

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF HISTON AND IMPINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Bob Yuille MSC DipTP MRTPI

Councillor David Jenkins
Histon and Impington Parish Council

Alison Talkington
Senior Planning Policy Officer
South Cambridgeshire District Council

Examination Ref: 01/BY/HINP

14 August 2019

Dear Councillor Jenkins and Ms Talkington

HISTON AND IMPINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of preliminary questions for South Cambridgeshire District Council and Histon and Impington Parish Council.

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

2. Site Visit

I intend to undertake a site visit to the Plan area and will notify you of the date of this in due course. This visit will assist in my assessment of the Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The site 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

At this stage, I consider the examination can be conducted solely by the written representations procedure, without the need for a hearing. However, 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 have a number of initial questions seeking further clarification, which I have set out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if you can seek to provide a written response within **4 weeks** of the date of this letter.

5. Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to examine the Plan (including conduct of the site visit) with a view to providing a draft report (for 'fact checking') within 4-6 weeks of its submission. In this instance, however, I have raised a number of initial questions and must allow time for these and any subsequent questions to be answered. Consequentially, the examination timetable will be extended. Please be assured that I will seek reduce any delay as far as is practicable. The IPe office team will seek to 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 a copy of this letter, and any responses to my questions are placed on the Parish Council and local planning authority's website.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

Bob Yuille

Examiner

ANNEX

From my initial reading of the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting evidence, I have the following preliminary questions..

Question to both South Cambridgeshire District Council and Histon and Impington Parish Council.

1. At the Regulation 16 stage South Cambridgeshire District Council made a large number of representations on the Plan. Would the two councils please produce a Statement of Common Ground which sets out those points on which they have been able to reach agreement and those on which they have not? Where they have reached agreement, can they let me have the wording of any consequential modifications they are proposing; where they cannot reach agreement, would they please set out the reasons for this?

In so doing I would be grateful if the two Councils would bear in mind that it is not part of my role as Examiner to delve into matters that do not fundamentally affect the Plan's ability to meet the Basic Conditions. I do not, therefore, deal with representations which, in effect, seek to improve the Plan but which are not necessary to meet the Basic Conditions.

Questions to South Cambridgeshire District Council.

2. The development plan for the area is the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018. Is that correct?

3. There is a commitment to undertake an early review of the adopted Local plan. This will be called the Greater Cambridge Local Plan. Has work on this commenced and if so, what stage has it reached?

Questions to Histon and Impington Parish Council.

4. Would the Parish Council please respond to the points made by various representors who object to Policy HIM04? These points include the opinion that the intention to restore Impington Mill should not be given priority over the rights of people living to the west to develop their property; that the Mill has not in the past been solely dependent on wind but has used an engine to provide supplementary power and that the covenant referred to in paragraph 5.44 is not designed to prevent further wind loss to the Mill. The question has also been raised as to how will this policy be implemented and who will advise the District Council on the application of the Molen-Biotoop methodology referred to in the policy.

5. Would the Parish Council please respond to points made by various representors who consider that the wording of the Plan needs to be modified to refer to bridleways and the needs of equestrians?

6. Table 4 of the Plan makes clear that several of the Local Green Spaces proposed in Policy HIM12 are in the Green Belt or Conservation Areas. Given that these sites are already protected by these designations, what additional local benefit would be gained by designating them as Local Green Spaces?

7. Were the owners of each of the proposed Local Green Spaces contacted at an early stage as required by Planning Policy Guidance Reference ID: 37-019-20140306?

8 Where will I find information as to the size of each of the proposed Local Green Spaces?

9. Representor No. 67948 claims that land he owns is identified on Map 17 of the Plan as '*Other non-important Natural Habitat areas providing ecological connectivity*'. Does the Parish Council know which land this relates to? If so, is it true that no ecological survey has been undertaken of this site?

10. What is the policy significance of the term '*Other non-important Natural Habitat areas providing ecological connectivity*'? I can find no reference to it in any policies of the Plan.