

PRESTON PARISH COUNCIL

CHAIRMAN: Cllr Mrs J Tomblin,
CLERK: Mrs C Braidwood, 77 Pheasant Way, Cirencester, Gloucestershire GL7 1BJ
Tel: 01285 380040 Email: clerk@prestonpc.org.uk

Andy Mead
Examiner
Intelligent Plans and Examinations (IPE)Ltd

cc. Joseph Walker
Cotswold District Council

7 December 2020

Dear Mr Mead,

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE PRESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

RESPONSE TO EXAMINER'S QUESTIONS DATED 19 NOVEMBER 2020

Examination Ref: 02/AM/PNP

Thank you for your letter of 19 November. The Parish Council's reply is as follows:

Q1: The Period of the Plan

Response:

The Local Plan Period is to 2031 and as a minimum, the Preston NDP period should extend to this date.

The initial Vision meeting in 2017 asked the Parishioners to imagine an end date of 2028. With hindsight, this was too short a period because it would only have resulted in an effective plan period of 2019-2028 which is only 9 years. To correct this and to bring the NPD in line with the Local Plan, subsequent drafts assumed an end date of 2031.

Evidence gathering started on the NDP in 2017. At that time, a plan period to 2031 would have been a plan period of 13 years, assuming a referendum in 2018. However, the original evidence in support of the countryside and landscape policies was criticised by the planning authority and it was decided to commission Portus & Whitton to prepare a landscape assessment. This led to almost a 2 year delay.

The community survey still used the date of 2031. However, by the time that the Reg. 14 consultation had been completed, it looked likely that the NDP would not be made before 2021. Had the original timetable end date been retained, the effective plan period would have been from 2021 to 2031 which is only 10 years. The

Steering Group felt that the preparation of the neighbourhood plan had been onerous and did not wish to go into an immediate review. The Steering Group referred to NPPF para. 22 which referred to strategic policies. The Steering Group considered that this would be appropriate for the neighbourhood plan.

For this reason, the end date was subsequently switched from 2031 to 2036 to provide an effective plan period of 15 years. There are no minutes to document this change but it was agreed with the Chairman of the Steering Group.

Q2: Regulation 14 Consultation

The Parish Clerk has confirmed that the end date of the consultation was 6 April 2020. Late responses were accepted.

Q3: Landscape

The photos in Figure 7 of the NPD seek to illustrate the importance of the view of the Parish Church as one approaches Cirencester on the A419. This area also serves as part of Cirencester's setting. The photos show the location of the church spire but do not do the view justice. In reality, when one drives towards Cirencester, one clearly perceives the spire and its importance to the viewer grows as the viewer drives nearer. The entire length of the A419 along the green wedge is important in this regard.

Elsewhere in the green wedge, one can see the spire. If development were to occur within the green wedge on land that is currently agricultural, any building would block the view and mitigation would be called for.

The green wedge in Figure 8 is within the view cone starting at the Parish Church and radiating outwards over level land. The figure below draws this view cone for clarification. Within this cone, it is possible to have views of the spire of the Parish Church and thus to understand the location of the historic heart of Cirencester. The view on the northern side of the A419 is impeded by the dual carriageway and in any event is of lesser importance and is therefore not included in the green wedge.

The policy wording for 1D is:

The open landscape character of the "green wedge" key view to the north east of the A419/Ermine way in Preston (Figure 8), and its positive contribution to the setting of Cirencester, should be retained.

Paras. 66 and 67 explain that the view is important from the Ermin Way as the main southerly approach into Cirencester, and from public footpaths and from the village itself. In addition, the openness of the green wedge is also of value, as explained in para. 67 and in Table 1, Area 4b which describes sensitive receptors.

Taken together, and to answer the Examiner's specific questions,

- *How is the map to be interpreted? Should there be a line drawn to define a hard boundary in the north west?*

It might be helpful to draw a hard boundary on Figure 8 showing the view cone as drawn in this response. It was left as a shaded area in the Submitted NDP because

there are no “hard” boundaries except the roads – it is a view cone and individual developments should address how they will retain the key view based on their own merits.

I trust that this is the information you require but if you have any further queries please do not hesitate to come back to us.

Regards,

Caroline Braidwood

CLERK TO THE PARISH COUNCIL

Figure 8: Key view linking Cirencester (and its Parish Church) to its rural hinterland

