

Great Barton Neighbourhood Development Plan

Independent Examiner's Clarification Note

Context

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 is very well-presented. The quality of the photographs and maps is very good. It results in a very readable and interesting document. The distinction between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. The Plan provides a distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area.

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now in a position to raise some initial issues for clarification. They are primarily for the Parish Council. There is also a specific question for West Suffolk Council.

The comments that are made on these points will be used to assist in the preparation of my report. They will also inform any potential modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

Questions for Great Barton Parish Council

Policy GB3

Does the imposition of development of 'around 150 dwellings' have regard to national policy to (NPPF paragraphs 59/60)?

Is the figure of 150 dwellings intended to be a cap or simply an indicative figure?

Policy GB4

Is the proposed housing mix underpinned by appropriate evidence?

Is the intended 15% delivery of bungalows intended to overlap with the requirement for 60% of all dwellings to be two or three bedrooms in size?

Policy GB5

In general terms this policy is well-considered.

In detail is it the Parish Council's intention that the whole of the policy would apply to The Severals site with the exception of section ii (the two-storey height issue)?

If so, is such an approach appropriate given that an adopted concept plan for the Severals site is included within the Bury St Edmunds Vision 2031 Local Plan (2014) and with a masterplan also adopted in 2014 as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)? Furthermore, West Suffolk Council advises that a hybrid outline planning application for 1375 homes on the site, with full details for phase 1 and 291 dwellings, was submitted in December 2019 and is pending consideration.

In any event is there appropriate evidence to support such an approach in the submitted Plan?

Policy GB9

The Local Green Space Assessment is well-developed and is presented in an attractive way. However, is the final sentence of the submitted policy supporting text rather than policy?

Policy GB14

The Buildings of Local Significance study is well-developed and is presented in an attractive way.

Question for West Suffolk Council*Policy GB3*

Does the Council have any comments on the suggestion from Suffolk County Council (13) on the proposed enlargement of the reservation of land for school provision in Policy GB3? In particular would it be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan?

Representations

Does the Town Council wish to comment on any of the representations received on the Plan?

In particular does it have any comments on the representations made by:

- West Suffolk Council (16) (in its capacity as the local planning authority)?
- James Broughton (3) on Policy GB14?
- West Suffolk Council and Suffolk Council (7)?
- Suffolk County Council (13) on the proposed enlarged reservation of land for school provision in Policy GB3?

Note: The numbers are those shown in the West Suffolk Council schedule of representations.

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses to the various questions by 16 September 2020. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It reflects the factual basis of the questions raised.

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 can all responses be sent to me by West Suffolk Council and make direct reference to the policy/issue concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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1 September 2020