-class local response to Section 12 of the NPPF.

Are criteria h) and i) needed given that the two issues are now managed by the Building Regulations?

Policy PFD7

The first sentence of the policy comments about a 'preference'. However, is a 'preference' capable of being implemented through the development management process?

In any event is the first sentence needed given the contents of the remainder of the policy?

Policy PFD8

I am minded to recommend that the order of the policy elements is reversed. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Policy PFD9

This is another excellent policy. I saw the importance of the footpath network during the visit.

Representations

I would find it helpful if the Parish Council commented on the representations from the Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

East Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council propose a series of detailed refinements to the policies and the supporting text. It would be also helpful if the Parish Council commented on those suggestions.

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses to the questions raised by 21 February 2024. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It reflects the factual basis of the questions raised.

If 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 can all responses be sent to me by East Suffolk Council and make direct reference to the policy/issue concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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31 January 2024