

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE FAIRFORD  
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

EXAMINER: Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Roz Morton  
Deputy Clerk to Fairford Town Council

Joseph Walker  
Cotswold District Council

Examination Ref: 02/AM/FNP

21 December 2022

Dear Ms Morton and Mr Walker

**FAIRFORD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION**

Having now reviewed all the documentation submitted with the Fairford Neighbourhood Plan (FNP) and conducted the site visit, I have a number of questions which seek clarification on some of the matters which have been raised.

I have one question for both Fairford Town Council (FTC) and Cotswold District Council (CDC) (Qu.1); four questions which are intended for FTC (Qu's. 2-5); and a further question which is addressed to CDC (albeit FTC is also welcomed to comment) (Qu.6).

In order to progress the examination, I would be grateful for responses to my questions to be made by **Monday 16 January 2023**, although an earlier response would be most welcome.

**1. Question to both FTC and CDC. Policy FNP1.1 Development Boundaries.**

Paragraph 6.5 indicates that the housing site F\_35B allocated by Policy S5 of the Cotswold District Local Plan (CDLP) has been removed and I note the Sustainability Appraisal states that since the adoption of the CDLP the site has been withdrawn and is no longer available for development.<sup>1</sup> However, comparison of CDLP Inset 4 – Fairford with the FNP Map B2 shows land to the east of site F\_35B has also been deleted from the Development Boundary.

a) Has this additional land been deleted for the same reasons as the withdrawal of F\_35B?

b) Does CDC accept that CDLP housing allocation F\_35B is no longer deliverable?

c) Are there other examples where the boundaries do not coincide (such as the small spike of land north-east of LGS 8 & 9 iii shaded green – Coln House Playing Field) and please could these be explained?

**2. Question to FTC. What were the dates of the Regulation 14 Consultation?**

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<sup>1</sup> SA Report: page 18 paragraph 4.12.

3. **Question to FTC.** Policy FNP3.1 l) Should Riverside Gardens be included on Map D: Community Facilities? If so, please show where?
4. **Question to FTC.** Policy FN)12.1 k) is a statement rather than a policy. Should this have an addition such as “.... and will not be supported”?
5. **Question to FTC.** Should the Key on Maps B and B1 refer to FNP17 in relation to the area which is coloured blue in the south east of the Plan area and not FNP16?
6. **Question to CDC (Comments from FTC welcome).** This relates to the Regulation 16 Consultation response from the Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DOI), dated 12 December 2022.

#### RAF Fairford

The DOI notes that the process and procedure for safeguarding strategic military aerodromes is defined within 'The Town and Country Planning (Safeguarded Aerodromes, Technical Sites and Military Explosives Storage Areas) Direction 2002'. In accordance with the requirements of that Direction, safeguarding plans are prepared and provided to Local Planning Authorities by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. These plans communicate the requirement to consult the Ministry of Defence (MOD) where specific forms of development are proposed, and the Direction sets out the Local Planning Authority's obligations with regard to both consultation and what actions are to be taken depending on responses to that consultation.

The Neighbourhood Plan area is washed over by statutory safeguarding zones drawn to ensure that the operation and capability of both RAF Fairford and RAF Brize Norton is not compromised or otherwise degraded by development. It is requested that reference is made in the Neighbourhood Plan to a requirement that new development does not compromise the operation or capability of Defence sites and assets.

Policy FNP14 provides guidance for a new low or zero carbon residential development on land identified between Leafield Road and Hatherop Road. This site falls within statutory safeguarding zones drawn to preserve the operation and capability of both RAF Fairford and RAF Brize Norton. The requirement for safeguarding consultation would be triggered by proposals for development within the designated policy area that exceeds a height of 15.2m above ground level; would be clad, finished, or constructed of metallic materials; or would include or incorporate a refuse tip, reservoir, sewage disposal works, nature reserve or bird sanctuary. In addition, consultation should take place where the development introduces or contains any area of open water, whether permanent or temporary, or Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). The same circumstances apply to development at the Whelford Road Industrial Estate under Policy FNP17.

The area to which the Neighbourhood Plan would apply falls within an area characterised by bodies of water, many formed as a result of mineral extraction and working. This proliferation of waterbodies contributes to a substantial population of waterfowl and other species which have the potential to be hazardous to aviation safety. This may be relevant to the provisions of Policy FNP4 Managing Flood Risk. It is requested that an additional provision is added that makes clear that where development includes the provision of attenuation or drainage basins, or incorporates any SuDS, there will, due to statutory safeguarding concerns, be a requirement for an

assessment of the potential for the development to form an environment attractive to birds and, where necessary, mitigation measures shall be incorporated to minimise the potential of the development to provide such an attractive environment.

Should the issues raised by the DOI be addressed primarily in the review of the CDLP due to their applicability at a wider scale than an individual neighbourhood plan? If not, is the CDC able to suggest the phrasing of an appropriate policy aimed at consultation on the implications of development proposed at Policies FNP14 and FNP17?

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure that a copy of this letter is placed on the Town Council and Local Authority websites.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

*Andy Mead*

Examiner