

Preston Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

Examiner's Clarification Note

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 provides a distinctive vision for the neighbourhood area.

The presentation of the Plan is excellent. The difference between the policies and the supporting text is very clear. The maps are very effective. The use of colour is helpful to the layout of the Plan. The photographs are particularly helpful and well-chosen.

The Plan has carefully formulated policies to add value to the wider development plan, including the emerging Local Plan.

Sections 1 and 2 of the Plan provide a very effective introduction to the Plan.

Points for Clarification

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 issues for clarification with the Parish Council. There are also specific questions for the District Council.

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 the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions. I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan.

Questions for the Parish Council

Policy HD1

Is this policy necessary?

To what extent does it add any value to the relevant policy in the emerging Local Plan?

Policy HD2/3/4/6/7

Are these policies intended to apply simply to the allocated site (HD1)?

Or is it intended that they would apply both to the allocated site and to any proposal which may come forwards as a result of Policy HD10?

Policy HD7

As submitted, it is not written as a policy. Is the intention that the first sentence should read along the lines of 'All new homes should be developed to include a garden of a scale appropriate to the size of the dwelling'?

Policy HD8

The initial sentence does not have the clarity required by the NPPF.

Does 'should avoid' mean that such developments 'will not be supported'?

In what circumstances would proposals be supported ‘where development is necessary’? How would the District Council be able to apply this element of the policy clearly and consistently?

Policy HD11

Is this a policy or supporting text to Policy HD10?

Policy EH1

For clarity should the village boundary be included within the Neighbourhood Plan itself?

Does the Parish Council support the definition of the village boundary and the relevant local plan policy?

Policy EH4

The assessments in Appendix C have been well-developed. However please can I have a version of the map on page 76 which highlights the seven proposed LGSs.

I can see that the policy identifies exceptions to the otherwise restrictive policy. On what basis has the Parish Council sought to identify the ‘very special circumstances’ as mentioned in the NPPF?

Should they be supporting text rather than policy?

Policies EH5/EH6/EH7

The various policies eventually become policies. However, in each case the policy is prefaced by supporting text.

I am minded to recommend that the initial parts of each of these policies are repositioned into the supporting text. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

Basic Conditions Statement

I can understand the approach taken in Paragraph 5.2.

However, it acknowledges that the submitted Plan is not in general conformity with the existing (albeit dated) adopted development plan?

Has the Parish Council directly considered this matter and the ability or otherwise of the Plan to meet the basic conditions?

Question for the District Council

What is the current state of progress on the emerging Local Plan?

In particular when is it anticipated that it will be adopted?

Please see my question to the Parish Council on the Basic Conditions Statement. Has the District Council directly considered this matter and the ability or otherwise of the Plan to meet the basic conditions in these circumstances?

What is the District Council’s view about the potential making of the neighbourhood plan before the emerging local plan is adopted given the strategic nature of the proposed changes to Green Belt boundaries and the contents of paragraphs 135/136 of the NPPF 2019?

Representations

Does the Parish Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan?

Protocol for responses

I would be grateful for responses and the information requested by 12 September 2019. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

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 could it all come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

Preston Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan.

19 August 2019