

**Belmont Rural Neighbourhood Plan Examination**  
**Request for further information and questions from the Examiner to the Parish Council and HC**

Having completed my initial review of the Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) and the evidence submitted in support of it, I would be grateful if both Councils could kindly assist me as appropriate in answering the following questions which either relate to matters of fact or are areas in which I seek clarification or request further information.

*Queries requesting further information and clarification*

1. I am mindful that the Parish has not got any 'target' for housing numbers, but it is important to ensure that the Parish contributes to the housing need identified for Hereford. Given the range and coverage of policies in the Plan, including in particular Policies 1, 2 (which could be regarded as potentially restricting housing supply) and 5 (which supports infill development), please could HC confirm whether they are satisfied (or not) that the Plan and its approach will generally conform to the strategic policies in the development plan in relation to housing requirements.
2. Leading on from this, Policy 2 seeks to protect Home Farm and land adjacent to Ruckhall Lane shown on Figure 10 from any development that would have a detrimental impact on its open character and the setting of heritage assets. Three questions arise:
  - a. This area coincides with an indicative route of the Relief Road shown in Figure 12 of the Plan. Please could HC update me on the latest position with the proposal and state whether it is considered that Policy 2 is in general conformity (or not) with the strategic policies of the development plan in this regard? In particular I am keen to ensure that the wording and thrust of Policy 2 would not (however inadvertently) prevent the Relief Road proposal from being implemented.
  - b. The supporting text refers to the area as an 'unregistered park'. Please could more details be given to me about the status/designation of, and information about, this area.
  - c. Please could a copy of the appeal decision (or link to it) for Home Farm be provided to me?
3. Policy 3, the Belmont Golf Course, supports housing, B1 or leisure uses on an area defined in Figures 5 and 11 as long as the existing buildings are reused and converted. A number of queries arise:
  - a. Are the existing buildings or any part of the land referred to in Policy 3 heritage assets? If so, please provide details.
  - b. Have any assessments been done (by the PC or anyone else) of the potential to convert the existing buildings or of their character and any historic or other contribution they may make to the local area? In other words what is the supporting information/evidence and rationale for Policy 3?

- c. How and on what basis has the area subject to the policy and shown on Figure 11 been defined?
- d. Has the landowner or their representatives been involved in any discussions and the development of this policy?
- e. A representation from Savills, on behalf of the landowner, indicates, amongst other things, their view that the policy is “overly restrictive, unjustified and has not taken account of the existing internal layout, condition or viability of the re-use”. Savills also refer to previous contact with Historic England and the need for enabling development. My earlier question relates to the basis on which this policy has been predicated. I consider it would be useful for HC to write to Savills to ask for further information and evidence in relation to the viability points they make in their representation objecting to Policy 3. I am keen to ensure that Policy 3 does not, however inadvertently, prevent the achievement of sustainable development.

#### *Queries of clarification*

- 4. Is there some missing text at the end of paragraph 5.14 on page 22 of the Plan? If so, please provide the text.
- 5. Policy 1 criterion b) seeks the designation of four areas of Local Green Space (LGS). These are shown on Figure 9. Yet Figure 8 refers to five such areas. Please clarify; for instance is Area 5 included within Area 2 on the map?
- 6. If possible, please provide a map indicating the location of the Local Wildlife Sites referred to in criterion d) of Policy 1 or direct me to where I might access this information.
- 7. Policy 1 criterion e) refers to Herefordshire’s Playing Pitch Assessment 2012, but this is not mentioned elsewhere in the Plan. I can see that this was included after a comment from Sport England at the pre-submission stage, but please could you briefly explain the relevance and status of this document and the intention of criterion e)?
- 8. Policy 5 criterion c) refers to garden areas and parking being provided “within the boundary of the existing property”. Was it intended to mean that gardens and parking would be provided within the curtilage of the new house(s) built? If not, please clarify what the intention was.
- 9. The Hereford Area Plan is referred to on page 41 of the Plan. Please update me on the latest position and whether the reference to the Area Plan is still relevant and appropriate for inclusion in this Plan.
- 10. The Basic Conditions Statement (page 11) indicates that Table 3 sets out the way Plan policies conform to the pre-submission version of the Herefordshire Local Plan Core Strategy (CS), but an earlier paragraph recognises the CS was adopted. Please confirm whether (or not) Table 3 relates to the adopted CS.

11. Was the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion consulted upon? If so, please give me details about the consultation and its dates.
12. The Environmental Report refers to a response from the Environment Agency at paragraph 2.10, page 5 as well as referring to a different neighbourhood plan. I have assumed these comments are made in error; is that correct?

It may be the case that on receipt of your anticipated assistance on these matters that I may need to ask for further clarification or that further queries will occur as the examination progresses. Please note that this list of questions and request for information is a public document and the answers and any associated documents will also be in the public domain. Both my questions and the responses should be placed on the Councils' websites as appropriate.

With many thanks.

Ann Skippers  
5 April 2017