

# INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF SUTTON POYNTZ NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

EXAMINER: Mary O'Rourke BA(Hons) DipTP MRTPI

Jane Biscombe  
Weymouth Town Clerk

Nick Cardnell  
Senior Planning Officer  
Dorset Council

Examination Ref: 01/MOR/SNP

14 August 2019

Dear Ms Biscombe and Mr Cardnell

## SUTTON POYNTZ NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN EXAMINATION

Following the submission of the Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan for examination, I would like to clarify several initial procedural matters. I also have a number of preliminary questions for Dorset Council and Weymouth Town Council.

### 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 intend to undertake a site visit to the neighbourhood plan area during the week commencing 19 August 2019. This will assist in my assessment of the draft Plan, including the issues identified in the representations. **It would be helpful for my site visit to have the mapping information requested in the Annex.**

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.

### 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

I have a number of initial questions seeking further clarification, which I have set out in the Annex to this letter. I would be grateful if you can seek to provide a written response **2 weeks** from the date 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.

As I have raised a number of questions, and may have others, 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 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 a copy of this letter and any respective responses to my questions, are placed on the Town Council and local authority's website.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Your sincerely

*Mary O'Rourke*

Examiner

## Annex

From my initial reading of the Sutton Poyntz Neighbourhood Plan and the supporting evidence, I have the following preliminary questions for Weymouth Town Council and for Dorset Council. Questions for the Town Council and/or Steering Group are marked WTC and those for Dorset Council DC.

1. (WTC) Paragraph 1.1 of the Plan on Origins and Purposes refers the Sutton Poyntz Society being recognised as a non-parish Neighbourhood Forum and becoming responsible for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. In paragraph 1.7 on Management and Monitoring, the Plan states that with the creation of Dorset Council on 1 April 2019, Sutton Poyntz became part of the new Weymouth Town Council and alludes to, but does not state explicitly, that the Neighbourhood Plan has passed to the Town Council, and that the Town Council is now the Qualifying Body progressing the Plan. Please provide suitable text setting out the legal basis for the transfer of the Plan to the Town Council and a short statement on the changes in local government, including dates, that can be incorporated into the draft Plan.
2. (WTC) The Map on page 7 shows the Neighbourhood Plan area. However, the scale is such that it is difficult to identify, particularly at the southern edge, which exact properties would be subject to the policies in the Plan and which would not. Please provide a larger scale version of the map on page 7 showing the full extent of the Neighbourhood Plan area with an explanation as to why the boundaries are where they are and clarify which are the properties that were initially excluded from the area (paragraph 1.3 of the Plan refers).
3. (WTC) Please provide a response to the representations made by David Harris and David Northam on the Plan area and the inclusion/exclusion of certain properties.
4. (DC) Having regard to the small scale and multiple overlays of Map M-HP 1.1, please provide, in respect of the Policies Map of the West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, plans to a scale of at least 1:25,000, such that individual properties can be identified, showing:
  - the full extent of the Preston Suburban Area Defined Development Boundary which includes Sutton Poyntz, Preston and Overcombe;
  - the Preston and Sutton Poyntz Open Gap; and
  - the areas of archaeological importance and areas of archaeological potential in the vicinity of the Plan area.
5. (WTC/DC) Please provide an explanation of the archaeological features shown on Map M-HE1, and the status of the information shown on the Dorset Explorer Map supporting policy HE1.
6. (WTC) I would appreciate the views of Weymouth Town Council on the comments made in paragraph 1.7 on the management and monitoring of the Plan and any alternative text.
7. (DC) Please provide me with a copy of the Place Appraisal 2018, as promised in Dorset Council's letter of 31 July.
8. (WTC/DC) The Plan has an end date of February 2036 which is described in paragraph 1.4 as aligning with that of the Local Plan but I note that the extant West Dorset, Weymouth and Portland Local Plan, adopted in 2015, only covers the period to 2031. Please clarify.
9. (WTC/DC) It is usual for neighbourhood plans to include a short descriptive section on the character of the Plan area, including details of the area's population and household numbers (by reference to the 2011 Census or ONS data). Whilst I have seen references in the Consultation Statement to there being 230 households in the Plan area, the Place Appraisal

gives a figure of 217 households with 456 inhabitants. It would be helpful to have the most up to date and correct figures confirmed.

10. (DC) Please confirm that the reference in policy GA2.1 is to the Bournemouth Poole and Dorset Residential Car Parking Study (May 2011) which can be found on the Dorset Council website and which I understand provides the residential parking standards used by the Council.
11. (WTC) In respect of policy GA2.3, please provide evidence of how the figure of 1,000 square metres for a new car park in the village was arrived at, how many car parking spaces this would be expected to provide, and what is meant in line 12 of the second paragraph of 4.4.3.2 by '*proportionate size*'.
12. (WTC/DC) Policy GA3 requires that Community Infrastructure Levy contributions are directed towards traffic calming and control measures. Please provide details of those schemes in the Plan area that are included in Weymouth Town Council's and/or Dorset Council's Regulation 123 list.
13. (WTC) Please advise as to how and when landowners were first notified of proposals to designate their land as Local Green Space in the Plan.
14. (WTC) I note that the Stage 2 Survey included questions on Local Heritage Assets, Key Views and Local Green Spaces and asked for responses on whether particular spaces, views and buildings should be identified for protection in the Plan. However, the Consultation Statement advises that in view of the concerns of various landowners, responses to the proposed lists of key views, heritage assets and Local Green Spaces '*would be excluded from the survey analysis*'. Other than consultation on the Regulation 14 version of the Plan, please clarify what public consultation took place on, and the level of support for, each of the individual proposed Local Green Spaces and key views now included in the submitted Plan.
15. (WTC) Please provide a plan showing where Puddings Field is.
16. (WTC) In respect of paragraph 4.5.3.3, please advise as to which Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) policies are being referred to as stating '*any development should be complementary*', and as being complementary to what? Also, please give examples of development in the AONB that it is envisaged could improve the key views.