

Beckley and Stowood Neighbourhood Plan

Consultation on Significant Modifications

Context

The Independent Examiner has advised the District Council that a package of modifications is required to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

The recommended modifications to the general parts of the Plan are matters of refinement to the relevant policies and do not need additional consultation.

The recommended modifications to the mitigation policies relating to the development of the strategic site as identified in the Local Plan (Policy STRAT13) at land north of Bayswater Brook are significant in their scale and effect. As such they will require further consultation.

The recommended modifications to the mitigation policies are the deletion of the mitigation policies and the associated supporting text (Section 6 of the Plan) as well as references to the mitigation policies and the associated supporting text throughout the plan including objective 7.

The examiner has reached these preliminary conclusions for the following reasons:

- the mitigation policies in the submitted Plan do not bring any added value to the comprehensive details included in Policy STRAT 13 of the Local Plan;
- the mitigation policies do not support the delivery of the strategic policies in the Local Plan (contrary to the details in Planning Practice Guidance 41:004-20190509) and could undermine the deliverability of the strategic policies in the development plan (contrary to the details in Planning Practice Guidance 41-005-20190509);
- the policies have not been promoted in a collaborative fashion;
- in any event there is no evidence that the contents of Policy STRAT 13 will not be properly implemented and its various principles will be incorporated into the eventual development; and
- Although the mitigation policies were developed in consultation with neighbouring parish councils, the approach taken has been pursued in isolation from other parishes which are affected by the strategic site (Elsfield, Forest Hill with Shotover and Stanton St Johns) and are not developing complementary policies. It would be unreasonable for a specific policy approach to be identified in part of a wider strategic development site where no other equivalent complementary policies are being pursued elsewhere.

The Consultation Process

The District Council invites comments on the examiner's preliminary conclusions between 18/01/24 and 29/02/24.

The consultation exercise is related only to this matter. No further comments on the submitted Plan are invited.

All the comments received in the consultation period will be sent to the independent examiner. He will consider the comments received before publishing his final report.