

Barrow cum Denham Neighbourhood Development Plan

Examiner's Note

Purpose of this Note

This Note sets out the basis on which the examination of the neighbourhood plan will now proceed. It is an update of the Examination Arrangements note of 8 January 2025.

The Parish Council's response to the Clarification Note

I have now considered both elements of the Parish Council's helpful response to the clarification note. I note the comments in the most recent element of the response about:

- the contents of the SEA/HRA process;
- the assessment of reasonable alternatives in the submitted Neighbourhood Plan; and
- the current stage of the West Suffolk Local Plan.

The suspension of the examination

The end of the consultation period for the proposed Main Modifications to the Local Plan is now imminent (15 April 2025). In these circumstances, I have concluded that it would be inappropriate to continue with the examination of the neighbourhood plan until such time as there is clarity on the timescale for the remaining stages of the Local Plan. I have reached this conclusion for two related reasons:

- in general terms, Planning practice guidance (ID: 41-009-20190509) advises that 'the local planning authority (here West Suffolk Council) should work with the qualifying body (here the Parish Council) so that complementary neighbourhood and local plan policies are produced. It is important to minimise any conflicts between policies in the neighbourhood plan and those in the emerging local plan, including housing supply policies'; and
- in specific terms, the differences between West Suffolk Council and the Parish Council on the allocation of land for residential use in the neighbourhood area are significant.

As such, the examination of the neighbourhood plan is suspended.

The next steps

I will liaise with West Suffolk Council as it decides how to proceed with the Local Plan after the consultation period has finished. Thereafter, I will issue a further note.

Once the process restarts, the examination will move directly to Stage 4 (Decision about the need for a hearing) and then to Stage 5 (the Examination Report) as set out in the earlier Examination Arrangement Note.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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7 April 2025