

## **Burcott and Clifton Hampden Neighbourhood Development Plan**

### **Clifton Hampden Neighbourhood Development Order**

#### **Examination Arrangements**

##### ***Purpose of this Note***

This Note sets out the basis on which the examination of the neighbourhood plan and the neighbourhood development order will be undertaken. It has two related purposes:

- to comply with the NPIERS Guidance for service users and examiners (April 2018); and
- to provide guidance for the Parish Council on the key stages of the two examinations.

##### ***The examination route map***

Different examinations raise their own issues. Nevertheless, the examination of the Plan and the Order will have the following the key stages:

##### ***Stage 1: Background Reading***

This involves reading the submitted Plan and the Order, the supporting documents, and the various representations. I will take all this information into account when preparing the two reports. This stage of the examination process is now largely completed.

##### ***Stage 2: Visit to the neighbourhood area***

The visit will provide me with an opportunity to look at specific issues and locations in the neighbourhood area. Plainly not every component of the Plan needs to be viewed on the visit. Nevertheless, it will be focused on the issues that have arisen either from the background reading and/or which are fundamental to the Plan and specifically to the Order.

The visit will be unaccompanied. I will not meet with representatives of the Parish Council, the District Council or any of the parties who have commented on the Plan and/or the Order. To do so would have the potential to affect the independence of the examination processes.

I will visit the neighbourhood area shortly.

##### ***Stage 3: Clarification Notes***

I will prepare separate clarification notes for the Plan and the Order after the visit. They will raise a series of questions for the Parish Council. The note for the Plan will be sent shortly after the visit. The note for the Order will take longer to prepare and will follow thereafter.

The answers to the questions will help me to understand the Plan better and, where necessary, to recommend modifications to ensure it meets the basic conditions.

The clarification notes will suggest timescales for responses based on the issues addressed. However, this is a matter which I am happy should proceed at whatever pace is determined locally. This acknowledges that work on neighbourhood plans and orders is carried out by parish councils and individuals on a voluntary basis.

I am happy for the Parish Council to delay its response to the note on the Plan until it has seen the questions in the note on the Order

#### *Stage 4: Decision about the need for a hearing*

The combination of the background reading, the unaccompanied visit and the responses to the clarification notes will allow me to come to a view about the need or otherwise for a hearing as part of the two examination processes. The legislation anticipates that most examinations can proceed by way of written representations and without a hearing.

If a hearing is required, I will ask the District Council to make the necessary arrangements.

#### *Stage 5: The Examination Reports*

I will prepare the two reports throughout the examination period. Their general parts can be written early in the process. The elements of the reports that overlap with the clarification notes will not be prepared until the responses to the note are received. These arrangements would also apply if a hearing was required.

I will prepare fact check reports before the final reports. This will give an opportunity for the Parish Council and the District Council to comment on any factual inaccuracies and/or omissions within the reports. It will not present an opportunity for the examinations to enter another phase.

#### ***Other related matters***

##### *The timing of the examination*

Plainly neighbourhood plans and orders cover different issues. In addition, their examinations are inevitably linear and are directly affected by the issues addressed and the number and complexity of the representations received.

In the case of the submitted Plan, I anticipate being able to send the fact check report in early October 2023. Plainly, the anticipated programme may be affected by the timing of the responses to the clarification note and/or the organisation of any required hearing.

In the case of the submitted Order, I will provide a separate timetable once the responses to the clarification note have been received.

##### *Documents/Administrative Arrangements*

I have asked the District Council to display all examination-related documents on its website.

I will ask the District Council to send documents to the Parish Council on my behalf. This will ensure that the District Council's website is up-to-date and that all concerned can track the progress of the two examinations.

Andrew Ashcroft

Independent Examiner

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7 August 2023