
CHAPTER 2: USER GUIDE

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 As its name suggests, the User Guide explains how the Plan should be employed to understand which policies are relevant to determining a planning application. I find the Guide clear and helpful. I recommend a minor modification to the text reflecting a proposed change put forward by the District Council, together with certain corrections.

2.2 Paragraphs 2.1 - 2.11 Introduction

Objections to First Deposit Version

193/AN	Coten End and Emscote Residents' Association
193/AO	Coten End and Emscote Residents' Association
197/AA	Norton Lindsey Parish Council
199/AN	James Mackay
199/AO	James Mackay
228/AB	West Midlands RSL Planning Consortium

Objections to Revised Deposit Version

66/RAB	The Warwick Society
199/RAF	James Mackay
350/RAB	Tesco Stores Ltd

Key Issues

- 2.2.1**
- (1) Whether there should also be guidelines on the planning application consultation process.
 - (2) Whether other matters should be included in the list of factors to be assessed and considered when determining a planning application.
 - (3) Whether the introductory sentence of Paragraph 2.8 in the First Deposit Plan should be reinstated.
 - (4) Whether clarification is necessary on how to locate the various Proposals Map Inset Plans.
 - (5) Whether the Environment Agency contact telephone number is the most appropriate.
 - (6) Whether parts of the User Guide are superfluous due to the status of the Plan prior to adoption and because of the SPD in force on Managing Housing Supply.

- (7) Whether the wording used in some parts of the Plan is ambiguous and does not deliver the requisite degree of certainty.

Inspector's Appraisal and Conclusions

- 2.2.2 Issue 1:** The purpose of the User Guide is to clarify how the Plan should be used by applicants. It explains the structure of the Plan and why it is in that format, and details the relationship between the different chapters and the Proposals Map and Inset Plans. There are 2 flow diagrams. The first shows how to find the policies that apply to a particular site. The second illustrates the planning application process as a whole, outlining clearly and simply the various stages. I consider that both charts would also be of use to consultees when considering the appropriateness and suitability of any scheme. With this in mind, I see no need for any further guidance.
- 2.2.3 Issue 2:** In the Revised Deposit Plan the Council added 'representations of objection and support' and 'affordability' to the list of factors identified in Paragraph 2.8. I support those amendments. I agree that 'tenure' need not be included, it being subsumed within affordability. As regards 'sustainability', this is expanded upon elsewhere through other Plan policies and through the objectives of the Core Strategy. Consequently, there is no need to enlarge upon the matter here.
- 2.2.4 Issue 3:** I agree with Tesco Stores Ltd that the first sentence of Paragraph 2.8 in the First Deposit version of the Plan should be reinstated to reflect the plan-led system and the primacy of the development plan. The District Council has, I note, suggested a proposed change to this effect with the result that the objection has been conditionally withdrawn.
- 2.2.5 Issue 4:** Paragraph 2.5A inserted into the Revised Deposit Plan satisfactorily addresses this concern.
- 2.2.6 Issue 5:** The Environment Agency contact telephone number has been amended in the Revised Deposit Plan. The number substituted is, I am told, that of the planning liaison team at the local area office.
- 2.2.7 Issue 6:** The User Guide needs to be relevant over the lifespan of the Plan. It would, I feel, be inappropriate to refer to the status and timescale of documents which might change over time or be superseded once the Plan is adopted. The SPD on Managing Housing Supply has been approved by the District Council for use in decision making but cannot be formally adopted at this stage and could conceivably be withdrawn before 2011.
- 2.2.8 Issue 7:** I am satisfied that efforts have been made to ensure that the Plan is clear and user-friendly, and that it reflects the slimmed down and more structured approach of the new local development framework. Where I consider there to be ambiguity or lack of clarity in a policy or its explanatory text, I say so in my report.
- 2.2.9** Although not raised in objections, I note that there are minor typographical errors in Paragraphs 2.2 and 2.4 of the Plan. I include those corrections in my recommendations.

Recommendations

2.2.10 (a) That the Revised Deposit Plan be modified as follows:

- (i) **substitute the following text for the introductory sentence and first bullet point of Paragraph 2.8:**

“Planning applications are determined primarily against policies in the development plan. The following points are assessed and considered when determining a planning application:-

- policies contained within supplementary planning guidance and supplementary planning documents;**
-**”

- (ii) **amend the fourth sentence of Paragraph 2.2:**

to delete the word ‘that’ before the word ‘those’.

- (iii) **amend Paragraph 2.4 by:**

deleting the words ‘and what’ in the first sentence.

- (b) **That no further modifications be made to the Revised Deposit Plan in respect of these objections.**
