

Independent Examiner's Report of the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan

Author

Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD

Planning Consultant

NPIERS Examiner

CEDR accredited mediator

8th

**SECTION 1
CONTENTS**

Section 1

Contents.....2

Section 2

Summary.....3

Section 3

Introduction.....4-6

Section 4

The Report.....7-28

- 1. *Appointment of the Independent Examiner.....7*
- 2. *Neighbourhood Plan Area.....7*
- 3. *Plan Period.....7*
- 4. *Site Visit.....7*
- 5. *Consultation Process.....7*
- 6. *Comment on Responses.....7*
- 7. *Compliance with the Basic Conditions.....7-8*
- 8. *Planning Policy.....8*
- 9. *Other relevant Policy Considerations.....9-13*
- 10. *Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan Policies.....13-28*

Section 5

Conclusions and Recommendations.....29

SECTION 2

Summary

As the Independent Examiner appointed by Wiltshire Council to examine the Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan, I can summarise my findings as follows:

- 1. Having read the Idmiston Consultation Statement and the representations made in connection with this subject I am satisfied that the consultation process was robust and that the Neighbourhood Plan and its policies reflects the outcome of the consultation process.*
- 2. I find that the policies contained within the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan subject to modification meet the Basic Conditions.*
- 3. I find that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan can, subject to modification proceed to Referendum.*
- 4. I am satisfied that the Referendum Area should be the same as the Plan Area, should the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan go to Referendum.*

SECTION 3

Introduction

1. Neighbourhood Plan Examination.

My name is Deborah McCann and I am the Independent Examiner appointed to examine the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan.

I am independent of the qualifying body, I do not have any interest in the land in the plan area, and I have appropriate qualifications and experience, including experience in public, private and community sectors.

My role is to consider whether the submitted Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the Basic Conditions and has taken into account human rights; and to recommend whether the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan should proceed to Referendum. My role is as set out in more detail below under the section covering the Examiner's Role. My recommendation is given in summary in Section 2 and in full under Section 5 of this document.

The Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan has to be independently examined following processes set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The expectation is that the examination of the issues by the examiner is to take the form of the consideration of the written representations. However, there are two circumstances when an examiner may consider it necessary to hold a hearing. These are where the examiner considers that it is necessary to ensure adequate examination of an issue or to ensure a person has a fair chance to put a case. Having read the plan and considered the representations I did require clarification on a number of issues. Initially these points were dealt with by written representations in a question and answer format. This additional information is publicly available on the Wiltshire Council website. I was satisfied that the written responses adequately clarified the issues and therefore decided that it was not necessary to hold a Hearing.

2. The Role of Examiner including the examination process and legislative background.

The examiner is required to check whether the neighbourhood plan:

- Has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body*
- Has been prepared for an area that has been properly designated for such plan preparation*

- *Meets the requirements to i) specify the period to which it has effect; ii) not include provision about excluded development; and iii) not relate to more than one neighbourhood area and that*
- *Its policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood area.*

The examiner must assess whether a neighbourhood plan meets the basic conditions and other matters set out in paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).

As an independent Examiner, having examined the Plan, I am required to make one of the following recommendations:

- 1. The Plan can proceed to a Referendum*
- 2. The Plan with recommended modifications can proceed to a Referendum*
- 3. The Plan does not meet the legal requirements and cannot proceed to a Referendum*

I am also required to recommend whether the Referendum Area should be different from the Plan Area, should the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan go to Referendum.

In examining the Plan, I am required to check, under Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, whether: - the policies in the Plan relate to the development and use of land for a designated Neighbourhood Area are in line with the requirements of Section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004:

- The Plan meets the requirements of Section 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 to specify the period for which it has effect - the Plan has been prepared for an area designated under the Localism Act 2011 and has been developed and submitted for examination by a qualifying body.

I am also required to determine whether the Plan complies with the Basic Conditions, which are that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan:

- Has regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;*
- Contributes to the achievement of sustainable development; and*
- Is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the area.*

The Plan must also not breach, and otherwise be compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.

Wiltshire Council will consider my report and decide whether it is satisfied with my recommendations. The Council will publicise its decision on whether or not the plan will be submitted to a referendum, with or without modifications. If the Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to a referendum, then 28 working days' notice will be given of the referendum procedure and Neighbourhood Plan details. If the referendum results in more than half those voting (i.e. greater than 50%), voting in favour of the plan, then Wiltshire Council must "make" the Neighbourhood Plan a part of its Development Plan as soon as possible. If approved by a referendum and then "made" by the local planning authority, the Neighbourhood Plan then forms part of the Development Plan.

SECTION 4

The Report

1. Appointment of the Independent examiner

Wiltshire Council appointed me as the Independent Examiner for the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan with the agreement of Idmiston Parish Council.

2. Qualifying body

I am satisfied that the Idmiston Parish Council is the qualifying body.

3. Neighbourhood Plan Area

The designated Idmiston Neighbourhood Area covers Idmiston Parish. The Basic Conditions Statement submitted with the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan confirms there are no other Neighbourhood Plans covering the Area of the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan.

4. Plan Period

It is intended that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan will cover the period 2015-2026.

5. Site Visit

Having read the plan, supporting documents and the additional information provided following my request for additional clarification

6. The Consultation Process

The Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan has been submitted for examination with a Consultation Report which sets out the consultation process that has led to the production of the plan, as set out in the regulations in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Statement describes the approach to consultation, the stages undertaken and explains how the Plan has been amended in relation to comments received. It is set out according to the requirements in Regulation 15.1.b of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012):

(a) It contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;

(b) It explains how they were consulted; (c) It summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and

(d) It describes how these issues and concerns were considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

Examination of the documents and representations submitted in connection with this matter have lead me to conclude that the consultation process was thorough, well conducted and recorded. However, there are references to the South Wiltshire Core Strategy which need to be removed and replaced with reference to the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015.

A list of statutory bodies consulted is included in the Consultation Statement.

8.Regulation 16 consultation by Wiltshire Council and record of responses.

The District Council placed the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan out for consultation under Regulation 16 from the 9th May 2016 to the 22nd of June 2016

A number of detailed representations were received during the consultation period and these were supplied by Wiltshire Council as part of the supporting information for the examination process. I considered the representations, have taken them into account in my examination of the plan and made reference to them where appropriate.

9. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

The Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan working Group produced a Basic Conditions Statement on behalf of Idmiston Parish Council. The purpose of this statement is for the Neighbourhood Plan Working Group to set out in some detail why they believe the Neighbourhood Plan as submitted does meet the Basic Conditions. It is the Examiners Role to take this document into consideration but also make take an independent view as to whether or not the assessment as submitted is correct.

I have to determine whether the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan:

- 1. Has regard to national policies and advice*
- 2. Contributes to sustainable development*
- 3. Is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the appropriate Development Plan*
- 4. Is not in breach and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations and Human Rights requirements.*

9.1 Documents brought to my attention by the District Council for my examination include:

(a) The Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan: This is the main document,

which includes the policies developed by the community.

(b) The Consultation Statement: This is a statement setting out how the community and other stakeholders have been involved in the preparation of the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan and is supported by an evidence base which arose from the consultation.

(c) Basic Conditions Statement. This is a statement setting out how Idmiston Parish Council considers that the Neighbourhood Plan does meet the Basic Conditions.

(d) Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion for the Historic Environment.

(e) Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment.

(f) Strategic Environmental Assessment - Screening determination for the Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan.

(g) Data Book- this is a comprehensive collection of the evidence base used in the formulation of the plan.

9.2 Comment on Documents submitted

The documents provide as a whole detail of the preparation of the Plan and the evidence base supporting it as required. There are a number of drafting errors which require correction as detailed in other parts of this report and where I have considered it necessary I have sought clarification by way of written questions to Wiltshire Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Group. I am satisfied that given the response to the questions, examination of the plan and the documents provided for the examination, policies and legislation that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan does, subject to the recommended modifications meet the Basic Conditions.

10.Planning Policy

10.1. National Planning Policy

National Policy guidance is in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012.

To meet the Basic Conditions, the Plan must have “regard to national policy and advice”. In addition, the NPPF requires that a Neighbourhood Plan “must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the local plan”. Paragraph 16 states that neighbourhoods should “develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development; plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the

Local Plan”.

The Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan does not need to repeat these national policies, but to demonstrate it has taken them into account. Concern has been raised that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan does not meet the Basic Conditions in this respect. I do not however accept this concern and consider that the plan and supporting documents do adequately demonstrate that the plan does have “regard to national policy and advice”.

I have examined the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan and consider that, subject to modification the plan does have “regard for National Policy and Advice” and therefore the Plan does meet the Basic Conditions in this respect.

10.2. Local Planning Policy- The Development Plan

Idmiston is within the area covered by Wiltshire Council. The relevant Development Plan for the purposes of this Examination is the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015.

There are references in the Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan to the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, which was the relevant Development Plan until the adoption of the Wiltshire Core Strategy in 2015. I have sought clarification on this point, it formed part of my overall clarification of the Plan and as stated previously both the questions and the responses are available to view in full on the Wiltshire Council website. As for many Neighbourhood Plan Groups the process of preparing a plan for Examination is a long one and in this case the process began when the Development Plan was the South Wiltshire Core Strategy. I am satisfied however, both through reading the plan and following clarification both from Wiltshire Council and the Neighbourhood Plan Group that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan has been considered against the strategic policies of the relevant Development Plan. The references to the South Wiltshire Core Strategy are drafting errors and should be removed and replaced by reference to the Wiltshire Core Strategy. In addition, I understand that the South Wiltshire Core Strategy was in effect incorporated into the Wiltshire Core Strategy upon its adoption in January 2015. Para 1.13 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy states that:

‘The Wiltshire Core Strategy covers the whole of the administrative area of Wiltshire Council, with the exception of the areas within the New Forest National Park, and it incorporates the South Wiltshire Core Strategy, thus replacing standalone version of that document’.

I have considered the Strategic policies of the Development Plan and the Policies of the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan and consider that the Plan does meet the Basic Condition in this respect and is in general conformity with the Strategic policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015.

11. Other Relevant Policy Considerations

11.1 European Convention on Human Rights (ECMR) and other European Union Obligations

As a 'local plan', the Neighbourhood Development Plan is required to take cognisance of the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive 2001/42/EC Office.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion was carried out by Wiltshire Council in September 2015. The following organisations were consulted as required

- *Natural England*
- *Historic England*
- *Environment Agency*

The Council's conclusion was that the proposed Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Having examined the plan and the supporting documents I agree with this conclusion.

11.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

A HRA was carried out for the plan and the conclusion was:

"The majority of the draft policies and proposals in the draft Idmiston NP do not allocate new land for development and largely provide qualitative criteria for development focused on improving the parish for local people, businesses and visitors, including some environmental policies and suggestions for the design of development sites. Consequently, none of these policies and proposals would give rise to likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.

Draft Proposals 18 and 19 identify ten sites for housing across Gomeldon, Idmiston and Porton, a total of 32 dwellings. This HRA has found that there would be no significant impacts of these proposals either alone, in-combination with each other, or in-combination with the Wiltshire Core Strategy."

11.2 Sustainable development

9.5 Sustainable Development

One of the Basic Conditions requires the Plan to contribute to sustainable development but there is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal. The Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan has been drafted to be in general conformity with the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy, and I am satisfied that the policies of the plan would contribute to sustainable development. Concern was raised through a Regulation 16 consultation response that by determining to allocate a number of small scale sites for future housing development the plan would fail to deliver sustainable development. Seeking further clarification on this issue the Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan Group provided me with the following written response:

“The allocated housing sites seek to meet the Basic Conditions in terms of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the following way:

- The sites consist of small developments which do not impose too much stress on the existing infrastructure and are in line with the requirements of the Wiltshire Core Strategy for small sites in small and large villages which in itself contributes to the achievement of sustainable development*
- The proposed sites are all in accessible locations close to local bus stop, within walking distance of village amenities thus reducing the need for car journeys*
- The sites are all on land in Flood Zone 1 – thus removing the risk of flooding under normal circumstances*
- The sites being small have the ability to maintain sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment whilst also not impacting upon any Natura 2000 nature sites, as confirmed in the Habitats Regulations Assessment screening submitted with the plan*
- There have been considerable efforts in the selection of sites, supported by evidence (see Data book 11, Visual Analysis Study), to protect, conserve and enhance the landscape character of the Parish,*
- The plan may not directly meet affordable housing targets given the change in affordable housing thresholds experienced during the preparation of the plan and the core strategies strategic requirement for smaller sites, however, affordable housing will be delivered through other means and plan through existing commitments as detailed in question 2.*

Having examined the plan, supporting documents and the written response to my questions for clarification I am satisfied that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Plan addresses the sustainability issues adequately.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan is required to take cognisance of the European Convention of Human Rights and to comply with the Human Rights Act 1998.

I am satisfied that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan has done so.

I am therefore satisfied that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan meets the basic conditions on EU obligations.

11.3 Excluded development

I am satisfied that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan does not cover County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such

as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

11.4 Development and use of land

I am satisfied that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan, subject to modification covers development and land use matters.

11.5 The Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Aims and Policies

The Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan Vision

The Vision

The aim of the Plan is to retain and enhance the traditional values of the small rural parish of Idmiston, which consists of three adjacent villages, thus ensuring that future development within the Parish reflects the community's needs and aspirations. The built environment should be compatible with local and national policies, but above all should enable all sections of the community to enjoy a sustainable way of life. It is to enable parishioners to help shape the future with regard to development, infrastructure and facilities. Our Objectives, Policies and Proposals are based upon the Village Design Statement (VDS) and surveys undertaken in the Parish.

Key objectives

- Protect the Parish's rural feel whilst modernising its infrastructure and meeting the needs of the future, working closely with key local employers and Wiltshire Council*
- Confirm which areas of the Parish should remain as open space and which areas for development.*
- Strengthen community spirit, community health and community safety.*
- Improve community life with particular regard for the vulnerable, the disadvantaged, the elderly and the young.*
- Ensure sufficient educational places to meet the requirements of the Parish.*
- Improve and sustain core facilities.*
- Enhance community and leisure facilities, particularly for youth and recreation.*
- Provide housing to meet local demand for downsizing, whilst also providing affordable homes.*
- New housing developments to be designed as small clusters in accordance with the Village Design Statement in conjunction with consultations undertaken for the Neighbourhood Plan.*

COMMENT

I am satisfied that the the Idmiston Plan's strategic aims and policies flow from the priorities identified during the consultation process.

12. Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies

General Comment

The format of the plan is confusing, grouping policies together and then grouping proposals without a clear definition of the difference between the two. The proposals generally read as justification for each of the policies however this is not consistent and unless I indicate otherwise, later in my report the proposals that align with each policy should appear as justification for the relevant individual policy. Where they do not relate directly to land use matters they should be removed from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Policy 1 - Village Separation

For the villages to remain as recognisably separate places, with their own identities, it is critical that these physical and visual breaks between our settlements are retained. Consequently, any development which prejudices the continued separation of our existing villages from each other, and from those in neighbouring parishes, will not be supported.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

Policy 2 - Conservation

To secure the conservation of our important riverside landscape and reduce exposure to flooding. Further built development, unrelated to agriculture, on the water meadows and woodland adjoining the River Bourne should be avoided.

COMMENT

This policy should be retitled "avoiding flood risk" to avoid confusion with other conservation policies.

Policy 3 - Future Developments

Any future development on, or close to, the periphery of the villages should have

regard for the need to minimise the visual impact of new development on the village edges. Field edge hedgerows and trees should be retained, and where necessary, screen planting incorporated to soften the built form.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

Policy 4 - Maintaining the Rural Feel

To secure the rural feel of our environment, all new development proposals will be required to incorporate a landscaping scheme, which provides for the planting of appropriate trees and shrubs, both as a boundary treatment and as an integral design component in the layout of the site.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

Proposal 1 - Village Separation

Ensure, with the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan, that planning applications mirror policies for maintaining village separation and identities.

COMMENT

Proposal 1 should form part of the justification for Policy 1 and explain why it is important to maintain village separation, describing the character of the area and how this is evidenced.

Proposal 2 - Maintaining the Rural Feel

Work with Wiltshire Council's Conservation and Landscape Officers regarding relevant planning applications to ensure the rural feel is maintained.

COMMENT

This should become the justification for policy 2 and as with policy 1 should clearly explain why this is important and describe what is the "rural feel" of the area.

THE PARISH'S CHARACTER AND HERITAGE

Policy 5 - Protect Character and Heritage

To retain our rural vistas and preserve the integrity of the villages as largely hidden

rural settlements. Any future development of potential sites should be located and designed in a way that precludes building on the skyline, when seen from within the villages.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy.

Policy 6 - New Conservation Areas

Conservation Area status for the historic parts of Idmiston will be explored. Notwithstanding this initiative, within the historic core, any new building or extension or works to an existing building will be required to enhance and positively contribute to the appearance of this area.

COMMENT

This policy does not meet the Basic Conditions as only Local Authorities can designate Conservation areas. This policy should be deleted and moved to the section for community aspiration/projects,

Policy 7 - Maintaining Historical Legacy

To ensure developments within the historic parts of Idmiston, the Porton Conservation Area and the areas immediately adjoining, reflect the appearance and character of our legacy of historic properties.

COMMENT

This doesn't read as a policy. It should either be deleted as development in Conservation Areas is controlled under National Policy or reworded:

New developments within the historic parts of Idmiston, the Porton Conservation Area and the areas immediately adjoining, should reflect the appearance and character of the area as Identified in the Idmiston, Porton and Gomeldon Village Design Statement and comply with any relevant National or Local Planning Policy.

Policy 8 - Maintaining and Enhancing Character

To ensure new housing both reflects and enhances the character of the villages and that extensions blend visually with existing buildings and do not detract from the street scene.

COMMENT

This policy doesn't read as a policy and needs to be reworded:

"All new housing developments and extensions to existing houses should be designed to be locally distinctive so that they reflect and enhance the character of the village as identified in the Idmiston, Porton and Gomeldon Village Design Statement."

Proposal 3 - Conservation Status Idmiston

Pursue conservation area status within Idmiston village to protect history and heritage.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 4 - Protect Historical Buildings

Review buildings within the villages that should be maintained/protected as part of our cultural/ historical heritage.

Note: Idmiston Historical Society has documented all buildings within this category

COMMENT

The intention of proposal 4 appears to be the drawing up of a local list of Non Designated Heritage Assets. This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Policy 9 - Community Infrastructure

To engage with parishioners to identify feasible community infrastructure requirements.

COMMENT

This isn't a policy and should be replaced by:

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Plan supports the following areas for CIL Expenditure (contributions from developers)

- ***Highway Infrastructure and parking provision***

- *Development of a Community Hub*
- *Youth and community Leisure facilities*
- *Acquisition and development of Community Assets*
- *Community Safety developments*
- *Enhancement of community service provision*
- *Cycle paths and footpaths*
- *School infrastructure*

Policy 10 - To Maximise use of CIL Contributions

All new multiple housing developments, including major builds at Porton Down, that have a direct impact on the Parish, must be considered for a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) financial contribution to infrastructure facilities.

COMMENT

The parameters of CIL are laid down in the Development Plan, this policy is unnecessary and should be deleted.

Policy 11 - Partner Porton Down Employers

Engage with Porton Down employers to manage infrastructure requirements in a partnering relationship.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 5 - Provide Additional Community Facilities

The Parish Council should identify, prioritise and cost community requirements and ensure that these are considered under the CIL, when new build applications are submitted.

COMMENT

This is covered by Policy 9 and should be deleted.

Proposal 6 - Actively Engage with Porton Down Management

The Parish Council should actively engage with Porton Down (Dstl, PHE and Science Park) to achieve a mutually acceptable plan to manage the impact of increased numbers of employees on Idmiston Parish infrastructure. This should include

managing commuter traffic and assistance with local infrastructure facilities.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 7 - Provision of Diverse Open Space

Seek to preserve and enhance the local environment (Public Open Space) and 'open feel' of the villages by seeking to maximize green and open space (as part of new developments) on-site whenever possible.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 8 - Improve the Porton Recreation Ground

Revisit the feasibility of improving the drainage and quality of the Porton recreation ground to provide a better long term sport and recreational facility.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 9 - Use of Open Space

Seek to secure public use of 'non-public' open space wherever appropriate and however possible.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 10 - Porton Down Sports Facilities

Increase use of and access to Porton Down sports facilities.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate

section for community aspirations or projects.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Policy 12 - Long Term Infrastructure Requirements

The village centre infrastructure is no longer capable of managing the current levels of parking, traffic volume and increasing demand for leisure and support facilities. There is a requirement to take a strategic view of future requirements and plan with Porton Down how best to manage future development and growth.

COMMENT

Policies 12 and 13 should be combined, retitled please see below.

Policy 13 - Short Term Infrastructure Requirements

There is a requirement to manage current infrastructure shortfalls for the management of traffic congestion, parking and safety.

COMMENT

This policy should be combined with Policy 12 retitled and reworded as follows:

Policy 12 Traffic and transport

The village centre infrastructure is no longer capable of managing the current levels of parking, traffic volume and increasing demand for leisure and support facilities. All new development proposals should provide information, appropriate to the scale of development, in the form of a Transport Statement and where necessary a Travel Plan, which demonstrates how any additional traffic generated by the proposal will be managed in terms of congestion, parking and highway safety. It should also include where possible details of improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

Proposal 11- Infrastructure Community Safety

That the Plan supports the need for Wiltshire Council, Highways and Porton Down to address the increased traffic flow, speeding, congestion, parking and safety issues caused by a considerable increase in commuter traffic. To establish a Porton Down Community Working Group to include Dstl, PHE, the Science Park and Idmiston Parish Councilors and parishioners.

COMMENT

This proposal should be split into two- the first section reworded to form a policy and the second sentence “To establish a Porton Down Community Working Group to include Dstl, PHE, the Science Park and Idmiston Parish Councilors and parishioners “should be moved to a separate section of the plan. The policy should be reworded as follows:

Proposals which address the increased traffic flow, speeding, congestion, parking and safety issues caused by a considerable increase in commuter traffic will be strongly supported.

Proposal 12 - New Access Road to Porton Down

To continue discussions and maintain pressure for a new access road into the Porton Down Establishment from the A338 at Boscombe with Dstl, Porton Down.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 13 - Traffic Management and Calming

Install traffic control measures (gateway treatments and vehicle activated speed signs) in the interests of greater safety, to moderate the flow of traffic at peak times from the A338 onto the Winterslow road and traffic calming measures to be installed on the Winterslow Road between the eastern boundary of the village and the Main Gate at Porton Down.

COMMENT

This should be reworded as follows to form a policy:

Proposals to install traffic control measures (gateway treatments and vehicle activated speed signs) in the interests of greater safety, to moderate the flow of traffic at peak times from the A338 onto the Winterslow road and traffic calming measures to be installed on the Winterslow Road between the eastern boundary of the village and the Main Gate at Porton Down will be strongly supported.

Proposal 14 - School Parking

Provision of off-road parking to be made at both the Primary Schools; St Nicholas C of E Primary School in Porton and Gomeldon Primary School and that in the vicinity of each of the two primary schools, a 20mph speed limit should be introduced. The provision of a new footway from Idmiston village towards St Nicholas C of E Primary

School.

COMMENT

This should be reworded as follows to form a policy:

Proposals for the provision of off-road parking at both the Primary Schools; St Nicholas C of E Primary School in Porton and Gomeldon Primary School along with the provision of a new footway from Idmiston village towards St Nicholas C of E Primary School will be strongly supported. The introduction of a 20mph speed limited in the vicinity of the two primary schools will also be strongly supported.

Proposal 15 - Porton Centre Parking

Space for a dedicated area for Church Parking on Winterslow Road to be investigated with the developers of the Chalk House housing development. This to be coupled with liaison with the Highways Authority to investigate the provision of more off-road parking to ease congestion in the centre of Porton village outside the village shop.

COMMENT

The second sentence of this proposal should be placed in a separate part of the plan.

The first sentence should be reworded as follows to form a policy:

“Proposals to provide space for a dedicated area for Church Parking on Winterslow Road will be strongly supported.”

Proposal 16 - Idmiston Halt

To explore the possibility of reopening the former railway station at Idmiston Halt on the London to Salisbury route as a dedicated request stop for the use of Porton Down employees to reduce traffic congestion and encourage commuting by train to Porton Down.

COMMENT

This proposal should be reworded as follows to form a policy:

Any proposals to reopen the former railway station at Idmiston Halt on the London to Salisbury route as a dedicated request stop for the use of Porton Down employees to reduce traffic congestion and encourage commuting by train to Porton Down will be strongly supported.

Proposal 17 - CIL Contributions

Further to the adoption of a CIL policy, the Parish council will prioritise CIL funding it receives to those items listed in the Plan's CIL Schedule.

COMMENT

This CIL proposal should be deleted as it is now covered in Policy 9.

HOUSING

General Comments

The housing policy section needs to be reworded:

Policy 14 - Housing Needs

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring that sufficient Affordable Housing is available to meet the needs of those who live in the Parish or the locality of Idmiston.*

** Affordable Housing being housing which is available, in perpetuity, to those households who are financially unable to compete in the local market to secure a reasonable home. Such housing includes social rented, shared ownership and low cost for sale.*

COMMENT

The definition of affordable housing should be included in policy justification and should follow the definition contained within the National Planning Policy Framework. The policy should be reworded:

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring that sufficient Affordable Housing is available to meet the needs of those who live in the Parish or the locality of Idmiston. Core Policy 44 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy allows the development of 'rural exception' sites and Core Policy CP46 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy supports the provision of housing for older people as an exception. Small schemes for affordable and elderly persons accommodation which come forward in compliance with this policy will be supported, subject to other policies within the plan. All other proposals for residential development will be expected to comply with Core Policy CP43 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy.

Policy 15 - Developments

A commitment to consider partnering the Community Land trust (CLT) and Partnership with a Housing Association as an alternative to relying entirely on commercial developers.

COMMENT

This is a proposal rather than a policy and should be removed from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Policy 16 - New Builds on Old Plots

Any development using the gardens and grounds of older properties in the villages will need to:

- **Avoid compromising the setting of the existing dwelling-house and the contribution of both house and garden to the character and appearance of the villages**
- **Conserve the green aspect of the area by the retention of as many viable trees and hedgerows as is practicable, including any original cob and brick and/or flint boundary walls**
- **Demonstrate how the proposed scheme will positively enhance the appearance and character of the villages and their Conservation Areas, where these exist**

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy

Policy 17 - Development Criteria

Any developments in villages will need to meet all of the following criteria:

- **Be well related to the existing village envelope**
- **Be of modest scale and not generally exceed ten dwellings, in order to protect the rural nature of the village**
- **Reflect the character and variety of the existing pattern of development in the village**
- **Follow the lines of the contours on sloping sites to ensure a better fit with the existing land form**

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy

Policy 18 - Preventing Overcrowding

To ensure sufficient private amenity space remains available, proposals that involve

increasing the footprint of a dwelling should have regard to the adequacy of the size of the plot and the general character of the area.

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy

Proposal 18 - New Development Sites

The only sites available for new development should be those identified in the Neighbourhood Plan.

COMMENT

Housing has been identified as one of the core themes of the Neighbourhood Plan but the plan doesn't contain a policy which effectively captures the intention of the plan to facilitate new housing development, I conclude that it was the intention that Proposal 18 should in fact be a Policy but as currently worded it doesn't reflect the housing content of the Neighbourhood Plan. The list of sites identified through the development of the plan should be referred to in this new policy, however I recognise that it is not the intention of the plan to facilitate the development of more than approximately 32 dwellings across the plan period and the inclusion of the intention to monitor housing delivery should address this issue and include the flexibility required by the NPPF. In order to meet the Basic Conditions this proposal should become a policy, should be moved to the policy section and reworded as follows:

The Neighbourhood Plan will facilitate the delivery of approximately 32 homes across the Plan period. The delivery of new homes will be monitored, in the event that the development of new homes through existing commitments or proposals will not achieve the figure of approximately 32 dwellings, consideration will then be given for the development of the sites shown in figure x of the plan. Subject to other policies in this Plan new residential development proposals will be supported to achieve the housing requirement where they deliver infill development or at the large village of Porton small scale development of no more than 11 homes within and immediately adjacent to the settlement boundary of Porton, as established in the Core Strategy.

Residential development elsewhere in the Plan area will be resisted.

Proposal 19 - Liaison with Ministry of Defence

Development site PC1, a Brownfield site, would be an ideal site for affordable housing for employees at Porton Down.

- That the Parish Council should actively encourage the development of this site*

through the relevant authorities.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 20 - Liaison with County Planners

To establish a consistent and regular relationship and liaison with County Planners, to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan, with other planning policies, form the basis for future decisions.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Proposal 21 - Engaging with Developers

That the Parish Council is pro-active in engaging developers at an early stage of the planning process to ensure consistency with the Neighbourhood Plan policies and to maximise benefit from the relationship.

COMMENT

This should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

INDUSTRY AND EMPLOYMENT

Policy 19 - Minimising Impact on Surrounding Countryside

To minimise their impact on the surrounding countryside, where possible, new agricultural buildings should:

- Avoid elevated and exposed locations
- Be sited in close proximity to those of a similar construction to form a coherent

Group

- If freestanding, utilise the land form and screen planting
- An appropriate colour finish to help reduce their visual impact

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy

Policy 20 - Porton Down Developments

To reduce their impact on the landscape, stand alone developments related to the scientific research establishments and their associated companies at Porton Down should where possible:

- Avoid elevated and exposed locations
- Utilise the land form and screen planting
- Use colour finishes and, where necessary, undertake appropriate earthworks to soften their appearance
- Minimise environmental impact

COMMENT

I have no comment on this policy

Policy 21 - Partnering Porton Down Employers to Protect the Parish

Develop a long term relationship with Porton Down Employers (Dstl, PHE, Science Park) for continuous collaboration for infrastructure support and any future CIL planning and contributions.

COMMENT

This is not a policy and should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Policy 22 - Support to Local Businesses

To encourage local businesses within the Parish.

COMMENT

This is not a policy and should be moved from the policy section of the plan and located within a separate section for community aspirations or projects.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Plan supports the following areas for CIL Expenditure (contributions from developers)

- Highway Infrastructure and parking provision
- Development of a Community Hub

- **Youth and community Leisure facilities**
- ***Acquisition and development of Community Assets***
- ***Community Safety developments***
- ***Enhancement of community service provision***
- ***Cycle paths and footpaths***
- ***School infrastructure***

COMMENT

This section on CIL priorities should be deleted from this section and used to replace policy 9.

SECTION 5

Conclusion and Recommendations

1. *The layout of the plan is confusing proposals should become the justification for the proposed policies unless indicated in my specific comments on policies in Section 4 of my report.*
2. *Any proposals which do not form policy justification should be moved to a separate section of the Neighbourhood Plan, which will enable the community aspirations/projects to be read together.*
3. *I find that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements and processes set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) and the subsequent Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.*
4. *The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure such as highways and railways or other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.*
5. *The Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan does not relate to more than one Neighbourhood Area and there are no other Neighbourhood Development Plans in place within the Neighbourhood Area.*
6. *The Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening, meet the EU Obligation.*
7. *The policies and plans in the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan, subject to the recommended modifications would contribute to achieving sustainable development. They have regard to national policy and to guidance, and generally conform to the strategic policies of the Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015.*
8. *I therefore consider that the Idmiston Neighbourhood Development Plan subject to the recommended modifications can proceed to Referendum.*

Deborah McCann BSc MRICS MRTPI Dip Arch Con Dip LD

Planning Consultant

NPIERS Examiner

CEDR accredited mediator

9th January 2017

