

Response from Sturton by Stow and Stow Parish Councils

Sturton by Stow and Stow Neighbourhood Development Plan Examiner's Clarification Note

Sturton by Stow and Stow Parish Councils would like to thank the Examiner for his comments on our draft Plan. We set out our response to the points of clarification below and for ease of reference our responses are in red.

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 doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

Initial Comments

The Plan provides a clear and concise vision for the neighbourhood area.

The presentation of the Plan is very good. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is clear. The Plan makes good use of various maps. The various background reports helpfully underpin the policies. The Neighbourhood Profile, the Local Green Space Assessment and the Protected Views Assessment are particularly informative.

A key element of the Plan is the way in which its key issues (Section 3.3) and vision and objectives (Sections 4.1 and 4.2) inform and underpin the resulting policies. This provides assurance that the Plan has addressed key local issues. The relationship between the text and the policies is well-considered. The way in which the Plan comments about how the policies are informed by national and local planning policies, and the most recent version of the emerging Local Plan review (2020), and residents' responses is very effective.

We appreciate your positive comments on our Plan and particularly how we have addressed local issues. Thank you.

Points for Clarification

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also read the parish councils' helpful comments on the representations received on the Plan. I have visited the neighbourhood area and am now in a position to raise issues for clarification with the parish councils. 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 ensure that the Plan meets the basic conditions.

I set out specific clarification points below in the order in which the policies appear in the submitted Plan:

Policy 1

The policy takes a positive approach to sustainable development.

As submitted, the policy would have a universal effect. In this context, many minor and householder planning applications would not have the ability to trigger several of the criteria. On this basis, I am minded to recommend a modification so that the policy would apply on a proportionate basis as appropriate to its scale and nature. Do the parish councils have any comments on this proposition?

Our local experience is such that we have concerns about local developments, large and small, where they do not address these issues. We would be grateful for clarification on how proportionality could be included in the policy in a manner, which does not lead to wide range of possible interpretations. We would accept that 1b. f. and g. may not apply to householder's applications for their existing properties.

Perhaps your proposed modification could be structured around these three sub-clauses only?

Policy 2

This is a very comprehensive and effective policy.

In criterion m is the second sentence necessary? As I interpret the approach taken, the transportation of waste could be a detailed response to the more general matter covered on the first sentence.

We agree criterion m in the second sentence is not necessary.

Criterion n takes a hybrid approach (part policy and part non-policy/operation issues). I am minded to relocate the latter into the supporting text. Do the parish councils have any comments on this proposition?

Local facilities are already overstretched and cause significant problems for local residents. These problems have not been adequately addressed by the relevant authorities, despite repeated representations by both residents and the Parish Council over many years. Reliance on remedial measures in the event of problems is thus inadvisable. The sewage plant in Sturton is the only one in the Plan area. There are new developments (less than five years old) with on-site facilities that are already not functioning properly. We, therefore, wish to keep the policy as robust as we can to avoid adding to the burden of sewage issues on the local community. Which parts would you wish to move to supporting text? We would like to retain all of our draft policy, but remain receptive to any proposed alternative, which achieves the same aims.

Part 2 of the policy has a generally negative approach rather than the positive approach of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. Was this intentional?

We would be happy to amend Part 2 to read: "In the surrounding countryside, residential development proposals will be supported if they demonstrate that the residential development....."

Are the five criteria in part 2 of the policy the elements which the parish councils see as being distinctive to the neighbourhood area?

We see the five elements as appropriate to the Plan area.

Policy 3

The purpose of this policy was self-evident when I visited the neighbourhood area. The final sentence of the policy is clear in its intentions in general terms. However, have the parish councils attempted to identify the types of development which would reduce and/or detract from the open character of the proposed Area of Separation (and those which would not do so)?

Is the policy intended to allow development to come forward in the Area of Separation which would otherwise comply with Policy LP55 of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan?

We wish to maintain the area of separation. There are currently no buildings in the area of separation and much of it is permanent pasture with some ridge and furrow.

Policy 5

This policy makes an excellent local response to the design elements of the NPPF 2021. It is helpfully underpinned by the excellent Neighbourhood Profile (and its Character Area work).

As submitted, the policy would have a universal effect. In this context many minor and householder planning applications would not have the ability to trigger several of the criteria in the policy. On this basis, I am minded to recommend a modification so that the policy would apply on a proportionate basis as appropriate to the scale and

nature of the development proposed. Do the parish councils have any comments on this proposition?

We would not wish to dilute the policy particularly as set out in 1 and 2.

Policy 6

Policy Map 6 (and its key) is an impressive piece of local work

Credit is due here to Mel Banham, Chairman of the Planning Group.

Policy 7

Does criterion a) expect an applicant to look for alternative brownfield sites first?

Yes.

If not, does it mean that development proposals take the opportunity to incorporate vacant or redundant buildings or land which may exist within the application site? If it is the former, how would an applicant be able to demonstrate that they had looked at alternative brownfield sites beyond their control?

We would propose that they provide a supporting statement evidencing their efforts.

In relation to criterion c) how could the planning process control the amount of remote working?

Point taken. We would suggest a revision of 1c) to read "Measures are implemented which enable remote digital working in the proposed development."

Policy 8

In general, the policy takes a positive and well-researched approach to this matter. I am minded to recommend the reversal of the order of parts 1 and 2 of the policy to assist the casual reader to understand the policy. Do the parish councils have any comments on this proposition?

We would agree.

In Part 1C is the reference to geographic area the same as that used in Policy 2?

To clarify we suggest that in 1c (to be 2c) fourth line, the words "as shown in Policy Maps 2.1 and 2.2." be added after ".....Sturton by Stow and Stow.....".

Is Part 3 of the policy more supporting text rather than policy?

Yes, we would agree.

Policy 9

The policy appears to comment more about the process to be followed rather than the outcome of planning applications and their relationship with the identified Protected Views. Was this the Plan's intention?

We take your point. We suggest a revised wording of: "Protected Views are important locally and applications that would impact on protected views will not be supported."

Policy 10

This policy is commendably underpinned by the Local Green Space Assessment.

The third part of the policy reads as a free-standing policy and otherwise sits uncomfortably with the policy's focus on local green spaces. Please can the parish councils explain the approach taken?

We accept your point and would propose that 3. be deleted from Policy 10 and be moved to Policy 11 in a slightly revised form.

Policy 11

The first part of the policy uses both 'where appropriate' and 'where practicable'. This makes its purpose unclear. Is it intended to comment about proposals where there

would be a direct relationship between new development and the provision of infrastructure (as set out in the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations)?

We would propose a revised 1. To read as follows:

“1. New development proposals will be supported that:

- a) contribute to the enhancement and/or connection, and management, of existing green corridors and infrastructure assets.
- b) create new green space (in addition to and not a replacement for existing green space) with permanent management provision, which provides a quality amenity for residents and will be of value for wildlife whilst at the same time providing climate change mitigation, adaptation and resilience.”

If the wording above is acceptable, Part 5 becomes redundant and could be deleted.

Is part 4 of the policy supporting text rather than policy?

We would agree.

Representations

I am grateful that the parish councils have already commented on the representations made to the Plan.

Do the councils wish to make any further comments or additions/updates to the responses?

We would wish to make the following corrections:

Foreword Page v second paragraph second line: “.....Thanks must go to the group for the time and effort they have given to developing the Plan ~~over the course of the couple of years~~, guided and supported by OpenPlan Consultants Ltd and Community Lincs (YMCA).....” Delete the words in green.

Policy 1 page 29: “1. To support and enhance the sustainability of the Parishes of Sturton by Stow and Stow, development will be supported where it is consistent with the following principles:.....” Add the word in green.

Policy 3 page 37 paragraph 5.3.4 amend “agriculture land” to “agricultural land”.

Thank you for the opportunity to clarify these issues.

Carol Gilbert, Chair, Sturton by Stow Parish Council and
Pam Duncan, Chair, Stow Parish Council