

Daventry District Council

Settlements and Countryside Local Plan.

Examination June 2019.

Closing Statement



On behalf of the Council I would like to thank you for the way you have conducted the hearing sessions and the guidance you have provided both to the Council and all other interested parties. We appreciate the clarity you have provided in steering us to address your concerns.

I would also like to thank the Programme Officer Ian Kemp, for the way in which he has ensured the smooth running of the examination.

Finally to all those who have participated in the hearing sessions and responded to the consultations. Given the complex nature of matters in a local plan, it is inevitable there would be differences of opinion on some issues but we feel that dialogue has been constructive in the pursuit of preparing a sound Part 2 Plan for Daventry District.

There was a relatively low number of respondents to the plan, and low number of participants at the various sessions, perhaps partly reflective of the fact that this is a part 2 plan, with the strategic issues having been dealt with in the Part 1 plan, the WNJCS.

In closing I will say a few words about each Matter, but this is not intended to cover everything before the examination either at the hearings or in writing.

Matter 1

There were no duty to co-operate matters before you from duty to co-operate bodies, and no claim that other statutory requirements have been contravened or not met. We believe that the SA, which is in any event an iterative process, has satisfied all the requirements. The main modifications will themselves, in due course, be subject to SA.

Matter 2

We have demonstrated that it is not the role of this plan to address shortfalls in delivery in the part of the NRDA in Daventry District. To do so would contravene the strategies and policies of the part 1 plan and would not be an appropriate way to deal with what is a cross boundary issue. As we said the sites were found sound at the Core Strategy examination, infrastructure is now coming forward, and there is planning or development activity on all of the sites in the District, it is now for the development industry to bring forward these sites, working with the local authorities

and other stakeholders. The review of the Part 1 plan, now underway, is the opportunity to consider this strategic, cross boundary matter.

We have demonstrated that the combination of completions, existing commitments and provision within the plan will exceed the requirement in the Core Strategy by some 47% in rural areas and 10% at Daventry town, 23% overall. Whilst there was some discussion about precise numbers, there was no serious challenge to this level of over provision. Given the level of oversupply in the rural areas, there is, in our firm view, no case to make allocations, to do so would further undermine the strategy of the Part 1 plan. We would also strongly urge you to have this oversupply and strategy point in mind when you consider any changes to our Rural Area policies, and we invite you to find that the changes we have already proposed to those policies are sufficient to overcome any soundness concerns and to reflect national policy.

Matter 3

We discussed our approach to allocations at Daventry town, and no challenge was made to our approach and no serious challenge to the sites we propose for allocation. We believe that we have clearly demonstrated that we will readily achieve the housing requirements for Daventry District outside of the NRDA, and that we have a comfortable five year housing land supply.

In terms of additional standards in policy H8 we believe we have demonstrated that these are justified and would help to make the new housing stock which will come forward in the plan more suited to people's needs,.

Matter 4

We discussed a number of changes to the Rural Area and SEA policies – we have put wording before you for consideration. Suggestions have been made that we should provide for development at Crick and Brixworth. We have set out that we currently haven't been provided with convincing evidence regarding the cases put forward: but we have made suggested changes to the relevant policies which would allow for these, or other proposals to come forward should that evidence be forthcoming in due course.

In terms of the town centre, we explained our approach given the significant changes in the retail environment, i.e. to produce a new Town Centre Vision/strategy to address this.

Matter 5

You had before you representations objecting to the SLA boundary proposed by the Council, but no evidenced alternative was provided by the objectors. We set out that our approach is based on sound evidence. This is one of those cases where the parties hold different views, and there isn't a way of achieving a meeting of minds. Sir

it's for you to decide if the Council's position is sound against the 4 tests of soundness, and if not what main modifications would be necessary to make the plan sound.

It is therefore for you to come to a conclusion based on what you have read, heard and seen from your site visits.

Early in the examination you asked us to review our approach to the Green Wedge. We have done that Sir, and we have suggested revised wording of the policy and some areas for removal from the designation. We explained the importance of this as a policy tool to prevent coalescence in areas under significant development pressure, and, as an example of this, we referred to the fact that over 700 houses have been approved at Moulton (on the northern fringe of Northampton) in the plan period. We hope that the revised approach finds favour with you.

Various amendments to policies and supporting text were discussed, and we will provide suggested wording to you shortly for your consideration.

Matter 6

We discussed various changes to Policy HO9 and the supporting text. We are comfortable with those suggested changes and are currently drafting wording for your consideration.

Matter 7

We discussed various changes to the policies in the Sustainable Transport section, and we will provide suggested wording to you.

Matter 8

We discussed various changes to the policies in the Community and Wellbeing and Parish Annex sections, we will reflect on those discussions and we will provide suggested wording to you.

Matter 9

We discussed various changes to the objectives, we will reflect on those discussions and we will provide suggested wording to you.

It just remains for me to thank you again. We trust that you will be able to find the plan sound, subject to the Main Modifications we have and will put forward, and any others you deem necessary.

We look forward to receiving your report in due course.

Richard Wood, Local Strategy Manager

Daventry District Council