**Leek Wootton and Guy’s Cliffe Neighbourhood 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 well-presented. It provides a clear and distinctive vision for the neighbourhood plan area. Its focus on Green Belt issues and the future of the former Warwickshire Police HQ is very distinctive to the Plan area.

The Plan’s preparation has overlapped with that of the Warwick District Local Plan 2011-2029. The recent adoption of the Local Plan in September 2017 has implications on the examination of the submitted neighbourhood plan against the basic conditions. This is reflected in several clarification questions in this Note.

***Points for Clarification***

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the Plan area. I am now in a position to raise some initial issues for clarification. They are designed mainly for the Parish Council. There are two specific questions for the District Council. They are set out towards the end of the Note.

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

I set out an initial series of strategic issues followed by clarification points on specific policies in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan.

***Strategic issues***

I can see from the audit trail and several of the representations that the Plan has now been overtaken by the adoption of the Warwick District Local Plan. Plainly this has an implication on the assessment of the submitted Neighbourhood Plan against the basic conditions in general terms, and its conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in particular. Policies LW3/5/6/7 are particularly affected by the details of Policy DS22 in the recently-adopted Local Plan.

Are there any elements of those policies and their supporting text that specifically add value and local distinctiveness to policy DS22 of the Local Plan?

Are there elements of the supporting text that are now superseded by the adoption of the Local Plan?

***General Policy clarification***

Policy LW1- I can see the purpose of the policy. However, is its section 9 effectively a summary of the preceding eight factors? Would it sit better in the supporting text?

Policy LW2 – Is the existing green infrastructure referred to in the policy that as described in paragraphs 6.1.11-6.1.14 of the supporting text? If so is it shown on a single map? Map 4 appears to refer only to Local Wildlife Sites.

Policy LW3 – Are the proposals deliverable given that negotiations with the Warwickshire Constabulary remain outstanding? Should they be seen within the overall development of a master plan?

Policy LW4 – I can see that as submitted the policy would apply to all the proposed development sites. In the context of the preparation of a master plan for the Police HQ site would there be merit and/or clarity in this policy applying only to other smaller developments that may arise as a result of policies LW8/9/10?

Policy LW8 – Do criteria 2 and 3 and their references to ‘adequate’ and ‘suitable’ mean ‘in accordance with development plan standards’? If not, how would the policy be applied in an informed and consistent way by the District Council?

Policy LW10 – Is there any further information/evidence on the proposed designation of a local green space beyond that in paragraph 6.4.14? How large is the site? What is the current level of public use of the proposed local green space?

I am separately asking the District Council to seek information from the Warwickshire Constabulary on the current use of the site.

Policy LW11 – The third paragraph refers to ‘new developments’. Is the policy intended to refer to all schemes irrespective of their size?

Map 11 would suggest that it is intended to apply to the Woodcote site. If this is the case has the wider issue of traffic generation from that site and its associated mitigation now been addressed in the recently-adopted Local Plan?

Policy LW12 – In my view the first and third paragraphs are not land use policies. On this basis I intended to recommend that they are repositioned into a separate part of the Plan in accordance with Planning Practice Guidance. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this approach?

Policy LW15 – There appears to be a disjoint between the supporting text (6.6.4) and the policy itself. The former supports homeworking generally. The latter appears to refer only to homeworking from ‘new housing development’. Please can I be advised on the Parish Council’s intentions on this point?

Appendices III/IV/V – Is this information now redundant following the recent adoption of the Local Plan?

***Questions for Warwick District Council***

What is the current position on the preparation of a master plan for the former Police HQ site following the adoption of the Local Plan in general, and Policy DS22 in particular?

Are there any planning applications or applications for listed building consent pending decision on this site?

***Protocol for responses***

I would be grateful for comments by Friday 15 December 2017. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain progress on 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 can all responses be sent to me by Warwick District Council making direct reference to the policy concerned.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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5 December 2017