

## Sutton Replacement Neighbourhood Development Plan

### Examiner's Clarification Note

This Note sets out my initial comments on the submitted Plan. It also sets out areas where it would be helpful to have some further clarification. For the avoidance of any doubt, matters of clarification are entirely normal at this early stage of the examination process.

#### ***Initial Comments***

The Parish Council's intention to replace the Plan responds positively to national guidance and associated best practice. The Plan continues to provide a clear vision for the neighbourhood area.

The Plan addresses a series of bespoke issues relating to the natural and built environment of the parish and its landscape setting. The policies are very distinctive to the neighbourhood area. A key element of the Plan is the way in which some of its policies are supported by detailed assessments. The Design Guidelines and Codes, the Local Green Space Assessment, the Housing Needs Assessment, and the Appraisal of Views set out relevant information in a very clear way.

The outcome is an excellent example of a replacement a neighbourhood plan. The table in the first part of the Plan and the notes at the beginning of each policy provide very clear guidance to the reader about the way in which the replacement plan relates to the made Plan.

#### ***Points for Clarification***

I have read the submitted documents and the representations made to the Plan. I have also visited the neighbourhood area. I am now able to raise issues for clarification with the Parish Council.

The comments made on the points in this Note will be used to assist in the preparation of the examination report and in recommending any modifications that may be necessary to the Plan to ensure that it meets the basic conditions.

I set out specific policy clarification points below in the order in which they appear in the submitted Plan:

#### ***Policy SUT2***

The policy takes a positive approach to the delivery of new housing in the parish and provides a careful update from the made Plan.

In this context does the Parish Council have any comments on the District Council's representation about the way in which the residential development of Site 1/NP4 (north of The Brook/west of Mepal Road) should be addressed and safeguarded?

#### ***Policy SUT3***

Please can I have an update on the progress of planning applications on Garden Close to complement the information presented in the final part of paragraph 6.9 of the Plan?

*Policy SUT5*

The relationship between the percentage figures in the policy and the findings of the Housing Needs Assessment (in paragraph 6.12) is self-evident. Nevertheless, is the mathematical and prescriptive nature of the policy either realistic or deliverable?

Is the deliverability of the policy likely to be related to the size of residential developments?

*Policy SUT6*

The policy reads well.

I note its context as described in paragraph 6.16 of the Plan. However, does the submitted policy bring any added value to the delivery of affordable housing on rural exception sites beyond that already included in national and local planning policies?

*Policy SUT8*

The note at the beginning of the policy identifies that the concept and delivery of biodiversity net gain has been evolving for some time. However now that key elements of the Environment Act are now in place has the need for this policy been overtaken by national events?

*Policy SUT9*

The policy has carefully selected additional proposed local green spaces.

I am minded to add a policy wording at the end of the policy to reflect the national approach on local green spaces taken in paragraph 107 of the NPPF. Does the Parish Council have any comments on this proposition?

*Policy SUT13*

This is an effective new policy

*Policy SUT14*

The approach taken includes good revisions and updates to this important policy for the Elean Business Park.

*Policy SUT15*

This is a good new policy which has been carefully worded so that the District Council will be able to apply it in a proportionate way through the development management process

*Policy SUT17*

This new policy on hot-food take aways reads well. I saw the existing uses of this nature during the recent visit.

Paragraph 11.8 of the Plan comments about such uses and their potential impacts on the village centres. In this context is the policy intended to apply throughout the neighbourhood area or only within the village centre? If the intention is the latter, would the village centre have the same geographic area as applied in Policy SUT16 (and as shown on the Policies Map)?

*Policy SUT19*

The policy takes a distinctive and positive approach to this important national issue. Its implementation will assist significantly in promoting new development that is distinctive to its

townscape setting. The interplay between the Sutton Design Codes and the Development Design Checklist (Appendix 1) is a very positive local response to Section 12 of the NPPF.

Are criteria j and k now needed given that the issues addressed are now managed nationally through the Building Regulations?

### ***Representations***

Does the Parish Council wish to comment on any of the representations made to the Plan?

It would be helpful if it commented on the representations received from:

- the Environment Agency;
- the RSPB; and
- the British Horse Society.

The District Council proposes a series of revisions to certain policies and to the general text. It would be helpful if the Parish Council commented on the suggested revisions in general and those which propose an alignment with the equivalent policies in the Reach Neighbourhood Plan?

### ***Protocol for responses***

I would be grateful for responses to the questions raised by 27 March 2024. Please let me know if this timetable may be challenging to achieve. It is intended to maintain the momentum of the examination.

If certain responses are available before others, I would be happy to receive the information on a piecemeal basis. Irrespective of how the information is assembled, please could it come to me directly from the District Council. In addition, please can all responses make direct reference to the policy or the matter concerned.

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Independent Examiner

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11 March 2024