

Willoughton 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 very clear and distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area. In particular it addresses a series of important issues in a positive and effective fashion.

The layout and presentation of the Plan is excellent. The various maps, photographs and sketches add to its depth and interest. The differences between the policies and the supporting text is very clear.

It inspires confidence that it has been professionally prepared and subject to satisfactory progress through the various statutory stages) can eventually become a part of the development plan in West Lindsey.

The submitted Character Appraisal is an excellent document. It is also clear how its key findings translate into the submitted Plan.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan and have visited the neighbourhood area. I am now in a position to raise issues for clarification with the Parish 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 that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions. I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan:

Policy 1

I can see this policy sits at the heart of the Plan. It is commendably detailed.

It would be helpful to have the Parish Council's comments on the following matters:

- Has the Plan attempted to identify the 'existing settlement footprint'? **The mention of the settlement footprint comes from the work undertaken from the Willoughton character assessment and the map on page 14 of the assessment. It is acknowledged that this boundary reflects more of the built form in relation to the character of the village and not necessary to the points identified within the "developed footprint" definition in the CLLP Policy LP2. The Neighbourhood Plan Group believe the CLLP "developed footprint" definition would struggle to enable the delivery the remaining 16 houses in such as restrictive boundary. Therefore, Policy 1 of the Neighbourhood Plan mentions 'within or directly adjoining' the existing settlement footprint to enable some flexibility....especially where some sites may only be able to accommodate one dwelling due to any identified constraints or due to its design.**
- To what extent (if any) does the use of 'existing settlement footprint' relate to the section on 'Settlement pattern' in the Character Appraisal? Paragraph 3.7 suggests that the one has informed the other. **The identified settlement footprint, as identified**

on page 14 of the Willoughton character assessment, relates solely to the settlement pattern of the village as described within the character assessment.

- On what basis has the Plan chosen to use the term 'existing settlement footprint' rather than 'in appropriate locations' and 'within the developed footprint' as specified in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (CLLP)? We believe that the term settlement footprint effectively means the developed footprint and we would be happy for the references to settlement footprint to be changed to reflect the CLLP terminology. It is believed that the sites identified on figure 4 of the Neighbourhood Plan reflect the definition of 'appropriate locations' as identified within the CLLP. The sites identified, do:
 - Retain the core shape and form of the settlement;
 - not significantly harm the settlement's character and appearance; and
 - not significantly harm the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside or the rural setting of the settlement.
- The three detailed elements of the policy appear to apply only to proposed development within or directly adjoining the existing settlement footprint. Is this correct? Yes. That is the approach the Group took when considering the wording of the policy.
- If so, would countryside policies apply to any proposed residential development elsewhere in the neighbourhood area? Yes, we believe the CLLP Policy LP55 effectively deals with the general countryside and development.
- Should the policy and its supporting text be more explicit about outstanding new residential development required to meet the CLLP 10% growth target? Yes, at the time of writing the plan, there was not an up-to-date picture on the monitoring element, but now this has been updated, we feel that a reference to the remaining 16 dwellings could be included within the justification and text of policy 1.
- Am I correct in reading the Conversion/Replacement sections that the Parish Council seeks to apply a sequential-type approach to such proposals? Yes, we believe it is important for potential developers to firstly identify whether the existing building could be reused for their intended use(s) due to most of them having some historical or character merit before demolition can take place.
- In paragraph 3.9 and Figure 4 I can see the approach taken towards potential development sites. Are they identified to meet the aspirations set out in paragraphs 3.3/3.4/3.8? Are they the types of sites envisaged by the opening part of the policy? The sites identified on Figure 4 in the Neighbourhood Plan are those sites that is believed meet the criteria for 'appropriate locations' and are located within or directly adjoining the existing settlement footprint of the village. These sites were made available to the group by landowners and were subject to consultation with the community. Some of these do have existing planning permission and are possible locations to accommodate some of the required 16 new homes over the plan period. However, it is also expected that not all of these will be developed due to issues with heritage and access which is why none of the sites are proposed as allocations.

Policy 3

The policy is commendably comprehensive. It is also distinctive to the neighbourhood area. Its relationship with the Character Appraisal is clear and obvious.

Policy 4

The approach taken is very thorough. Nevertheless, I am proposing to recommend that the facilities identified in figure 11 are listed in the policy itself. This will bring absolute clarity.

Do you have any comments on this proposal?

Yes, listing the facilities within the policy will help clarify the policy position.

Representations

Does the Parish Council have any comments on the representations made to the Plan by West Lindsey District Council (Policy 1 in particular)?

Does the Parish Council have any comments on the other representations?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for comments from the Parish Council by 29 January 2019. 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 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 all come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Willoughton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

15 January 2019