

Dursley Neighbourhood Development Plan 2018-2031

Initial Comments of the Independent Examiner

Prepared by

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10th August 2018

1. As you will be aware, I have been appointed to carry out the examination of the Dursley Neighbourhood Development Plan. I have carried out my initial review of the Plan and the accompanying documents that I have been sent. Yesterday, I visited the town and the surrounding countryside to familiarise myself with the plan area.
2. My initial view is that I should be able to deal with the examination of this Plan by the consideration of the written material only, although I do still have to reserve the right to call for a public hearing, if I consider that it will assist my examination.
3. There are a number of issues that I am seeking the views of the Qualifying Body, Dursley Town Council.

Regulation 16 Representations

4. I would firstly offer the Town Council an opportunity to comment on any of the Regulation 16 consultation responses. I would be particularly pleased to receive comments on the following representations:
 - a. Gladman Developments Ltd
 - b. Stroud District Council Property Services Team
 - c. Bell Cornwell on behalf of Avant Homes Ltd
 - d. Stroud District Council

Policy ES1: Green Infrastructure

5. Policy ES1 states that the neighbourhood plan is proposing to establish a green infrastructure network connecting the green spaces shown in Figure 7. However, it appears that the map is a compendium of all the natural habitat features and open spaces in the town. It does not show the “green links” unless it is referring to the hedgerow/treeline shown as a green dotted line. Whilst I can see the practicality of creating a green network through the masterplanning of new development areas such as Littlecombe, I am struggling to understand how or where the isolated green spaces will be linked up in the rest of the town. Is there a plan that shows the proposed network and linkages that will connect the green spaces up?
6. The issue is that the policy requires that any development within or adjoining the “network” will be expected to show how it will enhance (and maintain?) the green links. How will an applicant or decision maker know whether their proposals will lie on or close to the alignment of the new network which the plan proposes.
7. What is the objective of the green link? Is it to create a pedestrian route for residents and walkers to move through the area, following green spaces and avoiding the roads or is it meant to be a route to provide a corridor for wildlife to move through the plan area?

Community facilities

8. Can I be provided with a list of the community facilities that are shown on Figure 15. I would wish to incorporate a list of them, within the wording of the policy.

Long Street Town Green

9. This is identified as a local green space but on my site visit, I noted that there was a new road alignment to serve the new development under construction. Is it still the intention that this area of the designated as local green space?

Potential areas for enhancement

10. I need to be clear as to the planning status of the four areas with potential for enhancement and the proposals within them? Are they policies or proposals of the neighbourhood plan and therefore part of the development plan, are they to be used for the determination of planning applications? At present, they do not appear to be identified as planning policies.

Dursley Urban Design Framework

11. What is the status of this framework and its update – has it been adopted by the LPA as a Supplementary Planning Document, has the document been the subject to public consultation or have been the subject of a sustainability appraisal. It has been referred to as part of the evidence base of the plan.

Summary

12. It would be very helpful if the Town Council could provide me with the any representations and responses to these questions, by Friday **24th August 2018**, to enable me to complete this is examination within the original timescales sought?
13. Finally, I will be grateful, if a copy of this note and any subsequent response is placed on the appropriate neighbourhood plan website and copied to the LPA.

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Independent Examiner to the Dursley Neighbourhood Development Plan.

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