

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE WILSHAMSTEAD
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

EXAMINER: Andrew Mead BSc (Hons) MRTPI MIQ

Lizzie Barnicoat
Clerk to Wilshamstead Parish Council

Sonia Gallaher
Bedford Borough Council

Examination Ref: 01/AM/WNP

4 May 2022

Dear Ms Barnicoat and Ms Gallaher

WILSHAMSTEAD NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Wilshamstead Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters.

1. Examination Documentation

I can confirm that I have received the submission documents to enable me to undertake the examination including the draft Plan, Basic Conditions Statement, the Consultation Report, and the Regulation 16 representations.

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.

2. Site Visit

I intend to undertake a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area during the week commencing 9 May 2022. 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.

I anticipate that I may have a number of questions following my site visit, which I will set out in writing separately.

3. 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.

4. 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.

However, in the likely event that I have a number of questions seeking clarification as a result of my site visit, I must provide the opportunity for you to reply. This would mean that the examination timetable would be extended. Please be assured that I would seek to mitigate any delay as far as is practicable. The IPe office team will keep you updated on the examination and, in due course, the delivery date of the draft report.

If you have any process questions related to the conduct of the examination, which you would like me to address, please do not hesitate to contact the office team in the first instance.

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

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

Andy Mead

Examiner