

Response to SSDC Comments on Draft Pre Reg. 14 ECNP

Response sent to Jo Wilkins SSDC 8 December 2016

Jo

Thank for your reply and for identifying the key points, some of which we anticipated.

We have looked at and discussed your comments and propose the following for the time being, whilst recognising that there will be further changes required following the Regulation 14 Consultation, as we are keen to move forward.

As a matter of principle, we believe the local Neighbourhood Plan Group has reached the stage where, given the time taken to prepare the plan to date, they now want to push forward and publish the plan for regulation 14 consultation

We appreciate to fulfil your duty to guide and assist, required by paragraph 3 of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended), the Council will endeavour to identify whether the policies and supporting text in the ECNP pre-submission consultation draft have been worded clearly, concisely and positively and whether they have been based on robust evidence, clearly structured and of additional value to the existing policy framework. We look forward to continuing to work with you in implementing the recommended modifications at this stage.

On the detailed points:

Policy ECH1

We are puzzled that you should say that the methodology is not clear as this is set out in the plan and is based on a comparison of the % growth planned for the District, reduced to reflect the policy for areas such as East Coker.

In our view the Group and Parish Council should be commended for promoting this level of growth [above and beyond the Keyford site], when the policy for the area is essentially one of being 'open countryside' as the East & North Coker villages do not have development boundaries. We note what you say about the 2014 projections and other matters and so will recommend that this is looked at after Regulation 14 consultation. Given the policy context we are not sure that saying a minimum of 65 dwellings is appropriate, but perhaps 'approximately' would be better?

Policy ECCN7

We agree that there may be a need for more detail to explain each area identified (minor modifications) and suggest we leave that until the next stage when considering Regulation 14 responses as a whole

Policy ECCN8

We will look at this again, but are aware of similar policies in 'made' plans, so may well retain this as presented.

Policy ECT2

We will seek to address this concern

Policy ECCF1

We will check this again, looks like an editing oversight...thanks.

Policy ECH4

We appreciate that matters are still in a state of flux so will amend to just reflect the NPPF before Reg 14.

We are aware that NDPs should avoid repetition of national/local policies and should add a 'local' perspective to policy making i.e. the added reference to community engagement in EC1, but do also recognise that it is helpful for neighbourhood plans to contain a comprehensive picture of how the area is to be planned in the national/local context.

This is particularly useful and helpful to the local community, providing them with a planning policy document that is comprehensive, concise and relevant to their area. Provided there is no conflict with strategic policies, this should not be an issue.

We would be more than happy to meet in the New Year, to discuss the Regulation 14 amendments and perhaps we can set a date nearer the time, or we can also meet earlier if you wish, prior to your Regulation 14 comments being finalised.

Many thanks & best wishes

Simon

Simon Williams

Footprint Futures – Planning & Regeneration

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