

INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE STAINTON & THORNTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Patrick Whitehead DipTP (Nott) MRTPI

Mr A Liddle
Chair Stainton and Thornton Parish Council

Charlton Gibben
Middlesbrough Council

Examination Ref: 01/PW/STNP

17 September 2021

Dear Mr Liddle and Mr Gibben

STAINTON & THORNTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Stainton & Thornton Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of questions for the Parish Council and Middlesbrough Council and am asking for written responses to be provided within **two weeks** of receipt of this letter.

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.

2. Site Visit

I will aim to carry out a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area in the week beginning 20 September 2021. The site visit will assist in my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations.

The 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 may have some additional questions, following my site visit, which I will set out in writing should I require any further clarification.

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. Further Clarification

From my initial assessment of the Plan and supporting documents, I have identified a number of matters where I require some additional information from the Parish Council and Middlesbrough Council, which I have set out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if written responses can be provided within **two weeks** of receipt of this letter.

5. 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, as I have raised questions, I must provide you with sufficient opportunity to reply. Consequentially, the examination timetable will be extended. Please be assured that I will seek to mitigate any delay as far as is practicable. The IPE office team will seek to keep you updated on the anticipated delivery date of the draft report.

If the Parish Council or Local Planning Authority has 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 a copy of this letter and any subsequent responses are placed on both the Parish Council and the Middlesbrough Council websites?

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

Patrick T Whitehead

Examiner

ANNEX

From my initial reading of the Stainton & Thornton Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting evidence, I have the following questions for the Parish Council and Middlesbrough Council. I have requested the submission of responses within **two weeks** from the date of this letter, though an earlier response would be much appreciated.

Question for the Parish Council and Middlesbrough Council

- a. A revision to the National Planning Policy Framework was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government on 20 July 2021 alongside a final version of the National Model Design Code. Could both Councils please advise me if they consider any modifications are necessary to the Stainton & Thornton Neighbourhood Plan as a result of the publications?

Questions for the Parish Council

(If Middlesbrough Council has any observations on these questions, they would also be welcome.)

- b. The Borough Council has raised a number of specific questions in its statement dated 01/09/2021. Is the Parish Council able to offer written responses to these questions?
- c. Is the Parish Council able to offer comments on the Regulation 16 representations (including the representation on behalf of Messrs Bellway Homes Ltd regarding land at Stainton Vale Farm)?
- d. The Basic Conditions Statement makes a general reference to the Local Plan in the final paragraph on page 1, but only makes specific reference in respect of Policies ST7 and ST8 (pages 3 and 4). Can policies within the Neighbourhood Plan be identified that should be in general conformity with any relevant strategic policies in the Core Strategy, in addition to the Housing Local Plan 2014 and the Regeneration Development Plan Document 2009?
- e. Important views are referred to on page 22 and, whilst the Conservation Area Character Appraisal is referenced this does not appear to include all the views listed as important. Can the Parish Council provide a map showing the views referred to as 'Key Views' in Policy ST4?
- f. In framing Policy ST7 regarding infrastructure provision, can the Parish Council confirm that it has taken full account of the Government's advice in the Planning Practice Guidance: Reference ID: 41-045-20190509?
- g. Can the Parish Council justify Policy ST11 as sufficiently distinct from Policy CS6 in the Core Strategy to ensure that it serves a clear purpose and avoids unnecessary duplication of policies, as advised by the NPPF, paragraph 16(f)?
- h. Appendix 4 provides an assessment of the proposed Local Green Spaces (LGS). Can the Parish Council confirm that the owners of all of these spaces have been identified and notified of the intention to include them within the LGS designation?
- i. The Neighbourhood Plan indicates, page 36, that the Landscape and Heritage Assessment prepared as part of the evidence base for the 2016 Local Plan Review is "...relevant for the

development of the Neighbourhood Plan..” There does not appear to be any specific references in any of the draft policies to the assessments reproduced, so can the Parish Council advise on their relevance and provide a plan or plans identifying the parcels referenced?