**INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF WINCANTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

EXAMINER: Jill Kingaby BSc (Econ) MSc MRTPI

David Clews

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Dear Mr Clews and Ms Witherden

WINCANTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Wincanton Neighbourhood Plan for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of preliminary questions for the Town Council.

1. Examination Documentation

I can confirm that I am satisfied that I have received a complete submission of the draft Plan and accompanying documentation, including the Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Statement and the Regulation 16 representations, to enable me to undertake the examination.

Subject to my detailed assessment of the draft plan, I have not at this initial stage identified any very significant and obvious flaws in the plan that might lead me to advise that the examination should not proceed.

1. Site Visit

I intend to undertake a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area during the week commencing 11th September 2017*.* This will assist in my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The site visit will be undertaken unaccompanied. It is very important that I am not approached to discuss any aspects of the Plan or the neighbourhood area, as this may be perceived to prejudice my independence and risk compromising the fairness of the examination process.

1. Written Representations

At this stage, I consider the examination can be conducted solely by the written representations procedure, without the need for a hearing. However, I will reserve the option to convene a hearing should a matter(s) come to light where I consider that a hearing is necessary to ensure the adequate examination of an issue, or to ensure that a person has a fair chance to put a case.

1. Further Clarification

I have a number of initial questions seeking further clarification, which I have set out in the Annexe to this letter. I would be grateful if you can seek to provide a written response by 15th September*.*

Examination Timetable

As you will be aware, the intention is to examine the plan (including conduct of the site visit) with a view to providing a draft report (for ‘fact checking’) within 4-6 weeks of submission of the draft plan.

At this juncture, I consider that I will be able to meet the anticipated 6 week timetable. Once I have conducted the site visit, the IPe office team will provide an indication of the expected date for receipt of my draft report.

In the interests of transparency, may I prevail upon you to ensure a copy of this letter, and any respective responses, are placed on the local authority’s website.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

Jill Kingaby

Examiner

Annexe to Examiner’s Letter - Wincanton Neighbourhood Plan Examination

1. Page 14 - Wincanton’s Conservation Area is mentioned. It would assist me (and other readers and users of the Neighbourhood Plan) if the extent of it was shown on a map within the Plan. Would the Town Council confirm that this could be done and explain where a new or modified map should be added?
2. Page 14 – at the bottom of the page, reference is made to “undesignated heritage assets”. Policy 6 refers to “potential heritage assets” which may be “confirmed as historically significant”. Who would undertake the assessment of significance and reach a conclusion? Does South Somerset District Council maintain a local list of assets which do not have Listed Building status for example?
3. Page 18, Policy 10 – Custom and Self-Build Homes – refers to marketing “for a reasonable period”. Does the Town Council have a view as to how long this might be, and is the time period based on relevant experience within the locality?

1. The Regulation 16 responses raise a number of points, and it would assist me to understand how the Town Council views these responses. Detailed comments on the concerns raised by Abbey Manor Group Ltd and South Somerset District Council would be particularly helpful. If the Town Council considers that the submitted Neighbourhood Plan should be modified because of any of the comments received, please advise exactly how any policies or wording might be amended.
2. On procedural matters and human rights compliance, I wish to have a statement that the Plan would not breach human rights, within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998. South Somerset District Council should be consulted on this matter.